



# **unfoldingWord® Simplified Text**

**v89**

**Genesis**

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# *Genesis*

## *How God Created the Universe and Everything in It*

1:1-2:3

**1** <sup>1</sup> This is how everything began: God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> At first after that, the earth did not have its present form, and there was nothing living on it. It was totally dark, there was deep water everywhere, and God's Spirit was moving above the water. <sup>3</sup> Then God said, "I command light to start shining!" And immediately light started shining. <sup>4</sup> God observed that the light was excellent. Then he divided the light from the darkness so that each had its own time. <sup>5</sup> He named the light Daytime, and the darkness he named Nighttime. Then evening came, and later morning came, and that was the end of the first day.

<sup>6</sup> Then God said, "I command there to be a large space in the middle of the water, so that it divides the water into two separate places." <sup>7</sup> That is how God made a large space and used it to divide the water that was below the space from the water that was above it. Everything happened exactly as he commanded, <sup>8</sup> and he named the space Sky. Then evening came, and later morning came, and that was the end of the second day.

<sup>9</sup> Then God said, "I command the water that is below the sky to come together in one place so that there is dry ground." And that is exactly what happened. <sup>10</sup> Then God named the ground that had dried off Land, and he named the water which had gathered together Ocean. And he observed that what he had made was excellent.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, "I command the land to produce green plants all over the earth, including all types of plants that produce seeds and all types of fruit trees that produce their own type of fruit with seeds inside." And that is exactly what happened. <sup>12</sup> The land started producing green plants, including all types of plants that produce their own type of seeds and

all types of trees that produce their own type of fruit with seeds inside. God observed that what he had made was excellent. <sup>13</sup> Then evening came, and later morning came, and that was the end of the third day.

<sup>14</sup> Then God said, “I command there to be sources of light in the sky that divide the daytime from the nighttime. They must also mark when important things happen, and they must show when seasons, days and years begin and end. <sup>15</sup> They must function as lights in the sky that shine light on the earth.” And that is exactly what happened. <sup>16</sup> That is how God made the two bright lights, the brighter light to shine during the daytime, and the weaker light to shine during the nighttime. That is also when he made the stars. <sup>17</sup> He put those lights in the sky to shine light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to shine during the daytime or during the nighttime, and to divide the light from the darkness. God observed that what he had made was excellent. <sup>19</sup> Then evening came, and later morning came, and that was the end of the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> Then God said, “I command there to be large groups of water animals that live everywhere in the water. I also command there to be birds that fly in the sky above the earth.” <sup>21</sup> That is how God made the huge sea animals and all the other types of animals that live all over the place in the water, each having its own type of young. That is also how he made all the different types of birds, each having its own type of young. God observed that what he had made was excellent. <sup>22</sup> Then he blessed them all by saying to them, “You water animals must have many young so that you increase greatly in number and live all over the place in the ocean. You birds must also increase greatly in number all over the earth.” <sup>23</sup> Then evening came, and later morning came, and that was the end of the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> Then God said, “I command the land to produce all types of animals, each having its own type of young, including domestic animals, all types of animals that crawl and all the other types of wild animals, each having its own type of young.” And that is exactly what happened. <sup>25</sup> That is how God made all the different types of wild animals, each having its own type of young, and all the domestic animals, each having its own type of young, and all different types of animals that crawl on the ground, each having its own type of young. God observed that what he had made was excellent.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said to himself, “Now we should make human beings to be like us and act like us, and let us put them in charge of the fish in the ocean, the birds in the sky, the

domestic animals, and the entire earth, including all the animals that live on the earth.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created human beings to be like himself. Yes, he made them to be like himself. He also created them to be male or female.

<sup>28</sup> Then God blessed them by saying to them, “Have many children so that you and your descendants increase greatly in number and live all over the earth and take control of it. You are in charge of the fish in the ocean, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that live on the land.” <sup>29</sup> Then he also said to them, “Listen, I am now giving to you for food all the different types of plants that produce seeds and grow anywhere on the earth, as well as all the different types of trees that produce fruit with seeds inside it. All of them are yours to eat from.” <sup>30</sup> In the same way, I give every type of green plant for food to all the wild animals that live on the earth, and all the birds that fly in the sky, and all the other animals that live on the land and breathe air.” And that is how it was.

<sup>31</sup> Then God looked at everything that he had made, and he observed that it was all very excellent. Then evening came, and later morning came, and that was the end of the sixth day.

**2** <sup>1</sup> That is how God finished creating the heavens and the earth, including all the many things that are in them. <sup>2</sup> By the seventh day he had finished the work he had been doing, so he rested on that day from all that work. <sup>3</sup> Then God established the seventh day as a day to bless people, by setting it apart as a special time to rest and worship him. He did that because on that day he no longer did the work that he had been doing, creating everything.

## *How Yahweh Created the First Man and First Woman*

### **2:4-25**

<sup>4</sup> What follows tells more details about the history of what God did when he created the heavens and the earth: During the time when Yahweh who is God created the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup> for a while there were not yet any bushes growing in the fields on the earth, and there were not any other plants that had sprouted yet. That was because God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and human beings did not exist yet to cultivate the ground.

<sup>6</sup> During that time springs of water kept seeping up from underground and supplied water to the entire surface of the land. <sup>7</sup> Then Yahweh who is God took some dirt from the earth and formed the first man out of it. Then he blew his breath into the man's nostrils to make him live, so that the man became alive.

<sup>8</sup> Now Yahweh God had planted a large garden in the region of Eden, which was in the east, and that is where he put the man whom he had created. <sup>9</sup> There Yahweh had caused all types of trees to grow from the ground that are beautiful to look at and that grow fruit that is good to eat. In the middle of the garden was the tree whose fruit makes people live forever, as well as the tree whose fruit enables people to know what is good and what is evil.

<sup>10</sup> There was a river flowing through the region of Eden that provided water for the park. From Eden the river divided into four smaller rivers. <sup>11</sup> The first river was the Pishon River, which flowed around the entire region of Havilah, a place where there was much gold. <sup>12</sup> In fact, the gold from that region was very pure. A type of fragrant resin and valuable onyx gemstones were also in that region. <sup>13</sup> The second river was the Gihon River, which flowed around through the entire region of Cush. <sup>14</sup> The third river was the Tigris River, which flowed east of the region of Assyria, and the fourth river was called the Euphrates River.

<sup>15</sup> After Yahweh God placed the man in Eden Garden to cultivate it and take care of it, <sup>16</sup> he instructed him, "You may eat as much fruit as you want to eat from any tree in the garden, <sup>17</sup> except I forbid you to eat any fruit from the tree whose fruit enables people to know what is good and what is evil. If you eat fruit from that tree, on that same day you will definitely die."

<sup>18</sup> Then Yahweh who is God said, "It is not good for the man to live by himself. So I will create someone who is just right for him to help him." <sup>19</sup> Now previously, Yahweh had used dirt from the ground to form all the different types of wild animals and all the different types of birds that fly in the sky. So he brought them all to the man to hear how he would name them. Whatever name the man gave to each kind of animal, that became the name for that kind of animal. <sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all the different kinds of livestock and to all the different kinds of birds that fly in the sky, and to all the different kinds of wild animals, but none of them was an appropriate companion to help him.

<sup>21</sup> So Yahweh God caused the man to sleep deeply. Then while the man was asleep, God took a rib **out of the man's body** and filled in the place where it had been with flesh **and healed it.** <sup>22</sup> Next Yahweh God made a woman from the rib which he had taken out of the man's body, and he took her to the man. <sup>23</sup> **When the man saw her,** he exclaimed,

“Finally! Here is someone **like me** who has bones and flesh from me! I will call her ‘woman,’ because **it was from the body of a man that God took her.**”

<sup>24</sup> Because of that, **when a man gets married,** he must leave **the home of his father and mother,** and he must unite with his wife, so that they become completely united.

<sup>25</sup> **During that time** the man and his wife did not wear any clothes, but **yet they were not ashamed about it.**

## *Adam and Eve Sin against Yahweh, and He Judges Them*

**3:1-24**

**3** <sup>1</sup> Now the snake was the craftiest of all the animals that Yahweh God had created. **One day** he asked the woman, “Did God really command you not to eat **fruit** from any of the trees in the garden?” <sup>2</sup> The woman answered him, “**No, God said that** we may eat fruit from **any of the trees** in the garden, <sup>3</sup> except fruit from the tree that is in the center of the garden. He commanded **us** not to eat that fruit or even touch it, because if we do, we will die!” <sup>4</sup> But the snake said to the woman, “**That is not true.** You will not die. <sup>5</sup> Actually, God knows that as soon as you eat **fruit** from that tree, you will understand new things, so that you will know **what is right and what is wrong** just like God does.” <sup>6</sup> The woman saw that the tree's **fruit looked good** to eat and that the tree **itself was very beautiful.** She also wanted **to eat** the fruit so that it would make her wise. So she picked some of the fruit **off the tree** and ate it. She also gave **some of the fruit** to her husband, **who was there with her,** and he ate **it too.** <sup>7</sup> Suddenly they both understood new things, and they realized that their

bodies were bare. So they sewed some fig tree leaves together and made clothes for themselves to cover their nakedness.

**8** Late that afternoon, during the cool time of the day, the man and his wife heard Yahweh God's voice as he walked in the garden, but they hid from him behind some trees in the garden. **9** So Yahweh God called out to the man, "Adam, where are you?" **10** The man replied, "I heard the sound of you walking in the garden, but I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid from you." **11** Then Yahweh God asked, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you disobey me and eat fruit from the tree from which I ordered you not to eat?" **12** The man replied, "The woman whom you put here to be with me, she is the one who gave me some of that fruit, so I ate it." **13** Then Yahweh God asked the woman, "What did you do?" The woman replied, "The snake tricked me, so I ate some of the fruit." **14** So Yahweh God said to the snake, "Because you did that,

I am cursing you more severely than all the livestock and all the animals in the fields!

As a result, you must crawl along the ground on your belly, and you will eat dust with your food for as long as you live.

Besides this, I will cause you and your descendants to be enemies with the woman and her descendants.

In fact, her descendant will crush your head, and you will bite his heel."

**16** Then God said to the woman, "I will greatly increase how much you suffer when you bear children, yes, you will suffer much pain when you give birth. But you will still desire to be with your husband, and he will dominate you."

**17** Then God said to Adam, "You did what your wife said and ate fruit from the tree that I commanded you not to eat any fruit from.

Because of what you did, I have cursed the ground.

As a result, for as long as you live,

you will have to work very hard and suffer to grow enough food to eat.

In fact, the ~~18~~ plants and thistle plants and other weeds will grow from the ground and make it difficult for you to grow enough crops in your fields for food.

You will ~~19~~ have to work hard and sweat a lot

in order to produce enough food to eat,

until you die and again become dirt,

which I created you from.

Yes, I created you out of dirt,

so dirt is what you will become again after you die.”

<sup>20</sup> Then Adam named his wife Eve, which means “living,” because she would be the mother of everyone who would ever live. <sup>21</sup> Then Yahweh God made some clothes out of animal skins for Adam and his wife, and he put the clothes on them.

<sup>22</sup> Then Yahweh God said to himself, “Look! The man and his wife have become like one of us, so that they know what is good and what is evil. So now we must do something so that they do not also pick and eat fruit from the tree that gives people eternal life, which will make them live forever!” <sup>23</sup> Then Yahweh God expelled the man and his wife from Eden Garden to work the ground which he had made them from. <sup>24</sup> After he expelled them, he stationed to the east side of the garden some powerful cherubim angels and a burning sword that was swinging around in all directions to keep everyone away from the path to the tree whose fruit makes people live forever.

## *Cain Kills Abel: The First Murder*

### 4:1-16

**4** <sup>1</sup> Then Adam had marital relations with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son they named Cain, which means “obtained.” They named him that because she said, “Yahweh has enabled me to obtain a son!” <sup>2</sup> Then Eve also gave birth to Cain’s brother whom they named Abel. When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, and Cain became a crop farmer. <sup>3</sup> As time went by, one day Cain gave some of the crops that he had grown in his fields to Yahweh as a gift to honor him. <sup>4</sup> Abel also gave a gift to Yahweh, but

what he gave was some of the firstborn animals from his flocks, including some of their best parts. Yahweh was pleased with Abel and his gift. <sup>5</sup> However, he was not pleased with Cain or his gift. So Cain became extremely angry, and he frowned. <sup>6</sup> Then Yahweh asked him, “Why are you so angry? And why are you frowning?” <sup>7</sup> If you do what is right, I will accept you and your offering. But if you do not do what is right, then sin is like a fierce animal that is waiting outside your door to attack you. It wants to control you, but you must control it so that you do not sin.”

<sup>8</sup> But after that, Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field to work together.” So they went out to the field, and while they were there, Cain attacked his brother and murdered him.

<sup>9</sup> Later Yahweh asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” Cain responded, “I do not know where he is. Is it my job to take care of my brother?” <sup>10</sup> Then Yahweh said to him, “You have done a terrible thing! I see your brother’s blood on the ground, and I must punish you for killing him!” <sup>11</sup> So from now on I am cursing you so that you will not be able to grow food from the ground, which is where your brother’s blood spilled out when you murdered him. <sup>12</sup> Whenever you try to farm the ground, it will no longer produce good crops for you. From now on, you will be an outcast who wanders around on the earth without a permanent home.”

<sup>13</sup> Cain replied to Yahweh, “You are punishing me more severely than I can endure. <sup>14</sup> Look, you have now banished me from farming the ground, and I will be far away from you. I will be a homeless fugitive on the earth, so that whoever sees me will kill me!” <sup>15</sup> Yahweh replied to him, “So then, I will warn everyone that I will take vengeance on whoever kills you and punish him seven times more severely than I am punishing you!” Then he put a mark on Cain to warn everyone who met him not to kill him. <sup>16</sup> Then Cain left

Yahweh's presence and lived in the region of Nod, which means "wandering," which was east of the region of Eden.

## *Cain's Descendants*

### 4:17-24

<sup>17</sup> Then Cain had marital relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son they named Enoch. At that time Cain was building a city, so he named the city after his son Enoch. <sup>18</sup> When Enoch grew up, he had a son named Irad. Then Irad had a son named Mehujael. Then Mehujael had a son named Methushael. Then Methushael had a son named Lamech.

<sup>19</sup> When Lamech grew up, he married two wives. His first wife's name was Adah, and his other wife's name was Zillah. <sup>20</sup> Adah gave birth to a son named Jabal. He grew up and became the first of all those who live in portable shelters and raise livestock for a living.

<sup>21</sup> His brother's name was Jubal. He became the first of all those who play harps and flutes.

<sup>22</sup> Lamech's other wife Zillah also gave birth to a son named Tubal Cain. He was the first of all those who make all kinds of tools and other things out of bronze and iron. Tubal Cain had a sister whose name was Naamah.

<sup>23</sup> One day, Lamech bragged to his two wives,  
"Adah and Zillah, listen to what I have to say.  
My wives, listen to this:  
I killed a young man for wounding me!  
In fact, I killed that man just because he bruised me.  
God will ~~avenge~~ <sup>24</sup>avenge Cain seven times,

but I, Lamech **avenge myself 77 times!**”

## *People Start to Worship God Using His Name Yahweh*

**4:25-26**

**25** Then Adam had **marital** relations with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son, and she named him Seth, **which means “given.”** She named him that because **when he was born, she had said,** “God has given me another child to replace Abel, whom Cain killed.”

**26** Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh.

During that time people began to worship **God** by using His name Yahweh.

## *The Descendants from Adam to Noah*

**5:1-32**

**1 Chronicles 1:1-4**

**5** **1** Here is the **family** record of Adam and his descendants: On the day when God created human beings, he made them to be like himself. **2** He **also** created them **to be** male and female, and on the **same** day that he created them, he blessed them and named them “human beings.”

**3** When Adam was 130 years old, he had **a son** who was like him in many ways, and he named him Seth. **4** After Seth’s birth, Adam lived **another** 800 years. He **also** had **other** sons as well as daughters. **5** So Adam lived a total of 930 years, and **then** he died.

**6** When Seth was 105 years old, he had **a son named** Enosh. **7** After Enosh’s birth, Seth lived **another** 807 years. He **also** had **other** sons as well as daughters. **8** So Seth lived a total of 912 years, and **then** he died.

<sup>9</sup> When Enosh was ninety years old, he had a son named Kenan. <sup>10</sup> After Kenan's birth, Enosh lived another 815 years. He also had other sons as well as daughters. <sup>11</sup> So Enosh lived a total of 905 years, and then he died.

<sup>12</sup> When Kenan was seventy years old, he had a son named Mahalalel. <sup>13</sup> After Mahalalel's birth, Kenan lived another 840 years. He also had other sons as well as daughters. <sup>14</sup> So Kenan lived a total of 910 years, and then he died.

<sup>15</sup> When Mahalalel was sixty-five years old, he had a son named Jared. <sup>16</sup> After Jared's birth, Mahalalel lived another 830 years. He also had other sons as well as daughters. <sup>17</sup> So Mahalalel lived a total of 895 years, and then he died.

<sup>18</sup> When Jared was 162 years old, he had a son named Enoch. <sup>19</sup> After Enoch's birth, Jared lived another 800 years. He also had other sons as well as daughters. <sup>20</sup> So Jared lived a total of 962 years, and then he died.

<sup>21</sup> When Enoch was sixty-five years old, he had a son named Methuselah. <sup>22</sup> After Methuselah's birth, Enoch lived in a close relationship with God for another 300 years. He also had other sons as well as daughters. <sup>23</sup> So Enoch lived a total of 365 years. <sup>24</sup> Then while he was still living in a close relationship with God, suddenly he was no longer on earth, because God had taken him away to be with him.

<sup>25</sup> When Methuselah was 187 years old, he had a son named Lamech. <sup>26</sup> After Lamech's birth, Methuselah lived another 782 years. He also had other sons as well as daughters. <sup>27</sup> So Methuselah lived a total of 969 years, and then he died.

<sup>28</sup> When Lamech was 182 years old, he had a son, <sup>29</sup> and he named him Noah which means "rest," because he said, "This son will give us rest from the difficult work that we have to do because Yahweh has cursed the ground." <sup>30</sup> After Noah's birth, Lamech lived another 595 years. He also had other sons as well as daughters. <sup>31</sup> So Lamech lived a total of 777 years, and then he died.

<sup>32</sup> After Noah was 500 years old, he had sons whose names were Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

## *God Destroys the World with a Flood*

6:1-9:29

### *People on the Earth Become More and More Evil*

6:1-8

**6** <sup>1</sup> Now it happened that people began to multiply **in number** all over the earth, and they were having daughters. <sup>2</sup> **When those girls grew up**, the sons of God saw that they were beautiful, so they chose any **of them** that they wanted and married them. <sup>3</sup> Then Yahweh said **to himself**, “My Spirit will not put up with human beings forever, because they **are** very corrupt. I will give them 120 years **to repent**.”

<sup>4</sup> **People called** the Nephilim lived on the earth during that time and also later on. **That happened** when the sons of God had relations with the daughters of human beings, and those women gave birth to children for them. Their children were **the Nephilim**, who were the famous mighty men who lived long ago.

<sup>5</sup> Yahweh saw that the people on the earth had become very evil, and that everything they thought about and desired **was** completely evil all the time. <sup>6</sup> As a result, he regretted that he had made them **to live** on the earth, and he felt very sad. <sup>7</sup> So he said **to himself**, “I will completely destroy from the earth **all** the people whom I created. **In fact**, I will destroy **not only** all the people, but also **all** the animals, including the creatures that crawl on the

ground and the birds that fly in the sky, because I regret that I ever made them.”<sup>8</sup> But Yahweh was pleased with Noah.

## *Noah Prepares for the Flood*

### **6:9-22**

<sup>9</sup> Here is more of the history about Noah and his descendants: Noah was a man who did what was right. Out of all the people living at that time, he was the only one whom God considered blameless, and he lived in a close relationship with God. <sup>10</sup> Eventually Noah had his three sons, whose names were Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

<sup>11</sup> Now the people on the earth had become wicked according to God’s standards, and all over the earth they were doing violent things. <sup>12</sup> God saw how wicked everyone on the earth had become, because all the people on the earth were continually behaving in evil ways. <sup>13</sup> So he said to Noah, “I am going to destroy all people, because all over the earth they are doing violent things. In fact, I am going to destroy them and everything else on the earth too. <sup>14</sup> Therefore you must build a very large boat for yourself and your family out of the best wood for building boats. Build rooms inside the boat, and seal it inside and outside with tar to keep water out. <sup>15</sup> You must make the boat like this: It must be 140 meters long, twenty-three meters wide, and fourteen meters high. <sup>16</sup> Make a half-meter high opening between the top of the walls of the ark and its roof all the way around, to let light and air in. Put a door in the side of the boat, and build three levels on the inside. <sup>17</sup> Listen carefully to me: I am going to bring a flood over the whole earth, which will destroy all the creatures under the sky that breathe air. As a result, every living thing that is on land will die! <sup>18</sup> But I will make a special agreement between me and you, so you must get on board the boat, and take your wife, your sons, and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>19</sup> You must also take into the boat two of every kind of animal, so that they stay alive with you. Each pair must include one male and one female. <sup>20</sup> Pairs of every kind of bird and every kind of animal, including every kind of creature that moves on the ground, will come to you so that you keep them alive in the boat. <sup>21</sup> You must also gather all the different kinds of food that people and animals eat and store it on the boat with you, so that there will be enough food for you and

your family and for all the animals.”<sup>22</sup> So, that is what Noah did; he did everything exactly as God had commanded him to do.

## *Yahweh Sends the Flood*

### 7:1-23

**7** <sup>1</sup> Then after they had finished building the boat, Yahweh commanded Noah, “You and your entire family must go into the boat, because I know that you are the only one among the people living today who is living rightly according to my standards. <sup>2</sup> Take with you seven male and female pairs of every kind of pure animal, and one male and female pair of every kind of impure animal. <sup>3</sup> Also take seven male and female pairs of every kind of bird that flies in the sky, so that later their offspring will live all over the earth. <sup>4</sup> You must do that, because seven days from today I will make it rain continuously all over the earth for forty days and nights. In that way, I will completely destroy from the earth every living creature that I have made.” <sup>5</sup> Then Noah did everything exactly as Yahweh had commanded him to do.

<sup>6</sup> Noah was 600 years old when the flood covered the earth. <sup>7</sup> That is when he and his wife, and his sons and their wives went together into the boat so that they would not die in the flood. <sup>8</sup> Also, every kind of pure animal and every kind of impure animal and every kind of bird, including every kind of creature that lives on land, <sup>9</sup> came in pairs to Noah and went into the boat. They were male and female pairs, which was exactly what God had commanded him to take along.

<sup>10</sup> So it happened that when the seven days that God had spoken about had passed, water started to flood the earth. <sup>11</sup> When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month of the year, on that very day all the springs in the deep ocean started pouring out water. God also caused the water in the sky to start pouring down, as if he had opened huge floodgates in the sky, <sup>12</sup> so that it rained continuously all over the earth for forty days and nights.

<sup>13</sup> So it was that on the same day that the flood started, Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, along with his wife and his sons’ three wives all entered the boat. <sup>14</sup> They had

with them every kind of living creature, including every kind of livestock and every **other** kind of creature that lives on the land, and every kind of bird **and** everything **else** that flies.

**15** Pairs of every **kind of living thing** that breathes **air** came to Noah **and went** into the boat.

**16** The animals that went into **the boat were** male and female **pairs** from every **kind of living thing**, which was exactly what God had commanded Noah **to take along**. Then **after they were all inside**, Yahweh closed the door **of the boat** behind them.

**17** For forty days **and forty nights** the flood kept getting deeper and deeper **all over the earth**, and as the water rose, it lifted up the boat so that it floated **on the water** above the ground. **18** So the floodwaters continued to rise and get much deeper **all over the earth**, while the boat floated **safely** on the water. **19** Eventually the water became so deep on the earth that **even** all the highest mountains everywhere under the sky were under water. **20** **In fact**, the water rose **at least** seven meters above **the tops of the highest mountains**, so that they were **completely** under water. **21** Then all the creatures that lived on land died. **That included** **all** the birds, the livestock, and the **other** living creatures, including every **kind of creature** that lived in large groups on the earth, as well as all the people. **22** Every living creature that breathed air and **lived** on dry land died. **23** That is how Yahweh completely destroyed all the living creatures that **were** on the earth, including **all** people and livestock and **all the other** creatures that lived **on the land** and also the birds **that flew** in the sky. Yes, he completely destroyed everything **that lived** on the earth, so that the only ones who were still alive were Noah and his family and the animals that were with them in the boat.

## *God Causes the Flood to Go Away*

### **7:24-8:19**

**24** Deep water continued to cover the **entire world for** 150 days.

**8** **1** But God never forgot Noah **and his family** and all the animals, both wild and tame, that were with them in the boat. So he caused a wind to blow over **the water that was covering** the earth, so that the water **started to go down**. **2** He also caused the springs in the deep ocean to stop **gushing out water**, and he caused the water to stop pouring from the sky, so that it stopped raining. **3** Then the water steadily went down from **the surface of the land**.

After the 150 days **had passed**, the water had gone down <sup>4</sup> so **much** that on the seventeenth day of the seventh month **of the year**, the boat came to rest on **one of** the mountains in the Ararat **mountain range**. <sup>5</sup> The floodwaters continued to go down until on the first **day** of the tenth month **of the year**, the peaks of the **surrounding** mountains became visible **above the water**.

<sup>6</sup> After forty **more days had passed**, Noah opened a window in the boat that he had made, <sup>7</sup> and he released a raven, which kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up **more** from the land. <sup>8</sup> Meanwhile Noah **also** released a dove from the boat to find out if the water had gone down from the land. <sup>9</sup> But water was **still** covering the entire earth, so the dove did not find anywhere to land and rest. Then it returned to Noah in the boat, and Noah reached out, caught it, and brought it **back** into the boat. <sup>10</sup> Noah waited seven more days, then he released the dove from the boat again. <sup>11</sup> That evening the dove returned to him, and he saw that **it had** a fresh green olive **tree** leaf in its beak! That is how Noah realized that the water had gone down **further** from the land. <sup>12</sup> Then he waited seven more days and he released the dove **again**, but **this time** it did not come back to him again.

<sup>13</sup> So it was, when Noah was 601 years old, on the first **day** of the first month **of the year**, the water had **almost** dried up from the land. So Noah took off **part of** the roof of the boat and looked **around**, and he saw that **much of** the land's surface was **almost** dry. <sup>14</sup> Then by the twenty-seventh day of the second month **of the year**, the land had dried off.

<sup>15</sup> Then God commanded Noah, <sup>16</sup> "Come out of the boat, together with your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives. <sup>17</sup> Bring out all the animals that **are** with you, all of them, including the birds, tame animals, and every **other** animal that moves on land. Then they can live all over the earth; **yes**, they will have many young and increase **in number** **all** over the earth." <sup>18</sup> So Noah came out **of the boat**, along with his wife and his sons and their

wives. <sup>19</sup> All the animals, **including** all the animals that crawl and all the birds **and** everything **else** that lives on land, **also** came out of the boat in groups of their own kind.

## *Yahweh Makes a Covenant with Mankind and All Other Living Things*

**8:20-9:17**

<sup>20</sup> Then Noah made an altar **out of large stones to offer sacrifices** to Yahweh. Next he chose **some** of every **kind of** animal and bird that is acceptable to sacrifice, and he **killed** them and **burned their bodies** on the altar as an offering to Yahweh to worship him.

<sup>21</sup> Yahweh smelled the aroma **of the offerings** and was pleased, and he thought to himself, “Never again will I curse the ground because of mankind’s sins, **even** though everything they desire and think about **is** evil from the time they are children. And never again will I destroy all living **creatures** the way I **just** did.

As long as <sup>22</sup>the earth **still** exists,  
each year there will always be a season to plant seeds and a season to harvest **crops**,  
as well as cold weather and hot weather,  
summer and winter,  
and day and night.”

**9** <sup>1</sup> Then God caused Noah and his sons to prosper by saying to them, “Have many children so that you **and your descendants** will become numerous and live all over the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Every living creature on the earth will be afraid and terrified of you, including every bird **that flies** in the sky, **along** with every creature that moves on land, and all the fish in the

ocean. I have put them **all** under your authority. <sup>3</sup> **From now on** every creature that is alive and moves is yours **to eat** as food. In the same way that **I provided you** green plants **for food**, **now** I provide you everything **for food**. <sup>4</sup> However, you must never eat meat that still has its

blood **in** it, which made it live. <sup>5</sup> Also, I definitely require that anyone who murders someone must die. **In fact**, if any animal **kills a human being**, I require that it must die. **That is also true** for human beings: If anyone **murders** another person, I require that he must die.

**That’s right**, you must put to death

anyone who murders a human being,  
because God made human beings  
to be like himself.

<sup>7</sup> Now **as for you**, have many children so that you **and your descendants** will become numerous. Spread out all over the earth and become numerous everywhere.”

<sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and his sons, <sup>9</sup> “Listen **carefully** to me: I am making my agreement with you and your descendants. <sup>10</sup> It is also with all the living creatures that **are** with you, including the birds, the livestock, and all the **other** living creatures on the earth that **are** with you. **That includes** all **those** that came out of the ark and all the living creatures that **will ever live** on the earth. <sup>11</sup> My agreement that I am making with you is that never again will all living things die from a flood. I will not use a flood ever again to destroy **everything on the earth.**”

<sup>12</sup> Then God continued, “This **is** how I will show **everyone** that I have made this agreement with you and with all the living creatures that **are** with you, as well as with all the people and animals that will ever live: <sup>13</sup> I will put my rainbow among the clouds **in the sky** to remind **everyone** that I have made this agreement with **every creature that lives on the earth.** <sup>14</sup> So whenever I cause clouds to form **in the sky** above the earth and a rainbow appears in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> then I will not forget **to keep** my agreement that I have established with you and with all living creatures of every kind. **I promise** that I will never again use a flood to destroy all living creatures. <sup>16</sup> Yes, whenever a rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and keep **my** permanent agreement which I have established with all people and all animals that **live** on the earth.”

<sup>17</sup> Then God **concluded** by saying to Noah, “A rainbow is what I will use to remind everyone that I have made this agreement with all the people and animals that live on the earth.”

## *Noah and His Three Sons After the Flood*

### 9:18-29

<sup>18</sup> Noah’s sons who came out of the boat **after the flood** were Shem, Ham, and Japheth; it was Ham who **was** Canaan’s father. <sup>19</sup> It was the descendants of Noah’s three sons who populated the entire earth **again**.

<sup>20</sup> After a while, Noah, who was a farmer, planted **some** grape vines **and made wine from the grapes**. <sup>21</sup> Then **one day** he drank **too much of** the wine, so that he became drunk and was **lying** naked inside his tent. <sup>22</sup> Ham, **who was** Canaan’s father, saw that his father was naked, and he went outside and told his two brothers **about it**. <sup>23</sup> However, Shem and Japheth took a robe, and held it **between them** at shoulder level and walked backward **into the tent** and covered their father’s naked body **with it**. **As they did that**, they kept their faces turned away **from him** so that they would not see him naked.

<sup>24</sup> Later Noah woke up from being drunk, and he found out that his youngest son **Ham** had dishonored him. <sup>25</sup> So he exclaimed **about him**,

“I **ask God** to curse **Ham’s son** Canaan!  
Canaan will be the lowest servant for his relatives.”

<sup>26</sup> Then Noah said,

“Praise Yahweh, **who is** the God **who takes care of** Shem!  
May God cause Canaan to be Shem’s servant.  
I **also ask God** to give Japheth much **land**  
and enable him to live together **in peace** with Shem.  
May God **also** cause Canaan to be Japheth’s servant.”

<sup>28</sup> From the time that the flood began, Noah lived another 350 years, <sup>29</sup> so that he lived a total of 950 years before he died.

## *The Descendants of Noah's Sons*

10:1-32

1 Chronicles 1:4-23

10 <sup>1</sup> This is the record of the names of Noah's sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and the descendants they had after the flood was over.

### *Japheth's Descendants*

<sup>2</sup> Japheth's sons were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

<sup>3</sup> Gomer's sons were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.

<sup>4</sup> Javan's sons were Elishah and Tarshish, and he was the ancestor of the Kittites and the Dodanites.

<sup>5</sup> From Japheth's descendants came the people groups who lived in regions near the sea. They moved to different places and settled in their own territories, and each group spoke its own language. They each had their own families, which grew and became their own people groups.

### *Ham's Descendants*

<sup>6</sup> Ham's sons were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

<sup>7</sup> Cush's sons were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtecah. And Raamah's sons were Sheba and Dedan. <sup>8</sup> Cush also had a son named Nimrod, who was the first person on

earth to be a powerful ruler.<sup>9</sup> He was also a great hunter whom Yahweh blessed. That is why people say about other great men, “That man is like Nimrod, a great hunter whom Yahweh blessed.”<sup>10</sup> Nimrod started ruling as king over the cities of Babel, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh, which were all located in the region of Shinar.<sup>11</sup> From the land of Shinar he went to the region of Assyria, where he built the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah,<sup>12</sup> and Resen, which is located between the cities of Nineveh and the great city of Calah.

<sup>13</sup> Mizraim was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites,  
<sup>14</sup> Pathrusites, Casluhites, and Caphtorites. The Philistines descended from the Casluhites.

<sup>15</sup> Canaan had Sidon who was his firstborn son. He was also the ancestor of the Hittites,  
<sup>16</sup> Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites,<sup>17</sup> Hivites, Arkites, Sinites,<sup>18</sup> Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites. Later, those families that descended from Canaan spread out,<sup>19</sup> so that the territory where they lived reached from the city of Sidon in the north, all the way south toward the city of Gerar to the city of Gaza, then as far east as the cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, all the way to the city of Lasha.

<sup>20</sup> Those people were Ham’s descendants and each one had his own family. Each family grew and became its own people group that spoke its own language and lived in its own territory.

## *Shem’s Descendants*

<sup>21</sup> Shem also had some sons. He was the ancestor of all the descendants of Eber, and his older brother was Japheth.<sup>22</sup> Shem’s sons were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram.

<sup>23</sup> Aram’s sons were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

<sup>24</sup> Arpachshad had a son named Shelah, then Shelah had a son named Eber.<sup>25</sup> Then Eber had two sons. The name of the first one was Peleg, which means “division,” because during his lifetime the people on the earth divided into separate groups and spread out everywhere. Peleg’s younger brother’s name was Joktan.<sup>26</sup> Joktan had sons named Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,<sup>27</sup> Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,<sup>28</sup> Obal, Abimael, Sheba,<sup>29</sup> Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. Those were all Joktan’s sons.<sup>30</sup> The region where

they and their descendants lived reached from the city of Mesha in the west all the way to the city of Sephar, which is in the hill country in the east.

<sup>31</sup> Those people are Shem's descendants and each one had his own family. Each family grew and became its own people group that spoke its own language and lived in its own territory.

<sup>32</sup> All those family groups descended from Noah's sons. Each family group had its own descendants and became its own people group. In fact, after the flood all the people groups on the earth descended from them and spread out everywhere.

## *The Tower of Babel*

### 11:1-9

**11** <sup>1</sup> Now at first, all the people on the earth spoke the same language, so that everyone understood each other. <sup>2</sup> As time passed, they moved from the eastern regions and eventually came to a wide, flat valley in the region of Shinar and stayed there. <sup>3</sup> Then they urged each other, "Come on, let us work together and make bricks from clay and put them in fire to make them hard." They used bricks to build with instead of stone, and they used tar between the bricks instead of mortar. <sup>4</sup> Then they urged each other, "Come on, we should work together and build a city for us to live in that has a very tall building that reaches high into the sky. That way we will become famous, and we will not separate from each other and live all over the earth."

<sup>5</sup> But one day Yahweh came down from heaven and looked at the city and the very tall building that the people were building. <sup>6</sup> Then he said, "Look, they are one people group, and they all speak the same language. This is only the beginning of what they can do together. Soon they will be able to do anything they plan to do. <sup>7</sup> So we must go down there now and mix up their language so that they are not able to understand what they say to each other." <sup>8</sup> In that way, Yahweh caused the people to leave from there and live in different places all over the world, so that they had to stop building the city and the tall building. <sup>9</sup> That is why the name of the city is Babel, which means "mixed up," because that

is where Yahweh mixed up the language that everyone on the earth shared, and **in that way** he made them spread out from there all over the earth.

## *The History about Abraham 11:10-25:18*

### *Shem's Descendants down to Abram*

11:10-26

#### 1 Chronicles 1:24-27

**10** This is the record of Shem's descendants:

Two years after the flood **began**, when Shem was 100 years old, he had a son named Arpachshad. **11** After Arpachshad was born, Shem lived **another** 500 years. He **also** had **other** sons, as well as daughters.

**12** When Arpachshad was thirty-five years old, he had a son named Shelah. **13** After Shelah was born, Arpachshad lived **another** 403 years. He **also** had **other** sons, as well as daughters.

**14** When Shelah was thirty years old, he had a son named Eber. **15** After Eber was born, Shelah lived **another** 403 years. He **also** had **other** sons, as well as daughters.

**16** When Eber was thirty-four years old, he had a son named Peleg. **17** After Peleg was born, Eber lived **another** 430 years. He **also** had **other** sons, as well as daughters.

**18** When Peleg was thirty years old, he had a son named Reu. **19** After Reu was born, Peleg lived **another** 209 years. He **also** had **other** sons, as well as daughters.

**20** When Reu was thirty-two years old, he had a son named Serug. **21** After Serug was born, Reu lived **another** 207 years. He **also** had **other** sons, as well as daughters.

**22** When Serug was thirty years old, he had a son named Nahor. **23** After Nahor was born, Serug lived **another** 200 years. He **also** had **other** sons, as well as daughters.

<sup>24</sup> When Nahor was twenty-nine years old, he had a son named Terah. <sup>25</sup> After Terah was born, Nahor lived another 119 years. He also had other sons, as well as daughters.

<sup>26</sup> After Terah was seventy years old, he had sons whose names were Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

## *Terah's Children, including Abram*

### 11:27-32

<sup>27</sup> Here is the history about Terah and his descendants: Terah's sons were Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran had a son whose name was Lot. <sup>28</sup> While his father was still alive, Haran died in the land where he was born, in the city of Ur where the Chaldean people lived. <sup>29</sup> Meanwhile Abram and Nahor each married a wife. Abram's wife was named Sarai, and Nahor's wife was Milcah. Milcah and her sister Iscah were the daughters of Nahor's brother Haran. <sup>30</sup> But Sarai was not able to become pregnant, so she did not have any children.

<sup>31</sup> Then one day, Terah gathered his son Abram and his grandson Lot, who was Haran's son, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, who was Abram's wife, and they all left from the city of Ur where the Chaldean people lived to travel to the region of Canaan. But when they arrived at the city of Haran, they decided to live there instead. <sup>32</sup> Then many years later, when Terah was 205 years old, he died there in the city of Haran.

## *God Tells Abram to Move to Canaan*

### 12:1-9

**12** <sup>1</sup> One day Yahweh commanded Abram, "You must move away from your homeland and your relatives, including your father's family, and move to the land that I will guide you to.

I will make you and your descendants become an important people group,

and I will cause you **all** to prosper.

I will make you well-known,

and you **and your descendants** will bless **many people**.

I will bless **3** everyone who blesses you,

but I will curse anyone who curses you.

I will bless all the people on the earth through you.”

So Abram<sup>4</sup> left the city of Haran exactly as Yahweh had commanded him to do, and his nephew Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left from there.

<sup>5</sup> He took with him his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot and everything that they owned, including servants and everything else they had acquired in the city of Haran, and they all started traveling to the region of Canaan. When they arrived there, <sup>6</sup> they traveled through that region as far as the city of Shechem, to Moreh’s oak tree. At that time the Canaanites were still living in that land, <sup>7</sup> but Yahweh came to Abram and said to him, “I will give this land to your descendants.” So Abram built an altar out of large stones in that place and burned sacrifices on it to worship Yahweh, because Yahweh had appeared to him there.

<sup>8</sup> From the city of Shechem, Abram and his family moved south to the hill country that was east of the town of Bethel. They set up their tents between Bethel to the west and the town of Ai to the east. There Abram built another altar and burned sacrifices on it to worship Yahweh, and he addressed Yahweh by his name as he worshiped him. <sup>9</sup> Then Abram and his family moved from place to place southward until they reached the Negev Desert.

## *Abram and Sarai Go to the Country of Egypt to Escape a Famine*

### **12:10-20**

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a serious food shortage in that region. It was so severe that Abram and his family left there and went down to the country of Egypt to live for a while. <sup>11</sup> Just before they arrived in Egypt, Abram said to his wife Sarai, “Please listen to me: you are a very beautiful woman. <sup>12</sup> When the people in Egypt see you with me, they will say that you are my wife. Then they will kill me and let you live so that they can take you. <sup>13</sup> So please

tell people **that you are my sister** so that they will treat me well because of you and let me live.”

**14** That is **exactly** what happened: When Abram **and his family** arrived in **the country of Egypt**, the people there noticed that Sarai was **truly** very beautiful. **15** When some officers under Pharaoh **the king of Egypt** noticed her, they highly recommended her to him. So he had them bring her to his palace **to be one of his wives**. **16** The king thought that Abram was Sarai’s brother, so he treated him well. He gave him many sheep and cattle, as well as men and women servants, male and female donkeys, and camels.

**17** But since **King Pharaoh** had taken Abram’s wife Sarai, Yahweh afflicted the king and his family **with** severe illnesses. **18** So the king summoned Abram **before him** and said **to him**, “You have treated me very badly! You should have told me that Sarai **is your wife!** **19** You should not have said that she **is your sister**, so that I ended up taking her to be my wife! So now, here is your wife. Take **her** and leave **my country!**” **20** Then **King Pharaoh** ordered **some of his soldiers** to make sure that Abram left, so they forced him to leave **the country**, along with his wife and everything that he owned.

## *Abram and Lot Go Separate Ways*

13:1-13

**13** **1** So Abram left **the country of Egypt** and traveled back to the Negev Desert. He took with him his wife and everything that they owned, and also **his nephew Lot**. **2** By that time Abram **had become** very rich, so that he owned **many** livestock and **much** silver and gold. **3** From the Negev Desert he **and his family** traveled from place to place **northward** until they came to **the town of Bethel**, to the place where he had lived in tents before, between **the towns of Bethel and Ai**. **4** That was the **same** place where he had previously built an altar. There **again** he **sacrificed animals on the altar** and worshiped Yahweh by name.

**5** Lot was traveling with **his uncle Abram**, and he **and his family** also owned many sheep and cattle, as well as **many tents**. **6** In fact, there was not enough land to have enough food and water for both families **and their animals** if they lived in the same area. They each owned so many servants and animals that it was not possible for them to **all** live near each

other.<sup>7</sup> As a result, the men who took care of Abram's livestock and the men who took care of Lot's livestock started to argue with each other. Besides that, the Canaanites and the Perizzites were **also** living in that land at that time.

<sup>8</sup> Finally **one day** Abram said to Lot, "Please, since we **are** close relatives, we need to do something so that you and I and our herdsmen will not argue."<sup>9</sup> Look, the entire land is available to you **to choose from**. Please **choose where you want to live**, and let's live in separate places. If **you choose the land to the left of here**, then I will take **the land to the right**. Or if **you choose the land to the right of here**, then I will take **the land to the left**."

<sup>10</sup> Lot looked **all around** and he noticed that the entire **Jordan River Valley**, all the way to **the town of Zoar**, had plenty of water. It was **lush and green** like the garden that Yahweh had planted or like the country of Egypt. **That is what it was like before Yahweh destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, which were also in that valley**.<sup>11</sup> So Lot chose the entire **Jordan River Valley** for himself. Then he **left Abram and moved to the east to live there**. After that, Abram and Lot lived in separate places.<sup>12</sup> Abram stayed **where he was** in the region of Canaan, while Lot lived **in another part of the region** among the cities in the **Jordan River valley** and **eventually moved his tents to the city of Sodom and stayed there**.

<sup>13</sup> But the people **who lived in the city of Sodom** were extremely wicked and were **always sinning against Yahweh**.

## *God Promises to Give Abram the Land of Canaan and Many Descendants*

### 13:14-18

<sup>14</sup> After Lot had left Abram, Yahweh said to Abram, "Look **all around you** from the place where you **live**. Look north, south, east, and west."<sup>15</sup> All the land that you see I will give to you and your descendants **to own** forever.<sup>16</sup> In fact, I will give you so many descendants that they will be as **numerous as the specks of dust on the earth**. No one will be able to count how many descendants you have, just as no one can count how many **specks of dust** there are.<sup>17</sup> So **now, start walking through the land in all directions**. Go throughout the entire land **and look it over**, because I am giving it **all to you**."<sup>18</sup> Then Abram **obeyed Yahweh and moved his tents and settled near the oak trees on the land owned by a man**

named Mamre, near the city of Hebron. There he built an altar out of stones and burned sacrifices on it to thank and worship Yahweh.

## *Abram Rescues Lot from Four Kings*

14:1-16

**14** <sup>1</sup> During that time Amraphel was the king over the land of Shinar, Arioch was the king over Ellasar, Chedorlaomer was the king over the land of Elam, and Tidal was the king over the Goiim people. <sup>2</sup> Those four kings joined forces and went to war against five other kings, including Bera who was the king over the city of Sodom, Birsha who was the king over the city of Gomorrah, Shinab who was the king over the city of Admah, Shemeber who was the king over the city of Zeboyim, and the king over the town of Bela, which is also called Zoar. <sup>3</sup> Those five kings all united their armies as allies and fought against the four kings in the Siddim Valley, where the Salt Sea is now.

<sup>4</sup> For twelve years the five kings had paid tribute to King Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they started to rebel against him. <sup>5</sup> Then during the fourteenth year King Chedorlaomer and the three kings who were his allies united their armies and went to war against all their enemies. First they defeated the Raphaites in the city of Ashteroth-Karnaim, then the Zuzites in the city of Ham, the Emites in the city of Shaveh-Kiriathaim, <sup>6</sup> and the Horites who lived in the Seir Mountains all the way to the city of El Paran, which is located near the desert. <sup>7</sup> Next those four kings and their armies turned around and went to the city of En Mishpat, which is also called Kadesh. They conquered the entire territory where the Amalekites lived, as well as the Amorites, who lived in the city of Hazon Tamar.

<sup>8</sup> Then the king over the city of Sodom, the king over the city of Gomorrah, the king over the city of Admah, the king over the city of Zeboiim, and the king over the town of Bela, which is also called Zoar, marched out with their armies into the Siddim Valley and got ready to fight <sup>9</sup> against Chedorlaomer who was the king over the land of Elam, Tidal who was the king over the Goiim, Amraphel who was the king over the land of Shinar, and Arioch who was the king over the kingdom of Ellasar. Then the four kings attacked the five kings and started defeating them.

<sup>10</sup> Now there were many tar pits in the Siddim Valley. As the kings over the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and their soldiers were running away from the battle, some of their soldiers died there in the tar pits. Those who escaped ran away to the mountains to hide.

<sup>11</sup> Then the four kings seized all the people's belongings in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, including all their food, and carried it away. <sup>12</sup> They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his belongings, since he was living in the city of Sodom.

<sup>13</sup> But someone from Sodom escaped from the battle and went to Abram the Hebrew and reported to him what had happened. At that time Abram was still living near the oak trees that were owned by Mamre the Amorite, who was the brother of Eshcol and Aner. Those three men had made a pact with Abram to be his allies. <sup>14</sup> When Abram heard that the four kings had captured his nephew Lot, he called together 318 of his servants who had been born in his household and were skilled warriors. Then together with his allies they chased after the four kings and their armies all the way to the town of Dan. <sup>15</sup> There during the night Abram and his men divided into groups, surprise attacked the four kings and their soldiers, and defeated them. Then they chased them as far as the town of Hobah, which is located north of the city of Damascus. <sup>16</sup> As a result, Abram recovered all the people's belongings that the four kings had taken. He also rescued his nephew Lot and his belongings, as well as the women and all the other people whom the kings had captured.

## *Melchizedek Blesses Abram*

### **14:17-24**

<sup>17</sup> After Abram defeated King Chedorlaomer and the other three kings who were Chedorlaomer's allies, he started to return home. When he reached the Shaveh Valley, which is also called the King's Valley, the king over the city of Sodom came there and welcomed him. <sup>18</sup> Melchizedek who was the king over the city of Salem also came there, and he brought food and wine for Abram and his men to eat and drink. King Melchizedek was also a priest who served the God who is greater than all other gods. <sup>19</sup> So he blessed Abram by saying to him,

“May the greatest God, who owns heaven and earth, bless you.

Praise the greatest God,

because he enabled you to defeat your enemies!”

Then Abram gave King Melchizedek ten percent of everything that he had recovered in the battle.<sup>21</sup> After that, the king over the city of Sodom said to Abram, “Please return to me the people whom you rescued, but keep for yourself their belongings that you recovered.”<sup>22</sup> But Abram replied to him, “I raise my hand and swear to Yahweh, who is the greatest God and the One who owns heaven and earth,<sup>23</sup> that I will not accept anything that is yours or your people’s, not even a piece of string or the strap from a sandal. That way you can never say that you were the one who made me rich.<sup>24</sup> So I will only keep what my warriors ate and the part of the plunder that Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre deserve for being my allies. Please let them have their part of the plunder.”

## *God Makes a Covenant with Abram*

15:1-21

15<sup>1</sup> After that, Yahweh said to Abram in a vision,

“Abram, do not be afraid.

I will protect you,

and I will give you a very great reward.”<sup>2</sup> But Abram said to him, “Yahweh my Master, even if you reward me greatly, that will not benefit me, since I still have no children. So when I die, the one who will inherit all that I have is my servant Eliezer who is a foreigner from the city of Damascus.”<sup>3</sup> Then Abram continued, “That’s right, you have not given me any children, so that now when I die, one of my household servants will inherit everything I own!”<sup>4</sup> But immediately Yahweh said to Abram, “No, your servant Eliezer will not inherit your property, rather it will be your very own biological son who will inherit it.”<sup>5</sup> Then Yahweh took Abram outside his tent and said to him, “Look up at the night sky and count how many stars there are, if in fact you are able to count them all.” While Abram was looking at the stars, Yahweh said to him, “That is how many descendants you will have.”

<sup>6</sup> Abram trusted Yahweh, and because of that, Yahweh considered him to be righteous.  
<sup>7</sup> Then Yahweh said to him, “I am Yahweh who brought you here from the city of Ur that the Chaldeans rule, to give this land to you to own.”<sup>8</sup> But Abram asked him, “Yahweh my Master, how can I be sure that this land will be mine?”<sup>9</sup> Yahweh replied, “Bring me a

heifer, a female goat and a male sheep, each of which is three years old, as well as a dove and a young pigeon.” <sup>10</sup> So the next day Abram brought all those animals to Yahweh and killed them. Then he cut the animals’ bodies in half lengthwise and placed each half a short space across from the other half in two rows, except for the birds, which he did not cut in half. <sup>11</sup> Then some vultures flew down and landed on the animal bodies to eat them, but Abram chased them away.

<sup>12</sup> Later, as the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and suddenly, it became completely dark, and he became terrified. <sup>13</sup> Then Yahweh said to him, “I want you to know that your descendants will live as foreigners in a country that is not their own. They will serve the people of that country as slaves, and those people will treat them cruelly for 400 years. <sup>14</sup> But I will punish those people whom they serve. After that, your descendants will leave that country and take many riches with them. <sup>15</sup> As for you, after you have lived a good long life, you will die peacefully and join your ancestors who have died before you. <sup>16</sup> Then four generations later, your descendants will return here to live, because that is when the Amorites will have sinned as much as I will allow before I take away their land and give it to your descendants.”

<sup>17</sup> When the sun had set, it became very dark. Then suddenly a clay pot appeared that was full of burning coals and had smoke coming from it, and also a blazing torch, and they both went between the animal halves. <sup>18</sup> At that time Yahweh made a special agreement with Abram and said, “I am giving your descendants this land, which extends from Egypt’s river in the south to the great Euphrates River in the north. <sup>19</sup> That includes the land which belongs to the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup> the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, <sup>21</sup> the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

## *Abram and Sarai’s Servant Hagar Have a Son Named Ishmael*

**16:1-16**

**16** <sup>1</sup> Now Abram’s wife Sarai had still not given birth to any children for him, but she owned an Egyptian servant woman whose name was Hagar. <sup>2</sup> So she told Abram, “Please

listen to this: As you know, Yahweh has not allowed me to have any children, so please have marital relations with my servant woman Hagar so that maybe I can have a family through her children.” Abram agreed to do what Sarai requested.<sup>3</sup> So Abram’s wife Sarai gave her Egyptian servant Hagar to her husband Abram to be his second wife. This happened after Abram and Sarai had lived in the region of Canaan for ten years.

<sup>4</sup> Then Abram had marital relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when she realized that she was pregnant, she started to disrespect her mistress Sarai.<sup>5</sup> So Sarai complained to Abram, “It is your fault that I am suffering! I gave my servant to you to sleep with, but now that she realizes that she is pregnant, she disrespects me! I ask Yahweh to judge whether it is you or I who is responsible for this!”<sup>6</sup> Abram replied to her, “Listen, you are in charge of your servant. Do with her whatever you think is best.” Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she ran away from home to get away from her.

<sup>7</sup> Then one of Yahweh’s angels came to Hagar by a spring of water in the desert. It was the spring by the road to the city of Shur.<sup>8</sup> And the angel asked her, “Hagar, who serves Sarai, where are you coming from, and where are you headed?” She answered him, “I am running away from my mistress, Sarai.”<sup>9</sup> But Yahweh’s angel told her, “Go back home to your mistress and humbly obey her as her servant.”

<sup>10</sup> Then the angel added, “I Yahweh will give you so many descendants that no one will be able to count them all, because there will be so many of them.”

<sup>11</sup> Then the angel also told her,  
“Listen, as you know, you are pregnant.  
You will have a son,  
and you are to name him Ishmael, which means ‘God listens,’  
because Yahweh listened to you when you were suffering and has helped you.  
When Ishmael grows up, he will be proud and free like a wild donkey.  
He will fight against everyone,  
and everyone will fight against him.  
In fact, he will even be hostile  
toward all his relatives.”

<sup>13</sup> After Yahweh spoke to Hagar, she called him El Roi, which means “the God who sees.” She named him that, because she had exclaimed to herself, “I just now saw the back of

God who sees me!” <sup>14</sup> That is why the name of that well is Beer Lahai Roi, which means “Well of the Living One, who sees me.” It is still there between the cities of Kadesh and Bered.

<sup>15</sup> Then Hagar returned home and gave birth to a son for Abram, and Abram named his son Ishmael. <sup>16</sup> Abram was 86 years old when Hagar had Ishmael for him.

## *More Details about God’s Agreement with Abram, including Circumcision*

17:1-27

**17** <sup>1</sup> Years later, when Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh came to him and told him, “I am God who is all-powerful. Live in a way that pleases me so that you will be blameless. <sup>2</sup> I will establish my agreement with you, and I will increase the number of your descendants so that they are very numerous.”

<sup>3</sup> When Abram heard that, he bowed with his face to the ground before God to show respect, and God continued speaking to him, <sup>4</sup> “Listen, this is what I will do to fulfill my agreement with you: I will make you a community of peoples. <sup>5</sup> So your name will no longer be Abram. Rather, from now on it will be Abraham, because you will be the ancestor of many people groups. <sup>6</sup> Yes, I will give you many, many descendants, so that you will become the ancestor of many people groups. In fact, some of your descendants will be kings. <sup>7</sup> I will establish my agreement with you and all your descendants who live after you for all generations to come. It will be an agreement that never ends, that I will be your God and the God of all your descendants. <sup>8</sup> I will also give to you and your descendants this land where you have been living as a foreigner, yes, the entire region of Canaan. They will own it forever, and I will be their God.”

<sup>9</sup> Then God continued, “Now as for your part in this agreement, you must obey me. That applies to you as well as all your descendants for all generations to come. <sup>10</sup> This is what I require in my agreement with you and your descendants, which you all must obey: You must circumcise all males who live among you. <sup>11</sup> Yes, you must circumcise the foreskins of all the males among you, and that custom will remind you all that I made this

agreement with you. <sup>12</sup> For all **future** generations you must circumcise **every** baby boy who is eight days old, **as well as** all **other** males among your people. **That includes** males from your own family as well as those who **are** not your descendants but **are servants whom** you bought from foreigners. <sup>13</sup> **Yes**, you must definitely circumcise **all of** them, **regardless of whether** they are sons from your own family or servants whom you have bought. That is how you must mark my agreement on your bodies to show that it is an agreement that never ends. <sup>14</sup> In fact, if any man refuses to let you circumcise him, you must **send him away and** not allow him to associate with my people, **because** he has disobeyed **what I require** in my agreement.”

<sup>15</sup> God also told Abraham, “**As for** your wife Sarai, do not call her Sarai **anymore**. Rather, **from now on** her name will be Sarah. <sup>16</sup> I will bless her, and I will definitely enable her to bear a son for you. In fact, I will bless her so that she will **have many descendants that will become many** people groups, and some of her descendants will **even** be kings **who rule** over people groups.”

<sup>17</sup> **When Abraham heard that**, he bowed with his face to the ground **before God to respect him**, but he laughed **silently** and thought to himself, “How can a hundred-year-old man **like me** father a child? And how can Sarah, who is ninety years old, **still** have a baby?”

<sup>18</sup> So Abraham said to God, “Please let Ishmael be the one whom you bless **as my heir!**”

<sup>19</sup> God replied, “**Yes**, but **it is** your wife Sarah **who** will give birth to a son for you. You must name him Isaac. **He is the one** I will establish my agreement with, as a permanent agreement **that I will also keep** with **all** his descendants **who live** after him.

<sup>20</sup> I also heard what you asked me to do for Ishmael. **So** this is what I will do: I will **also** bless him, and I will give him many children and greatly increase **the number of** his descendants. **In fact**, he will be the father of twelve **sons who become powerful** leaders, and I will make him **the ancestor of** a large people group. <sup>21</sup> But I will establish my agreement with **your son** Isaac. Sarah will give birth to him at this time next year.” <sup>22</sup> After he had finished talking to Abraham, God left him and ascended **to heaven**.

<sup>23</sup> Then Abraham gathered his son Ishmael and all the **other** males who were born in his household and all **his male servants** whom he had bought, **yes**, every male in his household. Then on that same day he circumcised them, exactly as God had commanded him **to do**. <sup>24</sup> Abraham was 99 years old when he was circumcised, <sup>25</sup> and his son Ishmael was thirteen years old when **Abraham** circumcised him. <sup>26</sup> **So it was**, on that same day **both**

Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised.<sup>27</sup> And all the **other** males in Abraham's household, **including** those **who had been** born in his household as well as those **whom he had bought as servants** from foreigners, were also circumcised.

## *Yahweh Promises to Abraham and Sarah That They Will Have a Son*

18:1-15

**18** <sup>1</sup> Then **one day** Yahweh appeared **again** to Abraham at the oak trees on Mamre's land, while he was sitting **at** the entrance of his tent during the hottest part of the day. <sup>2</sup> Abraham looked up and saw that there were three men standing a short distance away. As soon as he saw **them**, he **jumped up and hurried to them** to greet them. Then he bowed **before them with his face to the ground to show respect**, <sup>3</sup> and he said **to them**, "Sirs, if you consider me worthy **to be your host**, please do not leave here without letting me serve you **as my guests**." <sup>4</sup> Please let me bring **you** some water, so that you **all** can wash **the dust off** your feet, and then rest under **the shade of this tree**. <sup>5</sup> Since you are here with me, let me **also** bring some food **for you to eat**. That way you can regain your strength before you continue on your way." They replied **to him**, "Okay, do what you have proposed."

<sup>6</sup> So Abraham quickly went to Sarah inside their tent and told her, "Quickly **get** three batches of our best flour and bake **some bread**." <sup>7</sup> Then he ran **outside** to his herd of **cattle** and chose one of his best calves that would be good to eat. Then he took it to one of his servants, and the servant quickly butchered it and cooked it. <sup>8</sup> Then Abraham brought **some** yogurt and milk and the meat that his servant had prepared, and he put it **all** before his **three** guests **to eat**. Then he stood nearby them **where they were sitting** under the tree **and served them** while they ate.

<sup>9</sup> Then **one of** the men asked Abraham, "Where **is** your wife Sarah?" Abraham answered, "**She is** there in the tent." <sup>10</sup> Then the man said **to Abraham**, "I will definitely come back **here** to visit you at this time next year. When I do, your wife Sarah will have a **baby son**." Now Sarah was listening inside the entrance of the tent, which was behind the man. <sup>11</sup> She and Abraham were **already** very old, so that Sarah was **far** past the age that she

could have children. <sup>12</sup> So she laughed to herself in disbelief and said to herself, “It does not seem possible that I could experience the pleasure of having a child now that I am too old to conceive. Besides that, my husband is also very old!” <sup>13</sup> But Yahweh asked Abraham, “Sarah should not have laughed and said to herself that she is too old to have a child! <sup>14</sup> Nothing is too difficult for Yahweh to do! At the time that I have set, I will return to you here. Yes, I will come at this time next year, and Sarah will already have a son.” <sup>15</sup> When Sarah heard that, she was afraid, so she lied to him and said, “I did not laugh.” But Yahweh replied, “That is not true. You did laugh.”

## *Abraham Tries to Save the People of Sodom from Being Destroyed by Yahweh*

### 18:16-33

<sup>16</sup> When they had finished eating, the three men got up to leave and started walking down toward the city of Sodom. Abraham escorted them for a while to see them on their way. <sup>17</sup> Then Yahweh thought to himself, “Should I keep secret from Abraham what I am about to do to the city of Sodom? <sup>18</sup> After all, he and his descendants will definitely become a great and powerful people group, and through them I will bless all the people groups in the world. <sup>19</sup> In fact, I have chosen him so that he will train his children and his descendants, so that they will live the way I want them to live and do what is right and treat people justly. Therefore I will do for him everything I have promised him that I will do.”

<sup>20</sup> So Yahweh said to Abraham, “I have heard that the people of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah have become very evil, and they are sinning very terribly. <sup>21</sup> I must go down to those cities now to determine whether or not they are guilty of everything that I have heard against them. If they are not guilty, then I will know it and I will not punish them.”

<sup>22</sup> Then the other two men left and continued walking toward the city of Sodom, while Abraham remained there with Yahweh. <sup>23</sup> Then Abraham stepped closer to Yahweh and asked him, “Certainly you will not destroy righteous people along with wicked people, will you? <sup>24</sup> What will you do if there are fifty righteous people living in the city of Sodom? Will you really still destroy all the people in the city rather than let them all live because of the fifty upright people who live there? <sup>25</sup> Certainly you would never do such a thing as kill

righteous **people together** with evil **people**, so that you are treating them both the same way! Certainly you would never do such a thing! As the Judge over everyone on the earth, certainly you will treat people justly.” <sup>26</sup> Yahweh replied to him, “If there are fifty righteous **people living** in the city of Sodom, then I will spare the whole city and everyone who lives there because of them.”

<sup>27</sup> Then Abraham spoke up again and asked Yahweh, “My Lord, please excuse me for speaking to you so boldly, even though I am as insignificant as dirt and ashes compared to you. <sup>28</sup> But what will you do if there are only forty-five righteous **people in the city** instead of fifty? Will you destroy the whole city and everyone in it if there are five people too few who are righteous?” Yahweh answered, “I will not destroy the city if there are forty-five righteous **people living** there.”

<sup>29</sup> Then Abraham spoke again to Yahweh and asked, “What will you do if there are only forty righteous **people in the city**? Will you destroy it then?” Yahweh answered, “I will not destroy the city, in order to save the forty **righteous people**.”

<sup>30</sup> Then Abraham pleaded with him, “My Lord, please do not be angry with me, but let me ask you another question: What will you do if there are only thirty righteous **people living** there?” He replied, “I will not destroy the city if there are thirty **righteous people** there.”

<sup>31</sup> Then Abraham asked him, “My Lord, please excuse me for speaking to you so boldly. What will you do if there are only twenty righteous **people living** in the city?” Yahweh replied, “I will not destroy the city, in order to save the twenty **righteous people**.”

<sup>32</sup> Then Abraham said, “My Lord, please do not be angry with me, but let me ask you just one more thing: What will you do if there are only ten righteous **people in the city**?” Yahweh answered him, “I will not destroy the city, in order to save the ten **righteous people**.”

<sup>33</sup> When Yahweh had finished talking with Abraham, he left **him**, and Abraham returned home.

## *Yahweh Destroys Sodom and Gomorrah*

### 19:1-29

**19** <sup>1</sup> That evening the two angels arrived at **the city of Sodom**, while Lot was sitting at the gate of the city. When Lot saw them, he stood up and greeted them and **then bowed before them** with **his face to the ground to show respect**. <sup>2</sup> Then he said **to them**, “Sirs, please **listen to this**: Please come to my house so that I can serve you and you can lodge for the night there. **That way too you can wash the dust off your feet**. Then **tomorrow morning** you can get up early and continue traveling.” But the two angels replied, “Thank you, but we will **just stay in the public square tonight**.” <sup>3</sup> However Lot continued to urgently invite them until they **finally agreed and** went with him to his house. Then Lot prepared a big meal for them, including **some flat bread**, and they **sat down and ate the meal**.

<sup>4</sup> **But after supper**, before they could lie down **to sleep**, **all the men in the city of Sodom** surrounded Lot’s house, including men of all ages. **In fact**, all the people from every part of **the city were there**. <sup>5</sup> Then they shouted to Lot, “Where **are the two men** who came to lodge with you tonight? Bring them outside to us so that we can have relations with them!” <sup>6</sup> But Lot went outside near the doorway **to talk to them**, and he closed the door **of the house** behind him. <sup>7</sup> Then he pleaded **with them**, “I beg you, my friends, do not do such an evil thing!” <sup>8</sup> **Listen to this please**: My two daughters have never had **marital** relations with a man. Allow me to bring them out to you **instead** so that you can do with them whatever you want. But do not harm these men, because they are my guests and I am responsible for their safety.” <sup>9</sup> But the men of Sodom shouted **at him**, “Get out of our way!” Then they complained **to each other**, “This guy came **here** as a foreigner, and now he thinks that he can judge us!” Then they shouted **at Lot**, “We will do worse things to you than **we do to your two guests**!” Then they started shoving hard against Lot and surged forward to break through the door **of his house**. <sup>10</sup> But Lot’s **two guests opened the door**, reached outside and **quickly pulled him back** into the house with them and closed the door. <sup>11</sup> Then those two men **who**

were angels caused the men who were at the door of the house to be blind, including every last one of them, so that they exhausted themselves groping around trying to find the door.

<sup>12</sup> Then the two angels asked Lot, “Do you have any other relatives here in Sodom? If you have sons-in-law or sons or daughters or any other members of your family here, then quickly get them away from this city, <sup>13</sup> because we are about to destroy it. Yahweh has heard that the people of this city are guilty of serious sins, so he has sent us to destroy the city.” <sup>14</sup> So Lot went to his future sons-in-law who were engaged to his daughters, and he warned them, “Hurry up and leave this city, because Yahweh is about to destroy it!” But his sons-in-law thought that he was joking, so they ignored him.

<sup>15</sup> Early the next morning, the two angels urged Lot, “Hurry up and take your wife and your two daughters out of the city so that you will not die when God punishes the people of the city.” <sup>16</sup> Lot hesitated, but Yahweh was being merciful to him, so the two men took hold of Lot’s hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters and led them out of the city. <sup>17</sup> As soon as the angels had taken them outside the city, one of them said to Lot, “Run away from here as fast as you can! Do not look behind you, and do not delay in the valley for any reason! Go quickly to the hill country, or else you will die!” <sup>18</sup> But Lot replied to them, “I beg you, sirs, do not make us do that. <sup>19</sup> Listen to me please: You have treated me well even though I am unimportant, and you have been very kind to me and saved my life. But I am not able to run all the way to the mountains before the disaster occurs and kills me. <sup>20</sup> So listen to this please: That town up ahead is near enough to run to in time, and it is just a small town. Please let us run there, and do not destroy it. After all, it is very small. Then we can stay alive.” <sup>21</sup> The angel replied to Lot, “Alright, I will allow you to go to the small town that you are talking about, and I will not destroy it. <sup>22</sup> But hurry up now and run there, because I cannot destroy anything until you get there.” Since Lot said the town was small, the name of the town is Zoar which means “small”.

<sup>23</sup> The sun was rising over the land as Lot and his family reached the town of Zoar. <sup>24</sup> Then Yahweh caused fire and burning rocks to fall like heavy rain from the sky on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. <sup>25</sup> In that way, he completely destroyed those two cities and the rest of the valley, including everyone who lived in the cities and all the plants in the area. <sup>26</sup> But Lot’s wife, who was walking behind him, glanced back at the city, and immediately she turned into a statue of solid salt rock.

<sup>27</sup> Early that same morning, Abraham got up and returned to the place where he had stood with Yahweh **the previous day**. <sup>28</sup> He looked down at **the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah** and all **the rest of the valley**. There in front of him, he saw that **lots of thick smoke** was billowing up over the land like smoke from a **huge fire**. <sup>29</sup> When God destroyed the cities in the valley, he did not forget Abraham **or his request**. So he saved Lot from the catastrophe that he had sent to **completely** destroy the cities where Lot had been living.

## *Lot's Descendants from His Daughters*

### **19:30-38**

<sup>30</sup> After that, Lot was afraid to stay in **the town of Zoar**, so he and his two daughters moved from there to the mountains, where they lived in a cave. <sup>31</sup> Then **one day his older daughter** said to **his younger daughter**, “Our father is elderly, and there are not any men around here to marry us, which **is the custom that people have** everywhere else in the world. <sup>32</sup> So come on, we should get our father drunk on wine. Then we can have **sexual relations** with him so that we can continue our family line with him.” <sup>33</sup> So that night Lot’s daughters got their father drunk on wine. Then the older **daughter** went **to him** and had relations with him. But **he was so drunk that** he was not **even** aware that she got in bed **with him** or that she left.

<sup>34</sup> The next day Lot’s older **daughter** said to **his younger daughter**, “Listen, last night I had **sexual relations** with our father. Tonight we should get him drunk on wine again. Then you **also** should go **and** have relations with him so that we can continue our family line with him.” <sup>35</sup> So that night Lot’s daughters got their father drunk on wine again. Then the younger **daughter** went **to him** and had relations with him. And **once again he was so drunk that** he was not aware that she got in bed **with him** or that she left.

<sup>36</sup> In that way, both of Lot’s daughters became pregnant from **having relations with their father**. <sup>37</sup> Later his older **daughter** gave birth to a son, and she named him Moab, **which means “from my father.”** He became the ancestor of the Moabite people **who are still living today**. <sup>38</sup> Lot’s younger **daughter** also gave birth to a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi,

which means “son of my people.” He became the ancestor of the Ammonite people who are still living today.

## *King Abimelech Takes Sarah to Be His Wife*

20:1-18

**20** <sup>1</sup> Meanwhile Abraham and his family left from the place where they were living and moved south to the Negev Desert area. There they lived between the cities of Kadesh and Shur, and they stayed for a while in the city of Gerar. <sup>2</sup> While they were there, Abraham told people that his wife Sarah was his sister. So one day Abimelech, who was the king of Gerar, had some of his servants bring Sarah to his home to be his wife. <sup>3</sup> But that night God appeared to King Abimelech in a dream and warned him, “Listen, you are about to die because the woman whom you have taken to be your wife is already married to someone else!” <sup>4</sup> However, Abimelech had not yet slept with Sarah, so he asked God, “Lord, will you kill me and my people even if we are innocent?” <sup>5</sup> Abraham himself told me that Sarah was his sister. And she herself also said that he was her brother. So I took her to be my wife with a pure conscience, and I did not know that I was doing anything wrong!” <sup>6</sup> God replied to him in the dream, “Yes, I realize that it was with a pure conscience that you took Sarah to be your wife. In fact, I am the one who kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you sleep with her. <sup>7</sup> Now then, you must give Abraham’s wife back to him. He is a spokesman for me, so he will ask me to be merciful to you, so that you will not die. However, if you refuse to give Sarah back to him, you can be sure that you and all your people will definitely die!”

<sup>8</sup> Early the next morning King Abimelech got up and called together all of his officials. He told them everything that had happened, and they were very afraid that God would punish them. <sup>9</sup> Then the king summoned Abraham and scolded him by saying, “You have treated us very badly! I never did anything wrong to you, and yet you have caused me and the people whom I rule to be guilty of sinning terribly! You have wronged me in ways that should never be done to anyone!” <sup>10</sup> Finally, King Abimelech asked him, “What motivated you to do what you did?” <sup>11</sup> Abraham answered him, “I did it, because I thought that there was certainly no one in this city who revered God, so I was afraid they would kill me to get

my wife **for themselves**. <sup>12</sup> Besides that, Sarah actually **is** my half-sister. We have the same father, but different mothers, and **after we grew up**, we got married. <sup>13</sup> **Years** later when God told me to leave my father's family, I asked her to do me a favor and tell people wherever we go that I **am** her brother."

<sup>14</sup> Then **King** Abimelech brought **many** sheep and cattle and male and female servants **to Abraham** and gave **them all** to him. He **also** gave Abraham's wife Sarah back to him.

<sup>15</sup> Then **King** Abimelech said **to him**, "Look, my land **is** available to you. Live **wherever** you decide **is** best." <sup>16</sup> Then he **turned** to Sarah **and** said, "Listen, I have given 12 **kilos** of silver to your brother. I am doing this so that everyone knows you did nothing wrong, and to compensate you for everything **that has happened to you**." <sup>17</sup> Then Abraham asked God **to be merciful to the king**. So God healed **King** Abimelech, as well as his wife and his female servants, and they were able to have children **again**. <sup>18</sup> **Previously** Yahweh had kept all the women in Abimelech's household from conceiving because he had taken Abraham's wife Sarah.

## *Isaac's Birth and Circumcision*

21:1-7

**21** <sup>1</sup> Then Yahweh blessed Sarah **just** as he had said **he would**. Yes, he did for her **exactly** what he had promised **to do**. <sup>2</sup> So Sarah became pregnant and at the time **God had** appointed, she gave birth to a son for Abraham when he was old, just as God had promised him **that she would**. <sup>3</sup> Then Abraham named his son Isaac, **the son** whom Sarah had given birth to. <sup>4</sup> Also, when Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, which was exactly what God had commanded him **to do**.

<sup>5</sup> Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born. <sup>6</sup> **When he was born**, Sarah exclaimed, "God has made me laugh **for joy!** Everyone who hears **about this** will laugh **for**

joy with me!”<sup>7</sup> She also exclaimed, “No one would have **even thought of** telling Abraham **that** I would have children. Yet I have given birth to a son **for him** when he is old!”

## *Sarah Has Abraham Send Hagar and Ishmael Away*

21:8-21

<sup>8</sup> Isaac grew as a child and reached the age when his mother stopped nursing him. When that happened, Abraham held a big feast **to celebrate**.<sup>9</sup> But **during the feast** Sarah noticed that **Ishmael**, the son of **her** Egyptian **handmaid** Hagar and Abraham, was making fun of **Isaac**.<sup>10</sup> So she **was angry and** told Abraham, “Get rid of that servant woman and her son! Her son must never share **any part of** what my son Isaac inherits **from you!**”

<sup>11</sup> Abraham was very upset about that, because **Ishmael** was **also** his son **and he cared about him too**.<sup>12</sup> But God told him, “Do not be upset about the boy or your servant woman. **Rather**, listen to everything Sarah tells you **to do, and do it**, because Isaac is the one who will be the ancestor of your descendants **whom I promised to you**.<sup>13</sup> But I will also make your servant woman’s son become **the ancestor of a large people group**, because he is your son.”

<sup>14</sup> Early the next morning Abraham got up, brought **some** food and a leather container **full of water** to Hagar **and** put them on her back. Then he sent her off with the boy, and they left and wandered **around** in the desert near **the city of Beersheba**.<sup>15</sup> When they had finished **all** the water in the container, she left her son under **the shade of** a bush.<sup>16</sup> She thought **to herself**, “I cannot **bear to** watch my son die.” So she went **away from him** and sat down by herself, about as far away as someone can shoot an arrow. Then she started crying loudly.

<sup>17</sup> God **also** heard the boy crying, so one of his angels called to Hagar from heaven and said, “What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid. God has heard the boy crying over there **and will take care of him**.<sup>18</sup> So go help the boy to get up, and take care of him, because I **Yahweh** will make him become **the ancestor of a large people group**.”<sup>19</sup> Then God enabled Hagar to see a water well. So she went over **to the well**, filled her **water** container with water, and gave her son some water to drink.

<sup>20</sup> As the boy grew up, God was with him **and helped him**. He lived in the **Paran Desert** and learned to hunt skillfully with a bow **and arrows**. <sup>21</sup> While he was there, his mother found a wife for him **who was** from the country of Egypt.

## *King Abimelech Makes a Treaty with Abraham*

### **21:22-34**

<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, one day **King Abimelech** came with his army captain Phicol to Abraham **and said to him**, “**I have noticed that God is with you and helps you** in everything that you do.” <sup>23</sup> Now then, **please** vow to me here in God’s presence that you will never **again** deceive me or my children or my descendants. **Instead**, just as I have treated you kindly, **vow that you will also** be kind to me and **my people in this country** where you are living.”

<sup>24</sup> Abraham replied to him, “**I vow that I will do those things.**”

<sup>25</sup> Then Abraham **also** confronted **King Abimelech** about a water well that Abimelech’s servants had taken control of **from Abraham’s servants**. <sup>26</sup> But Abimelech responded, “I have no idea who did that. Besides that, you did not tell me **about it before**, and so today is the first that I have heard about it.”

<sup>27</sup> Then Abraham gave **some of his** sheep and cattle to Abimelech, and he and Abimelech made a **peace treaty with one another**. <sup>28</sup> Abraham **also** separated seven female lambs from the rest of the flock. <sup>29</sup> So Abimelech asked him, “Why did you separate those seven lambs **from the rest of the flock?**” <sup>30</sup> Abraham replied, “Because I want you to accept them from me, to show **everyone** that you agree with me that I dug this well **and it belongs to me.**” <sup>31</sup> **Abimelech accepted the lambs**, so Abraham named that place Beersheba, **which means “Well of the Seven” or “Well of the Vow,”** because that’s where they both vowed to **live at peace with one another**.

<sup>32</sup> After Abraham and **King Abimelech** made their **peace treaty** at Beersheba, Abimelech and his army captain Phicol left **from there** and went back to **their homes** in the Philistines’ territory **that Abimelech ruled over**. <sup>33</sup> Then Abraham planted an **evergreen tree** named tamarisk at **the place called Beersheba**, and there he worshiped Yahweh, **who is the**

God who lives forever.<sup>34</sup> After that, Abraham lived **there** in the Philistines' territory for many years.

## *God Tests Abraham's Trust in Him*

22:1-19

**22** <sup>1</sup> Sometime later God **decided to** test Abraham. So he called to him, "Abraham!"

Abraham replied, "Yes, **Lord?**" <sup>2</sup> Then God commanded **him**, "Take your son **with you**, yes, your only son Isaac whom you love, and travel **with him** to the region of Moriah. There you are to burn him up **on an altar** as a sacrifice **to me**, on one of the mountains that I will show to you."

<sup>3</sup> So the next morning Abraham got up early and put a **pack saddle** on his donkey **to get it ready for the trip**. Then he got his son Isaac and two of his servants, and they chopped **some firewood** that they would use to burn the sacrifice **and loaded it on the donkey**. Then they started traveling to the place that God had told Abraham **to go to**. <sup>4</sup> Three days later Abraham looked **ahead** and in the distance he could see the mountain **where they were headed**. <sup>5</sup> Then he told his servants, "You **two** stay here with the donkey, while my son and I **go to the mountain** over there and worship **God**. Then we will come back to you."

<sup>6</sup> Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering **off the donkey** and loaded it on his son Isaac's **shoulder to carry**. He **himself** carried a fire **pot with hot coals in it** and a knife **to kill the sacrifice**. Then the two of them walked on together. <sup>7</sup> **As they walked**, Isaac said to Abraham, "Father?" Abraham replied, "Yes, my son?" Then Isaac asked **him**, "I see that we have the fire **coals** and the **firewood**, but where **is** the lamb that we will burn as a sacrifice **to God?**" <sup>8</sup> Abraham answered **him**, "My son, God himself will provide a lamb for us to burn as a sacrifice **to him**." Then they continued walking together **toward the mountain**.

<sup>9</sup> When they reached the place that God had told him **to go to**, Abraham built a **stone altar** there and put the wood **on top of it**. Then he tied his son Isaac's **arms and legs with rope** and laid him on top of the wood on the altar. <sup>10</sup> Then he picked up the knife **in order** to kill his son. <sup>11</sup> But one of Yahweh's angels called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" And he replied, "Yes, **Lord?**" <sup>12</sup> Then the angel told **him**, "Do not harm your son or do

anything else to him. Now I know that you revere me, since you obeyed me and did not refuse to sacrifice your son to me, even though he is your only son.”

<sup>13</sup> Then Abraham looked around and there behind him he saw a ram that had its horns stuck in a bush. So he released Isaac, went over to the ram and untangled it. Then he killed it and burned it on the altar as a sacrifice to God in place of his son. <sup>14</sup> That is why Abraham named that place Yahweh-Yireh, which means “Yahweh will provide”. Even today people still say, “On Yahweh’s mountain he will provide what you need.”

<sup>15</sup> Then Yahweh’s angel called to Abraham from heaven again. <sup>16</sup> He said, “This is what Yahweh declares to you: ‘With myself as my own witness, I vow to you that since you have obeyed me and did not hold back your son from me, yes, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will abundantly bless you. In fact, I will give you so many descendants that they will be as numerous as the stars in the sky and as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore. They will defeat their enemies and rule over them. <sup>18</sup> Through your descendants I will bless all the people groups on the earth. I will do that because you obeyed me.’”

<sup>19</sup> After that, Abraham returned with Isaac to his two servants. Then together they all traveled back home to the city of Beersheba, and Abraham and his family stayed there.

## *Abraham’s Brother Nahor’s Twelve Sons*

**22:20-24**

<sup>20</sup> Sometime later someone told Abraham, “I have news for you: Your brother Nahor and his wife Milcah also have some sons, <sup>21</sup> The oldest son is Uz, the second is Buz, and the third is Kemuel, who is the father of Aram. <sup>22</sup> They also have sons named Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.” <sup>23</sup> Bethuel had a daughter named Rebekah. Those are the

eight sons that Milcah had for Abraham's brother Nahor.<sup>24</sup> Besides that, Nahor and his servant-wife Reumah also had some sons, including Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

## *Sarah Dies and Abraham Buys Some Land to Bury Her Body*

23:1-20

**23** <sup>1</sup> Sarah lived to be 127 years old. That is how old she was <sup>2</sup> when she died in the city of Kiriath Arba, which is now called Hebron, in the region of Canaan. Abraham went to her and cried and mourned for her. <sup>3</sup> Later he stood up from mourning beside her and went to the leaders of the Hittites at the city gates and said to them, <sup>4</sup> “As you know, I am a foreigner who is living among you so I do not own any property here. Please sell me some of your land so I have a place to bury the body of my wife who has died.” <sup>5</sup> The leaders of the Hittites responded to Abraham, <sup>6</sup> “Sir, please listen to what we propose: You are a powerful man living among us. So you may bury the body of your wife who has died in any one of our best burial sites. All of us are willing for you to use any of our burial sites to bury her.”

<sup>7</sup> Abraham stood up and bowed in respect in front of the leaders of the Hittites, who owned the land in the area. <sup>8</sup> Then he said to them, “If you are willing for me to bury my deceased wife here, please help me by asking Ephron the son of Zohar <sup>9</sup> to sell me his cave that is at the edge of his field in the Machpelah area. Ask him to sell it to me for its full price, with all of you here to witness the sale. That way I will have a place where I can bury my wife who has died.” <sup>10</sup> Now Ephron the Hittite was sitting there at the meeting among the other Hittite leaders, so he replied to Abraham as the other leaders listened, including everyone who had gathered there at the city gate. He said, <sup>11</sup> “That’s not necessary, sir. Please accept this offer: I hereby give you the entire field, including the cave that is in it. I am giving it to you now as the leaders of my people watch. You may bury your deceased wife there.”

<sup>12</sup> Then Abraham bowed again before the leaders who owned the land in the area. <sup>13</sup> As they listened, he said to Ephron, “Rather than that, since you are willing to let me have the field, please accept my offer. I want to pay you the full price for the field. Please let

me buy it from you, so that it will be mine and I can bury my wife there who has died.”

<sup>14</sup> Ephron responded to Abraham, <sup>15</sup> “Sir, please listen to me. The land is worth about five kilos of silver. However since you and I are friends, there is no need for that. Go ahead and bury your deceased wife there.” <sup>16</sup> Abraham agreed with Ephron’s price, and he paid Ephron the amount of silver that he had suggested while the rest of the Hittites listened. Abraham weighed the 400 shekels of silver using the standard weights that sellers used at that time.

<sup>17</sup> So Ephron sold his field to Abraham, including the cave that was in the field, as well as all the trees that were inside its boundaries. The field was in the Machpelah area near the city of Mamre. Ephron sold that field <sup>18</sup> to Abraham, and it became his property while the Hittites watched, including everyone who had gathered at the city gate. <sup>19</sup> After that, Abraham put the body of his wife Sarah in the cave in that field in the Machpelah area east of the city of Mamre, that is, Hebron, in the region of Canaan. <sup>20</sup> So that is how that field, including the cave that was in the field, was officially sold to Abraham by the Hittites, so that he had a place where he could bury his wife who had died.

## *Abraham Finds a Wife for Isaac*

24:1-67

**24** <sup>1</sup> Abraham had lived a long time and was now very old, and Yahweh had blessed him in every way. <sup>2</sup> One day Abraham said to his chief household servant, who managed his entire estate for him, “Please put your hand under my thigh to show that you will do what I ask. <sup>3</sup> I want you to vow to me, with Yahweh the God who rules the heavens and the earth as your witness, that you will not arrange for my son Isaac to marry any of the Canaanite women who live around us here. <sup>4</sup> Rather, you must go to the country where I grew up, to my relatives who live there, and find a wife for him from there.”

<sup>5</sup> But Abraham’s servant asked him, “What should I do if the young woman I find refuses to come back with me to this land to live? Do you want me to take your son back there to your home country to marry her and live there?” <sup>6</sup> Abraham answered him, “No, be sure that you never take my son back there to live, <sup>7</sup> because Yahweh, the God who rules

the heavens, brought me here from my father's household and from the land where the rest of my relatives live, and he vowed to me that he will give this land to my descendants. He will send one of his angels ahead of you to help you, so that you will find a woman from my home land for my son to marry. <sup>8</sup> But if the woman you find refuses to come back here with you, then you will be free from keeping this vow that you are making to me now. But no matter what happens, never take my son back to my home country!"

<sup>9</sup> So Abraham's servant put his hand under his master's thigh and vowed to him that he would do what Abraham had requested him to do. <sup>10</sup> Then he got ten of his master's camels ready for the trip, and after he loaded them with all kinds of valuable things from his master to use as gifts, he left with some other servants and made the long trip to the region of Aram Naharaim, to the city where Nahor lived. <sup>11</sup> When they arrived there, Abraham's servant had the camels kneel down to rest outside the city near the well that was there. It was evening time, when the young women of the city were starting to come out to the well to draw water.

<sup>12</sup> Then Abraham's servant prayed, "Dear Yahweh, who is the God who takes care of my master Abraham, please help me succeed today and in that way be kind to my master. <sup>13</sup> As you see, I am standing by this well, and young women from the city are coming here to draw water. <sup>14</sup> Please make it happen that when I say to one of the young women, 'Please lower your jug so that I can have a drink,' she will say to me, 'Have a drink and I will also draw water for your camels.' Then I will know that she is the one you have chosen to be the wife of Isaac who serves you, and that you have been kind to my master."

<sup>15</sup> Before Abraham's servant had even finished praying, he saw a young woman named Rebekah coming out of the city carrying a water jug on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Milcah and Abraham's brother Nahor. <sup>16</sup> She was a very beautiful unmarried young woman, who had never had marital relations with a man. She walked down to the well, filled her jug with water and came back up carrying it on her shoulder.

<sup>17</sup> Then Abraham's servant ran to meet her and said to her, "Please let me have a little water to drink from your jug." <sup>18</sup> She replied, "Please have a drink, sir." Then she quickly lowered her jug from her shoulder to her hands and let him drink some water from it.

<sup>19</sup> After that, she said to him, "I will also draw water for your camels until they have had enough to drink." <sup>20</sup> Then she quickly emptied the rest of the water from her jug into the

animal drinking trough that was there and ran back and forth to the well to draw more water, until she had drawn enough for all of the camels. <sup>21</sup> Meanwhile Abraham's servant silently watched Rebekah and waited to find out whether or not Yahweh had made him successful on his journey to find a wife for Isaac.

<sup>22</sup> Finally, when the camels had finished drinking, the servant gave Rebekah a gold nose ring that weighed 6 grams, and two gold bracelets for her wrists that weighed 110 grams each. <sup>23</sup> Then he asked her, "Please tell me who your father is. Also, is there room at his house for me and my men to spend the night there?" <sup>24</sup> Rebekah answered him, "My father is Bethuel, and he is one of Nahor and Milcah's sons." <sup>25</sup> Then she added, "We have plenty of both straw and other feed at our house for the camels to eat, and there is also enough room for you all to stay there tonight." <sup>26</sup> Then the servant bowed to the ground and worshiped Yahweh, <sup>27</sup> by saying, "Praise Yahweh, the God who takes care of my master Abraham! He has never stopped being kind and faithful to my master, and he has guided me on my journey here to the home of my master's relatives!"

<sup>28</sup> Then Rebekah hurried home and told her mother's family about what had happened. <sup>29</sup> Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban, and he rushed out to the well where Abraham's servant was. <sup>30</sup> As soon as Laban had seen the nose ring that his sister was wearing and the bracelets on her arms and had heard her announce what the servant had said to her, he went out to meet him. He found him standing with his camels at the well. <sup>31</sup> Then Laban said to him, "Come with me, you whom Yahweh has blessed. There is no need for you to stand out here. I have gotten our house ready for you and your men to stay with us and there is also a place for your camels to stay."

<sup>32</sup> So Abraham's servant went home with Laban. When they arrived there, Laban unloaded the camels, and he gave straw and other feed to them to eat. He also gave water to the servant and the men who were with him to wash their feet. <sup>33</sup> Then Laban's family served them a meal to eat, but the servant said to them, "Before I can eat, I need to tell you why I am here." Laban responded to him, "Please tell us what you have to say."

<sup>34</sup> So the servant told them, "I am Abraham's servant. <sup>35</sup> Yahweh has abundantly blessed my master, so that he has become wealthy. Yahweh has given him many sheep and cattle, much silver and gold, many male and female servants, and many camels and donkeys. <sup>36</sup> Besides that, my master's wife Sarah gave birth to a son for him when she was old, and my master has given him everything that he owns. <sup>37</sup> Before I came here, my

master made me vow **to do something for him**. He said, ‘You must not arrange for my son Isaac to marry **any of** the Canaanite women whose land we have been living in. <sup>38</sup> Rather, go to my father’s family, to my **own** relatives, and find a wife for my son **from among them**.’ <sup>39</sup> So I asked my master, ‘What **should I do** if the **young woman I find** refuses to come **back here** with me?’ <sup>40</sup> He answered me, ‘Yahweh whom I serve will send one of his angels with you. He will make you succeed on your journey, so that you will find a wife for my son from **among** my relatives, **someone** from my father’s family. <sup>41</sup> At that time you will be free from **keeping** the **vow you are making** to me: If you find a wife for Isaac but my family refuses to let her go with you, then you will be free from **keeping** your vow to me.’

<sup>42</sup> Then today when I came to **your city’s** well, I prayed, ‘Dear Yahweh, **who is** the God **who takes care** of my master Abraham, if you are willing, please give me success on this journey that I have made. <sup>43</sup> As you see, I am standing **here** near **this** well. **Please** make it happen **that** when a young woman comes out **of the city** to draw water and I ask her, “Please let me drink a little water from your jug,” <sup>44</sup> if she replies, “**Yes**, have a drink and I will also draw water for your camels,” **then let her be** the woman whom **you** Yahweh have chosen to be the wife of my master’s son.’

<sup>45</sup> Before I had **even** finished praying quietly, suddenly I saw Rebekah coming out **of the city** carrying her **empty water** jug on her shoulder. She walked down to the well and filled her jug with water, so I asked her, ‘May I please have a drink **of water**?’ <sup>46</sup> She quickly lowered her jug from her **shoulder** and said, ‘Have a drink, and I will also draw water for your camels.’ So I took a drink **from her jug**, and she also gave water to my camels. <sup>47</sup> Then I asked her, ‘**Who is** your father?’ She answered, ‘My father is Bethuel, **who is** one of Nahor and Milcah’s sons.’ After that I gave her a nose ring and bracelets to wear. <sup>48</sup> Then I bowed **to the ground** and worshiped and praised Yahweh, the God **who takes care** of my master Abraham, because he guided me right where I should go to find the granddaughter of my master’s brother **to be the wife** for my master’s son. <sup>49</sup> So now, **please** tell me whether or not you are willing to be kind and faithful to my master **by letting her come with me**, so that I can decide what to do **next**.”

<sup>50</sup> Then Laban and Bethuel answered **Abraham’s servant**, “**It is clear that** Yahweh has made **all** this happen, **so** it is not our place to tell you anything different. <sup>51</sup> Look, here is Rebekah. Take **her with you** and return **home** so that she can marry your master’s son as Yahweh has guided.” <sup>52</sup> When Abraham’s servant heard what they said, he bowed to the

ground and thanked Yahweh. <sup>53</sup> Then he took out expensive gifts, including silver and gold jewelry, and also beautiful clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave valuable gifts to her brother and mother.

<sup>54</sup> Then Abraham's servant and his men ate supper and slept there that night. Early the next morning after everyone got up, Abraham's servant said to Rebekah's family, "Please let me return home now to my master." <sup>55</sup> But Rebekah's brother and her mother replied, "Please let the young woman stay here with us for another ten days or so. Then you can go and take her with you." <sup>56</sup> But the servant said to them, "Please do not delay me. Now that Yahweh has made my journey successful, let me go so that I can return to my master." <sup>57</sup> So they replied, "Let's call Rebekah and ask her what she wants to do."

<sup>58</sup> So they called for her and asked her, "Do you want to go now with this man?" She answered them, "Yes, I will go now." <sup>59</sup> So they agreed to send their sister Rebekah and her personal servant who had helped raise her, with Abraham's servant and his companions. <sup>60</sup> They blessed Rebekah by saying to her,

"Sister, we pray that God will give you countless thousands of descendants, and that he will help them conquer all their enemies and rule over them!"

<sup>61</sup> After Rebekah and her servants who were going with her packed their things, they got up on the camels they were going to ride and went with Abraham's servant. So Abraham's servant took Rebekah with him and started the journey back home.

<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile Isaac returned home from visiting the place called Beer Lahai Roi. At that time he was living in the Negev Wilderness. <sup>63</sup> One day as it was becoming evening, he went to the field to pray. As he was praying, he looked up and suddenly he saw in the distance some camels coming toward him. <sup>64</sup> Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. Immediately she got down from the camel that she was riding, <sup>65</sup> and asked Abraham's servant, "Who is that man in the field who is walking this way to greet us?" The servant answered her, "He is my master Isaac." So she covered her face with a veil to show modesty.

<sup>66</sup> Then the servant told Isaac everything that he had done on the journey. <sup>67</sup> Then Isaac took Rebekah into the tent where his mother Sarah had lived, and he married her, so

that she became his wife. Isaac loved her, and he was happy again after mourning for his mother who had died.

## *Abraham and Keturah's Descendants*

25:1-6

1 Chronicles 1:32-33

**25** <sup>1</sup> Then Abraham got married again, and his wife's name was Keturah. <sup>2</sup> She had sons with him whom they named Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

<sup>3</sup> Her son Jokshan had sons named Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's descendants became people groups named the Asshurites, Letushites, and Leummites. <sup>4</sup> Keturah's son Midian had sons named Ephah, Ephher, Hanoah, Abida, and Eldaah. All of those were Keturah's descendants whom she had with Abraham.

<sup>5</sup> Abraham gave everything that he owned to Isaac. <sup>6</sup> He also gave valuable gifts to the sons that his servant wives had with him, but after that he made them move away to the east country so that they would live far away from his son Isaac.

## *Abraham Dies and Is Buried*

25:7-11

<sup>7</sup> Abraham lived to be 175 years old. <sup>8</sup> Then he took his last breath and died at a very old age. After he had lived a long and satisfying life, he joined his ancestors who had already died. <sup>9</sup> His sons Isaac and Ishmael put his body in the cave of Machpelah which was in the field that had belonged to Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of the city of Mamre. <sup>10</sup> That is the same field that Abraham had bought from the Hittites. That is the cave where his sons buried his body next to the body of his wife Sarah whom he had buried

there before. <sup>11</sup> After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac, who lived near the well Beer Lahai Roi.

## *Ishmael's Descendants*

### **25:12-18**

<sup>12</sup> What follows is a record of the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael, the son Abraham had with Sarah's Egyptian slave woman Hagar. <sup>13</sup> Here is a list of the names of Ishmael's sons, given in the order that they were born: His oldest son was Nebaioth, followed by Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, <sup>14</sup> Mishma, Dumah, Massa, <sup>15</sup> Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedermah. <sup>16</sup> Those were Ishmael's twelve sons, who became the leaders of twelve tribes that were named after them, and each tribe lived in its own towns and villages. <sup>17</sup> Ishmael lived a total of 137 years. Then he took his last breath and died, and he joined his ancestors who had died before him. <sup>18</sup> His descendants lived throughout the area that extended from the region of Havilah to the wilderness of Shur that is east of the country of Egypt as you head from there to the city of Asshur. They lived as enemies against all their relatives.

## *The Birth of Isaac's Twin Sons Jacob and Esau*

### **25:19-26**

<sup>19</sup> Here is more of the history about Abraham's son Isaac and his descendants: After Abraham had Isaac, <sup>20</sup> Isaac grew up and married Rebekah when he was forty years old. She was a daughter of Bethuel, who was an Aramean from the region of Paddan Aram, and her brother was Laban who was also an Aramean. <sup>21</sup> However for many years Rebekah was not able to become pregnant, so Isaac prayed that Yahweh would give her children. Yahweh did what Isaac prayed for, so that she became pregnant with twins. <sup>22</sup> But the two babies wrestled with each other inside her, so she asked, "Why is this happening to me?" Then she asked Yahweh about it. <sup>23</sup> Yahweh answered her,

“The ancestors of two future people groups are inside you. They will be enemies **starting now** even before they are born. One of them will be more powerful than the other, so that the older **son’s descendants** will serve the younger **son’s descendants.**”

<sup>24</sup> Later when it was time for Rebekah to give birth, sure enough, there were twin boys inside her! <sup>25</sup> The first **one** who was born was completely covered with thick red hair. So his parents named him Esau, which means “hairy.” <sup>26</sup> Next his brother was born, with his hand grabbing on **tightly** to Esau’s heel. So they named him Jacob, which means “heel-grabber.” Isaac was sixty years old when Esau and Jacob were born.

## *Esau Sells His Rights as the Firstborn Son to Jacob*

### 25:27-34

<sup>27</sup> When the boys grew up, Esau became a skilled hunter and he enjoyed **being** in the open country, but Jacob had a quiet personality and **preferred** to work at home. <sup>28</sup> Isaac’s favorite son was Esau, because he liked to eat the meat of wild animals **that Esau hunted**, whereas Rebekah’s favorite son was Jacob.

<sup>29</sup> **One day** when Jacob was making **some** soup, Esau came home from **hunting out in** the open country and he **felt weak and hungry.** <sup>30</sup> So Esau requested from Jacob, “Please let me have some of that very red soup because I **feel weak and hungry!**” That is why Esau’s nickname was Edom, which means “red.” <sup>31</sup> But Jacob replied, “First trade your rights as the oldest son to me **for the soup, then I will give you some.**” <sup>32</sup> Esau responded, “Look, I am about to die **from hunger!** So my birthright is of no use to me **right now.**” <sup>33</sup> Jacob insisted, “**First make a vow to me today before God that your rights are now mine!**” So Esau vowed to Jacob that he had traded his rights as the oldest son to him **for the soup.** <sup>34</sup> Then Jacob

gave Esau **some of** the lentil soup with **some** bread, and Esau **quickly** ate the meal and left. In that way, Esau treated his birthright **carelessly** as if it had no value.

## *God Establishes His Covenant with Isaac*

26:1-5

**26** <sup>1</sup> Now there was **another** severe food shortage in the region. **This was** a different shortage from the one that had happened **years** before, while Abraham was still alive. So Isaac **and his family** went to **the city of** Gerar to **ask for help from** King Abimelech, who ruled over the Philistines. <sup>2</sup> Then Yahweh appeared to Isaac and commanded **him**, “Do not go to **the country of** Egypt, **rather** stay in this land where I tell you to live. <sup>3</sup> Live as a **foreigner** in this region, and I will stay with you and prosper you. In fact, I will give all the **surrounding** regions to you and your descendants, and I will continue to **keep** the vow that I made to your father Abraham <sup>4</sup> that I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. I will also give them all these regions. In fact, through your descendants I will bless all the people groups on the earth. <sup>5</sup> **I will do all that** because Abraham obeyed me and did everything that I ever commanded **him to do.**”

## *Isaac Lies about His Wife Rebekah to the Philistines*

26:6-11

<sup>6</sup> Then Isaac **did what God said and** settled with his family in the city of Gerar. <sup>7</sup> Now Rebekah **was** very beautiful, so the men in that city started asking Isaac about her. Isaac was afraid they might kill him in order to have her, so he **lied and** told **them** she **was** his sister. <sup>8</sup> **One day** after Isaac had lived there a long time, the Philistines’ King Abimelech looked down from a window **of his palace** and saw to his surprise that Isaac was showing affection to his wife Rebekah. <sup>9</sup> So Abimelech summoned Isaac and scolded **him**, “It is obvious that Rebekah **is** actually your wife! So why did you tell us that she **is** your sister?” Isaac answered him, “**I said that** because I thought someone might kill me in order to have her as

a wife.”<sup>10</sup> Then Abimelech scolded him further, “You have treated us very badly! Sooner or later, one of my men could have slept with your wife, and you would have caused us to be guilty of adultery!”<sup>11</sup> Then King Abimelech warned all his people, “I will definitely execute anyone who harms Isaac or his wife!”

## *Isaac Has Conflict with the Philistines over His Wells*

### 26:12-33

<sup>12</sup> Isaac planted crops in that area, and that year he gathered a huge harvest that was a hundred times more than what he had planted. Yahweh continued to bless him,<sup>13</sup> so that he became richer and richer until he was extremely wealthy.<sup>14</sup> He owned many sheep and cattle and he also owned many servants. As a result, the Philistines were jealous of Isaac.<sup>15</sup> So they filled up with dirt all the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug while he was still alive.

<sup>16</sup> Then King Abimelech said to Isaac, “Please move away from us, because you are so powerful that you are a threat to us.”<sup>17</sup> So Isaac moved from the city of Gerar and pitched his tents in the Gerar Valley and stayed there for a while.<sup>18</sup> Then Isaac had his servants dig the dirt out of the wells that Abraham’s servants had dug and that the Philistines had just filled with dirt. He gave the wells the same names that his father had given them.

<sup>19</sup> Next Isaac’s servants dug at a new place in the valley and discovered a source of fresh water there.<sup>20</sup> But the herdsmen from the city of Gerar argued with Isaac’s herdsmen and said, “That well is ours!” So Isaac named the well Esek, which means “argument,” because they argued with him about it.<sup>21</sup> Then Isaac’s servants dug another well, but Gerar’s herdsmen argued with them about that one too, so Isaac named it Sitnah, which means “hostility.”<sup>22</sup> Then Isaac and his family moved from there and he had his servants dig a third well. This time Gerar’s herdsmen did not argue about it, so he named it Rehoboth, which means “space,” because he said, “Finally Yahweh has provided space for us, so that we will prosper in the land.”

<sup>23</sup> From there Isaac and his family went south to the city of Beersheba. <sup>24</sup> That night Yahweh appeared to him and said to him, “I am the God whom your father Abraham serves. Do not be afraid, because I will always be with you. I will bless you and make your descendants numerous, just as I promised to Abraham, who serves me.” <sup>25</sup> So Isaac built an altar there at Beersheba and worshiped Yahweh by name. He also set up his tents there, and his servants started digging another well there too.

<sup>26</sup> Then King Abimelech went to Isaac from the city of Gerar with his adviser Ahuzzath and his army commander Phicol. <sup>27</sup> Isaac asked them, “Why have you come to me, especially since you have been hostile toward me and forced me to move away from you?”

<sup>28</sup> They answered him, “It is very obvious to us that Yahweh is with you and blessing you, and we decided that we should make a vow with you to live in peace with one another. So please let us make a peace treaty with you, <sup>29</sup> that you will never harm us, just as we never harmed you, but only treated you well and sent you away in peace. As a result, Yahweh has now blessed you.” <sup>30</sup> Then Isaac prepared a feast, and they all ate and drank together.

<sup>31</sup> Early the next morning they got up and made vows to one another that they would keep their treaty. Then Isaac said goodbye to them, and they went home from him in peace.

<sup>32</sup> That same day Isaac’s servants came to inform him about the well that they had been digging and announced, “We have struck water!” <sup>33</sup> So Isaac named the well Shebah, which means “vow.” That is why even today the name of that city is still Beersheba, which means “well of the vow.”

## *Esau’s Foreign Wives*

### 26:34-35

<sup>34</sup> When Esau was forty years old, he married two Hittite women: Judith, whose father was Beeri, and Basemath, whose father was Elon. <sup>35</sup> Isaac and Rebekah were very

distressed that their son had married foreign women rather than a woman from their own religion and people.

## *Jacob Steals Esau's Blessing from Their Father Isaac*

27:1-29

**27** <sup>1</sup> One day when Isaac was an old man and he could no longer see, he sent for his older son Esau and said to him, “My son.” Esau answered him, “Yes, sir?” <sup>2</sup> Then Isaac told him, “Please listen **closely**: I am an old man **now** and I do not know when I will die. <sup>3</sup> So then, get your bow and arrows, go out in the open country and hunt **some deer meat** for me. <sup>4</sup> Next **use the meat** to cook a delicious meal for me the way that I like it, and bring it to me to eat so that I can bless you before I die.”

<sup>5</sup> Rebekah overheard what Isaac said to his son Esau. So after Esau had gone out to the open country to hunt, <sup>6</sup> she said to her son Jacob, “Listen, I **just** overheard your father tell your brother Esau <sup>7</sup> to get him **some deer meat** and **use it** to cook a delicious meal for him to eat. Then before he dies, he wants to bless Esau with Yahweh as his witness. <sup>8</sup> So then, my son, listen to me and do what I tell you **to do**. <sup>9</sup> Please go **out** to our flock of **goats** and get for me two of the best young goats. I will **use the meat from them** to cook a delicious meal for your father, **just** the way that he likes it. <sup>10</sup> Then you can take the meal to your father to eat, so that he will bless you before he dies.”

<sup>11</sup> But Jacob responded to his mother, “As you know, my brother Esau has hairy skin, but I have smooth skin. <sup>12</sup> What if my father feels my skin? He will **recognize me and** realize that I am trying to deceive him. Then he will curse me instead of blessing me.”

<sup>13</sup> But his mother replied, “**If that happens**, may God curse me instead of you, my son. Just listen to me, and go get **two goats** for me!” <sup>14</sup> So Jacob went **to the flock** and selected **two goats** and took **them** to her. Then she cooked a delicious meal the way that his father liked it. <sup>15</sup> She also got her older son Esau's finest clothes that she had in the house and had her

younger son Jacob put them on. <sup>16</sup> And she used the goat skins to cover Jacob's arms and the part of his neck that had no hair on it.

<sup>17</sup> Then she handed the delicious meal to Jacob, including some bread that she had baked. <sup>18</sup> He took the meal to his father and said, "Father." His father answered, "Yes? Which of my sons are you?" <sup>19</sup> Jacob replied to his father, "I am Esau, your oldest son. I have done what you requested me to do. So now please sit up and eat some of the deer meat that I have cooked for you, so that you can bless me." <sup>20</sup> But Isaac asked him, "How were you able to find the deer so quickly, my son?" Jacob answered, "Yahweh, who is the God who takes care of you, helped me to succeed."

<sup>21</sup> Then Isaac said to him, "My son, please come here so that I can feel you and make sure that you are really my son Esau." <sup>22</sup> So Jacob stepped closer to his father Isaac, and his father felt him and thought to himself, "Hmm, his voice sounds like Jacob's voice, but his arms feel like Esau's arms." <sup>23</sup> So Isaac was not able to identify who Jacob was because his arms felt hairy like his brother Esau's. Isaac was about to bless Jacob, <sup>24</sup> but first he wanted to be completely sure, so he asked him, "Are you really my son Esau?" Jacob answered, "Yes, I am." <sup>25</sup> So Isaac said to him, "Serve me the meal so that I can eat some of your deer meat and bless you." Then Jacob served the meal to his father and he ate it. Jacob also served him wine and he drank it.

<sup>26</sup> Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come here and kiss me, my son." <sup>27</sup> So Jacob went over to his father and kissed him on the cheeks. As he did that, his father recognized the fragrance of Esau's clothes, so he blessed him and said,

"Ahh, my son, you smell wonderful

like the fragrance of a field

that Yahweh has caused to flourish!

I ask God ~~to~~ provide you and your descendants plenty of rain from the sky for your crops and animals

and riches from the earth,

including abundant harvests and much wine.

I also ask God to cause nations to serve

and honor you and your descendants.

You will rule over your brother's descendants,

and they will **submit to you** and bow down to you.

Whoever curses you **God** will curse,  
but whoever blesses you **he** will bless.”

## *Esau Gets “Blessed” Too by His Father Isaac*

### **27:30-40**

<sup>30</sup> As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and right after Jacob had left his father’s presence, Jacob’s brother Esau returned **home** from hunting. <sup>31</sup> Then he too cooked a delicious meal, and he took **it** to his father **Isaac** and said to him, “Father, **please** sit up and eat some of your son’s deer meat so that you can bless me.” <sup>32</sup> But his father asked him, “Which son **are** you?” Esau answered, “I **am** your oldest son Esau.” <sup>33</sup> Then Isaac **became so upset that his body** shook very violently, and he asked **Esau**, “Who **was** it then that hunted deer meat and brought a meal to me? I finished eating it just before you came, and I blessed him. So God will definitely bless him.” <sup>34</sup> When Esau heard what his father said, he shouted out with a very loud and distressed shout and begged his father, “**Please** bless me too, father!” <sup>35</sup> But his father responded, “Your brother came **to me** and tricked **me** and stole the blessing that I was planning to give you.” <sup>36</sup> Then Esau exclaimed, “The name Jacob fits him exactly, because he has tricked me like this two times **now!** **First** he stole my rights as the oldest son, and now look **what he has done:** he has stolen my blessing!”

Then Esau begged **his father**, “Is there still a way you can **ask God** to bless me?” <sup>37</sup> Isaac answered, “Listen, I have **already** appointed Jacob to be your master. In fact, I have asked **God to make it so** that you and all your descendants will serve him **and his descendants**. Besides that, I have **also** blessed him with **abundant** harvests and wine. So then, there is no way left for me to bless you, my son!” <sup>38</sup> But Esau continued to beg his father **and say**, “Father, is there not **just** one more way that you can bless **me?** **Please** bless me too, father!” Then Esau started crying loudly. <sup>39</sup> Finally his father said to him, “Listen, you **and your descendants** will live in a place where the land is not good **for farming** and where there is not much rain.

You and your descendants will have to fight battles to stay alive, and you will serve your brother and his descendants. But when you rebel against them, you will get free from their control over you.”

## *Jacob Flees from Esau*

### **27:41-28:5**

<sup>41</sup> After that Esau held a grudge against Jacob because their father had blessed him. So Esau thought to himself, “Soon my father will die; then after we bury him and mourn for him, I will kill my brother Jacob.” <sup>42</sup> But Rebekah heard about what her oldest son Esau was planning, so she sent for her youngest son Jacob and told him, “Listen, your brother Esau is planning to take revenge on you and kill you. <sup>43</sup> So then, my son, listen to me: Hurry and escape to the city of Haran to my brother Laban! <sup>44</sup> Live with him for a short time until your brother is no longer angry with you. <sup>45</sup> When he is not angry with you anymore and he forgets what you did to him, I will send word that it is safe for you to come back home from there. I do not want to lose both of you on the same day!”

<sup>46</sup> Then Rebekah complained to Isaac, “My life is very miserable because of our Hittite daughters-in-law whom Esau married! If Jacob were to also marry a local Hittite woman like that, I would not want to keep on living!”

**28** <sup>1</sup> So Isaac summoned Jacob, blessed him and told him, “You must not marry a Canaanite woman. <sup>2</sup> Instead you must go right away to the region of Paddan Aram, to the home of your mother’s father, Bethuel, and marry one of your uncle Laban’s daughters. <sup>3</sup> I pray that God, who is all-powerful, will bless you and give you many children and increase the number of your descendants, so that you become the ancestor of a community of peoples. <sup>4</sup> I also pray that he will bless you and your descendants the same way that he blessed Abraham, so that you will own this land where you have been living as a foreigner, the same land which God gave to him.” <sup>5</sup> Then Isaac sent Jacob on his way, so Jacob started

traveling to Laban's house which was in the region of Paddan Aram. Laban was the son of Bethuel the Aramean and also the brother of Rebekah, who was Jacob and Esau's mother.

## *Esau Marries Another Wife*

**28:6-9**

<sup>6</sup> Now Esau had seen Isaac bless Jacob and send him to the region of Paddan Aram to marry a woman from there. As Isaac was blessing him, Esau heard him tell Jacob not to marry a Canaanite woman. <sup>7</sup> Esau also saw that Jacob obeyed their father and mother and started traveling to Paddan Aram. <sup>8</sup> That is when Esau realized that his father Isaac did not approve of his sons marrying Canaanite women. <sup>9</sup> So in addition to the two wives he already had, Esau went to the family of Abraham's son Ishmael and married Ishmael's daughter Mahalath, whose brother was Nebaioth.

## *Jacob Dreams about a Stairway to Heaven*

**28:10-22**

<sup>10</sup> After Jacob left from his family's home in the city of Beersheba, he started traveling to the city of Haran. <sup>11</sup> That evening he reached a good place to sleep, so he stopped there for the night because the sun had set. He chose one of the stones that was there and used it as a pillow. Then he lay down and went to sleep. <sup>12</sup> While he was dreaming, he saw a stairway. The bottom of the stairway was on the ground and its top reached up to heaven, and he saw God's angels going up and coming down on the stairway. <sup>13</sup> And there standing at the top of the stairway was Yahweh, and he said to Jacob, "I am Yahweh, the God whom your ancestors Abraham and Isaac serve. I will give you and your descendants this land that you are lying on. <sup>14</sup> They will be as numerous as the dust specks on the ground, so that they live throughout this land in every direction. Because of you and your descendants, I will bless all the families in the world. <sup>15</sup> Remember that I will always be with you. I will protect you wherever you go, and I will lead you back to this land. In fact, I will never leave you and I will do everything that I have promised you that I will do."

<sup>16</sup> Suddenly Jacob woke up from his dream and exclaimed **to himself**, “Yahweh definitely lives in this place, but I did not know **it before now!**” <sup>17</sup> He was afraid, so he also exclaimed, “This is a terrifying place! This can only be God’s house! **It must be the entrance to heaven!**”

<sup>18</sup> Early the next morning Jacob got up, took the stone that he had used as a pillow and set it up **on its end** to mark the place **where God had appeared to him**. Then he poured **some olive oil** on top of the stone **to dedicate the place to God**. <sup>19</sup> He named that place Bethel, **which means “house of God.”** Previously the name of that town had been Luz.

<sup>20</sup> Then Jacob made a vow **to God** and said, “God, if **you** will stay with me and protect me as I travel on this journey and if you provide me food to eat and clothes to wear, <sup>21</sup> so that I return safely to my father’s home, then Yahweh, **you** will be the God whom I serve.

<sup>22</sup> This stone that I have set up will be your house and mark the place **that you appeared to me**, and I will give back to you a tenth of everything that you give to me.”

## *Jacob Meets Rachel and Laban in the City of Haran*

29:1-14

29 <sup>1</sup> Then Jacob left Bethel and continued traveling **until he came** to the land in the east where various people from that land lived. <sup>2</sup> **When he arrived there**, he looked around, and he saw a well in an **open field**. There were three flocks of sheep lying near the well **waiting for water**. That was the well that flocks drank water from, but there was a **heavy, large stone** covering the top of the well. <sup>3</sup> **Every day** shepherds would bring all the flocks of sheep there. They would **work together** to remove the stone from the top of the well and draw water for the sheep. Then they would put the stone back over the top of the well.

<sup>4</sup> Jacob asked the shepherds, “My friends, where do you live?” They replied, “We are from **the city of Haran.**” <sup>5</sup> So Jacob asked them, “Do you know Laban, Nahor’s grandson?” They answered, “**Yes, we do.**” <sup>6</sup> So Jacob asked, “Is he doing well?” They answered **him**, “**Yes, he is well.** In fact, here comes his daughter Rachel **now**, bringing **his sheep.**” <sup>7</sup> Then

Jacob urged **them**, “Look, the sun is still bright, and **it is** too early to gather the flocks for the night. You ought to draw water for them and take **them** back out to the fields to graze some more.”<sup>8</sup> But they replied, “We can not **do that** until all the shepherds are here with their flocks. Then **together** we will move the stone away from the top of the well and draw water for the sheep.”

<sup>9</sup> While Jacob was still talking with the shepherds, Rachel arrived at the well with her father Laban’s sheep; it was her job to take care of them.<sup>10</sup> As soon as Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of his uncle Laban with her father’s sheep, he walked over to the well, removed the stone that covered it, and drew water for his uncle’s sheep.<sup>11</sup> Then he kissed Rachel on her cheek and he was so happy that he started crying.<sup>12</sup> Then he told her that he was her father’s nephew, the son of her aunt Rebekah. So she ran home and told her father the news.

<sup>13</sup> When Laban heard about his sister’s son Jacob, he ran out to greet him. Then he hugged him and kissed him on the cheeks and took him to his house. Then Jacob told Laban about himself and everything that had happened,<sup>14</sup> and Laban exclaimed to him, “There is no doubt that you are a close relative of my family!”

## *Jacob Works for Laban to Marry Rachel and Leah*

### **29:14b-30**

After Jacob had stayed with Laban and worked for him for an entire month,<sup>15</sup> Laban said to him, “**Just** because you are my nephew, **that does not mean that you should have to** work for me for free! Tell me what you want me to pay you.”<sup>16</sup> Now Laban had two daughters: The name of the older one was Leah, and the younger one was Rachel.<sup>17</sup> Leah had pretty eyes, but Rachel was extremely beautiful in every way.<sup>18</sup> Jacob was in love with Rachel, so he said to Laban, “I will work seven years for you if you will let me marry your younger daughter Rachel.”<sup>19</sup> Laban replied, “**I agree to your terms.** I would much rather give her to you to marry than give her to someone else. **So stay here and work for me.**”<sup>20</sup> So Jacob worked seven years for Laban so that he could marry Rachel, but he loved her so much that to him the time seemed to pass quickly like only a few days.

<sup>21</sup> When the seven years were over, Jacob said to Laban, “Please let me marry your daughter Rachel now so that I can live with her as my wife, because I have finished my seven years of work for you.” <sup>22</sup> So Laban invited all the local people and held a wedding feast. <sup>23</sup> But that evening Laban tricked Jacob and brought his daughter Leah to Jacob’s tent instead of Rachel, so that he had marital relations with her. <sup>24</sup> Laban also gave his female servant Zilpah to Leah to be her personal servant.

<sup>25</sup> But the next morning Jacob was shocked to see that it was Leah he had married! So he complained to Laban, “You have treated me very badly! You know that Rachel is the one I served you for! So why did you trick me?” <sup>26</sup> Laban replied, “It is not our custom here for the younger daughter to marry before the older daughter marries. <sup>27</sup> So then, keep Leah as your wife and finish this week of celebrating your marriage to her. Then our family will also give you my younger daughter to marry if you will work for me for another seven years.”

<sup>28</sup> So Jacob agreed with Laban and did what he said: he finished celebrating his marriage to Leah that week. Then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to marry. <sup>29</sup> Laban also gave his servant Bilhah to Rachel to be her servant. <sup>30</sup> Then Jacob had marital relations with Rachel, and he loved her more than he loved Leah. Then he started working for Laban for seven more years.

## *Jacob’s Children*

### **29:31-30:24**

<sup>31</sup> Now Yahweh knew that Jacob did not love Leah, so he made it possible for her to have children, but Rachel was not able to conceive. <sup>32</sup> Then Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, which means “See, a son!” because she exclaimed, “Now that Yahweh has seen that I am suffering and helped me, surely my husband will love me!”

<sup>33</sup> Then Leah became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She exclaimed, “Since Yahweh heard that my husband does not love me, he has given me this child also.” So she named him Simeon, which means “he hears.”

<sup>34</sup> Then Leah became pregnant **yet** again and gave birth to another son, and she exclaimed, “Now finally my husband will want to be with me because I have given him three sons!” That is why his name was Levi, **which means “be with.”**

<sup>35</sup> Once again Leah became pregnant and gave birth to another son, and she exclaimed, “Now I will praise Yahweh!” That is why she named him Judah, **which means “praise.”** Then Leah stopped having children **for a while.**

**30** <sup>1</sup> Meanwhile **when** Rachel realized that she was not able to bear **any children** for Jacob, she was jealous of her sister, and she demanded of Jacob, “Help me have children, or else I want to die!” <sup>2</sup> Jacob became very angry with Rachel and responded, “I am not God! He is the one who has prevented you from having children!” <sup>3</sup> Then Rachel told **him**, “You can have my servant woman Bilhah **as a wife.** Have **marital** relations with her so that she will have children for me, so that I too can have a family.” <sup>4</sup> So Rachel gave Jacob her servant Bilhah to be **another wife for him**, and Jacob had **marital** relations with her.

<sup>5</sup> Then Bilhah became pregnant and had a son for Jacob, <sup>6</sup> and Rachel exclaimed, “God has judged in my favor! Yes indeed, he has answered my prayer and given me a son!” That is why she named the baby Dan, **which means “he judged in my favor.”**

<sup>7</sup> Then Rachel’s servant Bilhah became pregnant again and had a second son for Jacob. <sup>8</sup> Then Rachel exclaimed, “I have had a difficult contest with my sister, and **now** I have defeated her!” Then she named that son Naphtali, **which means “my contest.”**

<sup>9</sup> Now when Leah realized that she had stopped having children, she brought her servant Zilpah to Jacob and gave her to him to be **another wife for him.** <sup>10</sup> Then Zilpah had a son for Jacob, <sup>11</sup> and Leah exclaimed, “I am so fortunate!” So she named him Gad, **which means “fortunate.”**

<sup>12</sup> Then Leah’s servant Zilpah had a second son for Jacob, <sup>13</sup> and Leah exclaimed, “**God** has truly blessed me! Now **other** women will know that **God** has blessed me.” So she named that son Asher, **which means “blessed.”**

<sup>14</sup> Then **one day** during the season when people were harvesting wheat, Leah’s son Reuben went out in a field and found **some** fertility plants, and he gave them to his mother. **When Rachel found out about the plants,** she begged Leah, “Please give me some of the

fertility plants that your son found.” <sup>15</sup> But Leah replied to her, “No! It was bad enough that you stole my husband from me! And now you even want to take my son’s fertility plants!” Rachel replied, “Alright then, Jacob can sleep with you tonight if you will give me your son’s fertility plants.”

<sup>16</sup> That evening when Jacob came home from working in the field, Leah went out to greet him and told him, “You must sleep with me tonight, because I have traded my son’s fertility plants for time with you.” So Jacob spent that night with Leah. <sup>17</sup> God answered the prayers of Leah, so that she became pregnant and had a fifth son for Jacob. <sup>18</sup> Then she said, “God has rewarded me for giving my servant to my husband as a wife.” So she named that son Issachar, which means “reward.”

<sup>19</sup> Then Leah became pregnant again and had a sixth son for Jacob. <sup>20</sup> Then she said, “God has given me a valuable gift, so that now my husband will honor me because I have had six sons for him.” So she named their son Zebulun, which means “honor.”

<sup>21</sup> Sometime after that, Leah had a daughter and named her Dinah.

<sup>22</sup> God had not forgotten Rachel, so he answered her prayers and made it possible for her to have children. <sup>23</sup> Then she became pregnant and had a son, and she exclaimed, “God has made it so that I am no longer ashamed!” <sup>24</sup> She named her son Joseph, which means “may he give another,” because she said, “I pray that Yahweh will give me another son.”

## *Jacob Becomes Very Rich Working for Laban*

### **30:25-43**

<sup>25</sup> After Rachel had Joseph, Jacob requested of Laban, “Please allow me to leave here, so that I can return to my own home in my own country. <sup>26</sup> Let me take my wives and my children, whom I have earned by working for you, so that I can leave with them. You yourself know how well I have worked for you.”

<sup>27</sup> But Laban responded to him, “Please be kind to me and stay, because I have found out from observing signs that Yahweh has blessed me because you are here with me.”

<sup>28</sup> Then he added, “Tell me what you want your pay to be, and that is what I will pay you.”

<sup>29</sup> Jacob replied to him, “You yourself know how **hard** I have worked for you and how **well** your animals have prospered under my care. <sup>30</sup> The few that you owned before I came have multiplied dramatically. Yes, Yahweh has blessed you because of me. But now, I need to also provide for my **own** family!”

<sup>31</sup> So Laban asked **him**, “What can I pay you **to persuade you to stay here?**” Jacob answered, “Do not pay me anything. Just do this **one** thing for me, and I will continue taking care of your flocks: <sup>32</sup> Let me look through all your flocks today and separate out from them all the lambs that are speckled, spotted or dark-colored, and **all** the young goats that are spotted or speckled. They will be my pay. <sup>33</sup> That way **too**, in the future it will be easy **for you** to know whether **or not** I am being honest whenever you check the animals you have paid me. **If you see that I have any sheep or goats that are not speckled or spotted or any lambs that are not dark-colored, you will know that I stole them from you.**”

<sup>34</sup> Laban replied, “I agree, let’s do exactly as you have suggested.” <sup>35</sup> But that **same** day, Laban separated **from his flocks** all the he-goats that had stripes or spots, and all the she-goats that had speckles or spots, all that **had any white marks** on them, together with all the dark-colored lambs. Then he told his sons to take care of **them**, <sup>36</sup> and he **and his sons** took **those animals** a three-day walking-distance away from Jacob. Meanwhile Jacob continued taking care of the rest of Laban’s flocks.

<sup>37</sup> Then Jacob cut **some** branches from poplar trees, almond trees, and chestnut trees, and made white streaks on them **by peeling off long strips of bark**, which exposed the white wood that was inside the branches. <sup>38</sup> Then he put those **streaked** branches in all the drinking troughs that the flocks would come to drink from, so that the flocks would see the branches. **That way, whenever** the animals that were ready to mate came **to the troughs** to drink, <sup>39</sup> they would see the branches as they were mating. As a result, they would have **young that were striped or speckled or spotted.** <sup>40</sup> Then Jacob separated those young animals **from Laban’s flocks to form new flocks for himself**, and he put **the rest of the flocks** with the striped and dark-colored animals in Laban’s flocks **so that they would mate and have young that were striped or dark-colored.** In that way, **over time** he created separate flocks of **sheep and goats** for himself that he kept separate from Laban’s flocks.

<sup>41</sup> Whenever the stronger female animals were ready to mate, Jacob put the **streaked** branches in the **drinking** troughs in front of those animals so that they would see the

branches as they were mating. <sup>42</sup> But whenever the weaker female animals were ready to mate, Jacob did not put the branches in the troughs. In that way, the young from the weaker animals were Laban's and the young from the stronger animals were Jacob's. <sup>43</sup> So Jacob became extremely wealthy. He owned large flocks of sheep and goats, and many male and female servants and many camels and donkeys.

## *Jacob and His Family Flee from Laban*

31:1-21

**31** <sup>1</sup> Then one day Jacob heard that Laban's sons were complaining and saying, "Jacob has taken for himself everything that our father owned. In fact, he has gotten all his riches by taking the animals that were our father's!" <sup>2</sup> Jacob also noticed that Laban no longer acted friendly toward him the way he did in the past. <sup>3</sup> Then Yahweh told Jacob, "Return to your ancestors' homeland, where your relatives live, and I will stay with you and help you."

<sup>4</sup> So Jacob sent a message to Rachel and Leah that they should meet him at the field where he was with his flocks of sheep and goats. <sup>5</sup> When they arrived, he said to them, "I have noticed that your father no longer acts friendly toward me the way he did in the past, but the God whom my father serves has stayed with me and has helped me. <sup>6</sup> You both know how I have worked for your father as hard as I could, <sup>7</sup> but he has cheated me by changing what he pays me ten times. However, God has not permitted him to hurt me. <sup>8</sup> For example, every time that he told me that the speckled animals would be my pay, all the female animals in the flocks gave birth to speckled young. But whenever he changed his mind and told me that the striped animals would be my pay, then they all gave birth to streaked young. <sup>9</sup> In that way, God has taken your father's animals from him and has given them to me.

<sup>10</sup> One time during the season when the flocks of sheep and goats were mating, I had a dream. In the dream I looked around and was surprised to see that the only male goats and sheep that were mating with the female goats and sheep were striped, speckled, or blotched.

<sup>11</sup> Then an angel from God called to me in the dream, 'Jacob!' and I answered, 'Yes, Lord?' <sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, 'Look around and notice that all the male goats and sheep

that are mating with the female goats and sheep are striped, speckled, or blotched. I have caused that to happen, because I have noticed all the wrong things that Laban has been doing to you. <sup>13</sup> I am the God who appeared to you at the town of Bethel, where you poured oil on top of a memorial stone to dedicate the place to me, and where you made an oath to me. So then, get ready and leave this land immediately, and go back to your home land.”

<sup>14</sup> Then Rachel and Leah responded to Jacob, “We will not inherit anything from our father when he dies! <sup>15</sup> It is obvious that he treats us like strangers and not family. For example, he sold us to you, and then he spent all the money that should have been ours.

<sup>16</sup> In fact, all the wealth that God has taken from our father rightfully belongs to us and our children. So then, you should do everything that God has told you to do.”

<sup>17</sup> So Jacob quickly got ready for the journey and helped his wives and his children get up onto some camels. <sup>18</sup> Then he started herding the camels and all his other animals toward the region of Canaan where his father Isaac lived. He took with him all his possessions that he had accumulated, including all the livestock that he had acquired while living in the region of Paddan Aram.

<sup>19</sup> Now before that, Laban the Aramean had gone away for several days to shear his sheep. While her father was gone, Rachel entered his tent and stole his idols that he worshiped. <sup>20</sup> At the same time, Jacob also deceived Laban by fleeing secretly without telling him that he was leaving. <sup>21</sup> So in that way Jacob ran away with his family and took everything that they owned. They quickly crossed the Euphrates River and headed toward the hill country of Gilead.

## *Laban Chases After Jacob and His Family*

**31:22-42**

<sup>22</sup> Three days later someone informed Laban that Jacob had run away. <sup>23</sup> So Laban took some of his relatives with him and chased after Jacob and his family for seven days until they overtook him in the hill country of Gilead. <sup>24</sup> But that night God appeared to Laban in a dream and warned him, “Be sure that you do not threaten Jacob in any way.”

**25** By the time that Laban caught up with Jacob, Jacob had already set up his tents in the hill country of Gilead, so Laban and his relatives also set up camp there at a place nearby.

**26** Then the next day Laban met with Jacob and complained to him, “Look what you have done! You have deceived me and dragged away my daughters like prisoners of war! **27** You should not have deceived me and secretly run away! You should have told me you were leaving! If I had known, we could have held a feast and sung joyful songs and danced together, with tambourines and lyres playing, before sending you on your way. **28** You did not even let me kiss my daughters and my grandchildren before they left! What you have done is foolish! **29** I have the power to harm all of you, but last night in a dream the God whom your father serves warned me not to threaten you in any way. **30** Now then, I understand that you left because you were so homesick to return to your father’s family, but why did you steal my gods?”

**31** Jacob answered Laban, “We left secretly because I was afraid. I thought that if I told you we were leaving, you might take your two daughters from me by force. **32** However we did not take your gods. In fact, if you find your gods with anyone here, that person will die for stealing them! So while our relatives are watching, go ahead and search all my belongings for yourself. If you find anything that is yours, take it.” When Jacob said that, he did not know that Rachel was the one who had stolen the idols.

**33** So Laban started searching in Jacob’s tent. Then he searched through Leah’s tent and through the two servant women’s tent, but he did not find anything that belonged to him. Next after he left those tents, he went into Rachel’s tent. **34** Now Rachel had hidden the idols inside her camel saddlebag, and she was sitting on them. So although Laban searched through everything else in the tent, he could not find them. **35** As he was searching, Rachel said to him, “Sir, please do not be upset that I am not able to get up to greet you, because it’s that time of the month when I feel weak.” That is also why he could not find his idols when he searched her tent.

**36** Then Jacob became very angry at Laban and confronted him by saying to him, “Tell me my crime! Tell me what sin I have done against you that gives you the right to chase after me! **37** Now that you have searched through all my things, did you find anything that anyone took from your household? If so, put it here in front of our relatives, so that they can decide which one of us is right!

<sup>38</sup> For twenty years I have worked for you! During all that time your sheep and your goats had no trouble bearing young, and I have never killed and eaten any animals from your flocks. <sup>39</sup> Whenever wild animals killed any of your animals, I never brought the dead animal to you to prove I was innocent. Rather, I replaced them at my own expense. Besides that, you required me to pay for any animals that anyone ever stole at any time of day or night. <sup>40</sup> That was my situation! During the days, I suffered from the hot sun, and during the nights it was so cold that I could not sleep. <sup>41</sup> It was like that for me during the entire twenty years that I was with you. I worked for you for fourteen years in order to marry your two daughters, and I worked another six years to earn flocks of animals from you, even though you changed my pay ten times. <sup>42</sup> If God, whom my ancestors Abraham and Isaac serve and revere, had not been with me to take care of me, there is no doubt that I would now be leaving here with absolutely nothing. But God knows how much you have mistreated me and how hard I have worked for you, so last night he rebuked you.”

## *Jacob and Laban Establish a Peace Treaty with Each Other*

### 31:43-55

<sup>43</sup> Then Laban responded to Jacob, “These women are my daughters, and their children are my grandchildren, and these flocks are also mine. In fact, all that you see here is mine! But there is nothing I can do today to keep my daughters or their children near me any longer! <sup>44</sup> So then, you and I should make a peace treaty with each other, and there should be something to remind us to keep that treaty.” <sup>45</sup> So Jacob picked out a large stone and set it up on its end as a monument to mark the place where they made their treaty. <sup>46</sup> Then he told his relatives, “Gather some more stones.” So they all gathered stones and put them in a large pile. Then everyone ate a meal together there next to the pile of stones. <sup>47</sup> Laban gave the pile the Aramaic name Jegar Sahadutha, which means “pile that reminds,” while Jacob gave it the Hebrew name Galeed, which has the same meaning. <sup>48</sup> Laban said to him, “Starting today this pile of stones will remind you and me about our peace treaty.” That is why the name of that place is Galeed. <sup>49</sup> Another name for the place is Mizpah, which means “watchtower,” because Laban said to Jacob, “May Yahweh watch both of us to make sure that we keep our treaty while we are apart from each other. <sup>50</sup> If you treat my daughters

badly, or if you marry **other** wives besides them, remember **that even if no one else is watching us, God is always watching both of us to hold us accountable.**”

<sup>51</sup> Then Laban **also** said to Jacob, “Here is this pile of stones, and here is this monument which we stood up between us **to remind us about our peace treaty.** <sup>52</sup> This pile of stones and this monument **both** remind us that I must never go past this pile **to attack you**, and that you must never go past this pile and this monument to attack me. <sup>53</sup> May **your grandfather Abraham’s God and my grandfather Nahor’s gods, which were also their father Terah’s gods, judge between us and punish us if we break this agreement!**” But Jacob made a vow by the God whom his father Isaac revered **that he would keep their treaty,** <sup>54</sup> and he burned the body of an animal on an altar as a sacrifice to God on the mountain. Then he invited his relatives to eat a meal **together there.** So they **all** ate the meal **together** and spent the night there.

<sup>55</sup> Early the next morning Laban got up and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters **goodbye on the cheeks** and asked God to bless them. Then he **and his men** left from there and returned home.

## *Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau*

32:1-21

32 <sup>1</sup> Meanwhile Jacob continued on his journey **toward home with his family, and some angels from God met him.** <sup>2</sup> When Jacob saw the angels, he exclaimed, “This is God’s army!” So he named that place Mahanaim, **which means “two armies.”**

<sup>3</sup> Then Jacob sent **some** messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau **who was living in the region of Seir, which was also called the country of Edom.** <sup>4</sup> **Before they left,** he ordered them, “This is what you must tell my master Esau: ‘I, your servant Jacob, want you to know that I have been staying with **our uncle** Laban all this time. <sup>5</sup> I **now own many** cattle, donkeys, and flocks, as well as **many** male and female servants. I have sent this message to you, sir, hoping that you will be kind to me when I arrive.’”

<sup>6</sup> **After the messengers delivered Jacob’s message,** they returned to Jacob and reported to him, “We went **and spoke** to your brother Esau. Now he is on his way **here** to meet you, but

there are also 400 men coming with him!”<sup>7</sup> When Jacob heard that, he was very frightened and worried. So he put all the people and animals that were with him into two large groups, including his family, his servants and all his flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle and camels.<sup>8</sup> He did that because he thought, “If Esau and his men come and attack one group, then the other group might be able to escape.”

<sup>9</sup> Then he prayed, “Dear Yahweh, the God whom my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac served, you told me to go back to my country where my relatives live, and that you would cause me to prosper.<sup>10</sup> I am not worthy of how kind and faithful you have always been to me as I have served you. When I first crossed this Jordan River, all that I owned was my walking stick, but now my family and belongings are enough to form two large groups.<sup>11</sup> Please rescue me now from my brother Esau, because I am afraid that he and his men will come and attack me as well as these mothers and our children!<sup>12</sup> But you promised me that you would greatly prosper me, and that you would make my descendants as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore, which are so numerous that no one can count them all.”

<sup>13</sup> Then Jacob spent the night there, and during that time he selected many of his animals to give to his brother Esau,<sup>14</sup> including 200 female goats and twenty male goats, 200 female sheep and twenty male sheep,<sup>15</sup> thirty mother camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, and twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys.<sup>16</sup> Jacob put his servants in charge of the animals, with each kind of animal in a separate group. Then he ordered his servants, “Go ahead of me, one group at a time, and keep some distance between each group of animals.”<sup>17</sup> He also ordered the servant in charge of the first group of animals, “When my brother Esau meets you and asks you, ‘Who is your master, and where are you headed? And who do these animals belong to that you are driving ahead of you?’<sup>18</sup> then you are to tell him, ‘Esau, sir, these animals belong to Jacob who humbly serves you. He has sent them to you as a gift. In fact, he is following us here.’”

<sup>19</sup> In the same way, Jacob ordered the servants who were in charge of the second and third groups of animals, and all the servants who were in charge of the other groups, “When you meet Esau, tell him the same thing that I told the first servant.<sup>20</sup> Especially be sure to tell him that his servant Jacob is following you there.” Jacob did all that, because he thought that if he sent the gifts of animals ahead of himself to Esau, then Esau would stop being angry at him. He was hoping that when Esau saw the gifts, he would forgive him and

welcome him when they met in person. <sup>21</sup> So Jacob's servants went ahead of Jacob with the animal gifts for Esau, while Jacob and his family stayed behind in the camp that night.

## *Jacob Wrestles with God, Who Names Him Israel*

### 32:22-32

<sup>22</sup> Later that same night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two servant wives and his eleven sons across a shallow place in the Jabbok Stream. <sup>23</sup> After he had taken them across the stream, he went back and had his servants take all his animals and other belongings across the stream too. <sup>24</sup> Then Jacob was there by himself for a while, and a man came and fought with him until daybreak. <sup>25</sup> When the man realized that he was not able to defeat Jacob, he struck him on his hip, so that it went out of place as they fought with each other. <sup>26</sup> Then the man said to him, "Let go of me, because it is daybreak!" But Jacob replied, "No! I will not let go of you until you first bless me!" <sup>27</sup> So the man asked him, "What is your name?" He answered, "My name is Jacob." <sup>28</sup> Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but rather it will be Israel, which means 'he who wrestles with God,' because you have wrestled with God and with people, and you have won."

<sup>29</sup> Then Jacob asked the man to tell him his name. But he replied, "There is no need for you to ask me what my name is!" Then the man blessed Jacob there. <sup>30</sup> So Jacob named the place Peniel, which means "God's face," because he exclaimed, "I saw God's face here, but yet he allowed me to live!"

<sup>31</sup> The sun was shining as Jacob left Peniel and returned to his family. He was limping as he walked because of his hip injury. <sup>32</sup> That is why even today the people of Israel do

not eat meat that comes from an animal's hip joint, because that is the place on Jacob's hip that God struck and injured.

## *Jacob Reunites with Esau and Settles in the City of Shechem*

33:1-20

**33** <sup>1</sup> Then Jacob looked and saw in the distance that Esau was coming toward him, and with him were 400 men! So Jacob quickly divided up his children among Leah, Rachel and his two servant wives. <sup>2</sup> He put his servant wives and their children first in line, then Leah with her children behind them, and Rachel with her son Joseph last. <sup>3</sup> Then Jacob himself went ahead of them all toward his brother. As he got closer to him, he bowed with his face to the ground seven times to show respect.

<sup>4</sup> But Esau ran to greet Jacob and hugged him. He held him tightly and kissed him on the cheeks, as they both cried for joy. <sup>5</sup> Then Esau looked ahead and noticed the women and children who were there, so he asked Jacob, "Who are these people? Do they belong to you?" Jacob answered him, "They are the wives and the children whom God has kindly given to me, sir." <sup>6</sup> Then the two servant wives with their children came forward, and they all bowed to the ground in front of Esau to show respect. <sup>7</sup> Next Leah and her children also came forward and bowed to the ground. Then last of all, Joseph and his mother Rachel came forward, and they also bowed to the ground.

<sup>8</sup> Then Esau asked Jacob, "Why did you send all those herds of animals that I encountered?" Jacob answered him, "They are gifts for you so that you will be kind to me, sir." <sup>9</sup> But Esau replied, "My brother, I already have enough animals, so keep them for yourself." <sup>10</sup> But Jacob insisted, "Please do not refuse my gifts. Rather, if you want to be kind to me, then please accept these gifts from me. After all, for me to see your face is like seeing God's face, especially since you have welcomed me so kindly. <sup>11</sup> So please accept my gift of animals that I sent to you, because God has been kind to me, so that I have all that I need." Jacob kept insisting that Esau accept the animals from him until finally he accepted them.

<sup>12</sup> Then Esau suggested to Jacob, “Let’s start traveling home, and I will accompany you.” <sup>13</sup> But Jacob replied to him, “Sir, as you know, my children are fragile, and I need to be careful with all the sheep and cattle that are nursing their young. If I force the animals to go too far for even one day, all of them will die. <sup>14</sup> So then, sir, please go on home ahead of me, sir. I will travel along slowly at a safe pace for the animals and the children that are with me, until we reach you in the region of Seir.”

<sup>15</sup> So Esau responded, “Okay, then please let me leave with you some of my men to escort you.” But Jacob replied, “There is no need for you to do that. Just please continue to be kind to me, sir.” <sup>16</sup> So that same day Esau and his men started on their way back home to the land of Seir. <sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, instead of going to Seir, Jacob and his family traveled to the town of Succoth. There he and his men built houses for himself and his family, and they built some shelters for his animals. That is why the name of that place is Succoth, which means “shelters.”

<sup>18</sup> After that, Jacob and his family continued their journey home from Paddan Aram, until they arrived safely at the city of Shechem in the region of Canaan. Then they set up their tents in a field near that city. <sup>19</sup> While he was there, he bought the land where he had set up his tents for a hundred pieces of silver from the descendants of Hamor, who was the father of Shechem. <sup>20</sup> Jacob also built an altar out of stones on that land, and he named it El Elohe Israel, which means “God is the God of Israel.”

## *Shechem Rapes Dinah, and Jacob’s Sons Take Revenge*

34:1-31

**34** <sup>1</sup> Then one day Dinah, who was the daughter of Jacob and Leah, went out to visit with some of the local women. <sup>2</sup> The chief of that region was a Hivite named Hamor. His son Shechem saw how beautiful Dinah was, so he grabbed hold of her and raped her. <sup>3</sup> Shechem admired Jacob’s daughter Dinah so much that he fell in love with her and spoke sweetly to her to try to woo her. <sup>4</sup> Then Shechem said to his father Hamor, “Negotiate things for me so that I can marry this girl.”

<sup>5</sup> When Jacob found out that Shechem had dishonored his daughter Dinah, his sons were **still out** in the fields taking care of his animals, so he did not say anything **about it** until they returned **home**. <sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, **Shechem and** his father Hamor went to talk to Jacob. <sup>7</sup> Soon Jacob's sons returned **home** from the fields. When they heard **what had happened**, they were shocked and extremely angry that Shechem had dishonored **the people of Israel** by raping Jacob's daughter. No one should ever do such a **horrible thing!** <sup>8</sup> But Hamor urged Jacob and his sons, "My son Shechem deeply loves your daughter **and sister**. **So please** allow him to marry her. <sup>9</sup> **In fact**, let's allow marriage between our two peoples, **so that** your daughters can marry our **young men** and your **young men** can marry our daughters. <sup>10</sup> You can live among us. The land is available for you **to choose what you want**; **live in it wherever you want**. You can **also** trade **freely** here, and you can **buy your own land**."

<sup>11</sup> Then Shechem said to Dinah's father and brothers, "**Please** be kind to me **and let me marry her**. Then I will pay you whatever you request from me **for her**. <sup>12</sup> Set the bride-price and **marriage gifts that I must pay for her** as high as you want, and I will pay you whatever you ask from me. **Just please** give the young woman to me to marry."

<sup>13</sup> But since Shechem had dishonored their sister Dinah, Jacob's sons replied to him and his father Hamor in a deceitful way. <sup>14</sup> They said to them, "It would not be acceptable for us to let our sister marry a man **like you** who is not circumcised, because that would dishonor our family! <sup>15</sup> The only way that we can agree with your proposal **is if first you and your people** become like us by circumcising all of your males. <sup>16</sup> **If you do that**, then we will allow your **young men** to marry our daughters, and **we will allow** your daughters to marry our **young men**. We will **also** live among you **in this land**, so that we become one people group. <sup>17</sup> However if you refuse to agree with our requirement that you circumcise **your people**, then we will take our sister and move **somewhere else**."

<sup>18</sup> What Jacob's sons said seemed good to Hamor and his son Shechem. <sup>19</sup> So right away Shechem, who was the most respected member in his family, started to do what they required, because he was thrilled with Jacob's daughter. <sup>20</sup> In fact, he and his father Hamor went **straight** to their city entrance **for a town meeting**, and they told the elders of their city **about Jacob and his sons**, <sup>21</sup> "These people are friendly toward us, so **let's** allow them to live in **our** land and trade **freely** here. After all, there is more than enough space in the land for them **too**. **Besides that, then** our **young men** can marry their daughters, and their **young men** can marry our daughters. <sup>22</sup> There is just one thing: They will only agree to live

among us and become one people group **with us** if we circumcise all our males so that we are like them. <sup>23</sup> **But if we do that, all their property, including their livestock and all their other animals will belong to us! So let's just agree to do what they require so that they will live among us!"**

<sup>24</sup> All the men who were leaders of the city agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem, so they circumcised every male in the city, including themselves.

<sup>25</sup> Three days later, when the men of the city of Shechem were all still sore from being circumcised, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, who were Dinah's brothers, took their swords and attacked the city, with no one opposing them. They killed all the men <sup>26</sup> with their swords, including Hamor and his son Shechem. Then they got Dinah from Shechem's house and left the city. <sup>27</sup> Next all Jacob's sons went into the city and took everything valuable from the dead bodies and from the rest of the city. They did that, because that was where Shechem had dishonored their sister. <sup>28</sup> They plundered whatever was in the city and in the surrounding fields, including the people's flocks of sheep and goats, their herds of cattle and their donkeys. <sup>29</sup> They carried away all the valuable things the people of Shechem had owned, including everything that was in their houses. They also captured their women and children.

<sup>30</sup> Later Jacob scolded Simeon and Levi by saying, "You have brought me serious trouble by causing the Canaanites and Perizzites who live in this land to hate us! I only have a few men to defend us, so if they all join forces against us and attack us, they will destroy us and the rest of our family!" <sup>31</sup> But Simeon and Levi responded, "Shechem should not have treated our sister like a whore!"

## *God Blesses Jacob at the Town of Bethel*

**35:1-15**

**35** <sup>1</sup> Then God commanded Jacob, "Leave here and move to the town of Bethel. Build an altar there and offer sacrifices on it to worship me as the God who appeared to you there when you were running away from your brother Esau." <sup>2</sup> So Jacob told his family and everyone else who was with him, "Get rid of the idols you have that other people worship.

Also wash and make yourselves clean and put on clean clothes. <sup>3</sup> Then we will leave here and move to **the town of Bethel**. There we will build an altar and worship God because he helped me during the time when I was in trouble. He has **always** been with us **and taken care of us** everywhere that we have gone.” <sup>4</sup> So they gave Jacob all their idols and **all** their earrings. Then Jacob buried all those things at the base of the oak tree that **was near the city of Shechem**.

<sup>5</sup> Then Jacob and everyone with him left that place, and God caused **the people in the surrounding towns** to be terrified, so that they did not attack Jacob’s family. <sup>6</sup> He and his family **continued traveling** in the region of Canaan, and they arrived at **the town of Luz**, which **also has the name Bethel**. <sup>7</sup> There Jacob built an altar, and he named the place El Bethel, which means “**the God of Bethel**,” because that is where God had **first** appeared to him when he was running away from his brother.

<sup>8</sup> **While they were there**, Deborah died. She was the servant that had helped raise **Jacob’s mother Rebekah when she was young**. Jacob buried her body at the base of an oak tree, **in the valley near the town of Bethel**. So he named the place Allon Bacuth, which means “**oak tree of mourning**.”

<sup>9</sup> Now that Jacob had returned from **the region of Paddan Aram**, God appeared to him at **Bethel** again. **There** God blessed him <sup>10</sup> and said to him, “**Although your name has been Jacob**, that will no longer be your name. Rather, you will have the name **Israel!**” So **once again** God gave Jacob the name **Israel**.

<sup>11</sup> Then God **also** said to Jacob, “I am Almighty God. Have many children so that you **and your descendants** become **very numerous**. Your descendants will become a community of peoples, and some of your descendants will be kings. <sup>12</sup> **Besides that**, the land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I **also** give to you and your descendants **who live after you**.” <sup>13</sup> After God finished talking to Jacob, he left him there and went up **to heaven**.

<sup>14</sup> Then Jacob stood a **large stone up on its end** at the place where God had talked to him, to mark the place **as special**. Then he poured some wine and some **olive oil** on the stone

marker to thank God and dedicate the place to him. <sup>15</sup> Since God had talked to Jacob at that place, Jacob named it Bethel, which means “God’s house.”

## *Rachel Dies Giving Birth to Benjamin*

### **35:16-20**

<sup>16</sup> Later Jacob and his family moved on from Bethel and headed for the town of Ephrath. While they were still some distance from there, his wife Rachel went into labor, but she was experiencing great difficulty. <sup>17</sup> Then when her labor pain was at its worst, the baby was born and the woman who was helping her deliver exclaimed to her, “Do not despair! You now have another son!” <sup>18</sup> But Rachel was dying, and as her spirit was leaving her body, she named her baby Benoni which means “son of my sorrow”. But later, his father Jacob changed his name to Benjamin, which means “son of my right hand.”

<sup>19</sup> After Rachel died, they buried her body beside the road to the town of Ephrath, which also has the name Bethlehem. <sup>20</sup> Jacob stood a stone up on its end on her grave to mark where it was. In fact, that same stone still marks Rachel’s grave today.

## *Jacob’s Twelve Sons*

### **35:21-26**

<sup>21</sup> Then Israel and his family moved on from there and set up their tents on the south side of the tower of Eder. <sup>22</sup> While they were living in that area, Israel’s son Reuben committed adultery with his father’s servant-wife Bilhah, and Israel found out about it.

With the birth of Benjamin, Jacob now had a total of twelve sons. <sup>23</sup> The sons he had with Leah were Reuben, who was his oldest child, then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. <sup>24</sup> The sons he had with Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. <sup>25</sup> The sons he had with Rachel’s servant Bilhah were Dan and Naphtali. <sup>26</sup> And the sons he had with Leah’s

servant Zilpah were Gad and Asher. All those are the sons Jacob had starting from the time that he lived in the region of Paddan Aram.

## *Isaac Dies*

**35:27-29**

<sup>27</sup> Then Jacob went home to his father Isaac in the city of Mamre, which also has the name Kiriath Arba or Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac and their families had lived for a while as foreigners. <sup>28</sup> Isaac lived to be 180 years old. <sup>29</sup> Then, after living a long, full life, he took his last breath and died, and he joined his ancestors who had died before him. Then his sons Esau and Jacob buried his body.

## *Esau's Descendants*

**36:1-19**

**1 Chronicles 1:34-54**

**36** <sup>1</sup> Here is a record about the descendants of Esau, whose name was also Edom.

<sup>2</sup> Esau had married two Canaanite women. Their names were Adah, who was the daughter of a Hittite man named Elon, and Oholibamah, whose father was Anah and whose grandfather was a Hivite named Zibeon. <sup>3</sup> Esau also married Basemath, who was Ishmael's daughter and Nebaioth's sister.

<sup>4</sup> Adah had a son with Esau whom they named Eliphaz, while Basemath had a son named Reuel. <sup>5</sup> Oholibamah had sons named Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. All those were Esau's sons whom he and his wives had while they lived in the region of Canaan.

<sup>6</sup> Later Esau moved away from his brother Jacob. He took with him his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the other members of his household, as well as his livestock and all the rest of his animals and all the other belongings that he had gotten in the region of Canaan. <sup>7</sup> The reason he moved away is that he and Jacob both owned so many animals that

they could not live together **in the same area**. The land where they were staying was **just not big enough** to support them **both** because they had so many livestock. <sup>8</sup> That is how Esau and his family ended up living in the Seir Mountains. **That is the record about Esau, that is, Edom.**

<sup>9</sup> Here is a **more detailed** record of the descendants of Esau, **who was** the ancestor of the Edomites **who live** in the Seir Mountains. <sup>10</sup> **Two of** Esau's sons were Eliphaz, whom he had with his wife Adah, and Reuel, whom he had with his wife Basemath. <sup>11</sup> Eliphaz and his wife had sons **they named** Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. <sup>12</sup> Eliphaz and his servant-wife Timna had a son **they named** Amalek. Eliphaz's sons were **all** grandsons of Esau and his wife Adah.

<sup>13</sup> Reuel's sons were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. They were the grandsons of Esau and his wife Basemath.

<sup>14</sup> Esau and his wife Oholibamah had sons **whom they named** Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. Oholibamah was the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon.

<sup>15</sup> Here is a **record of** the descendants of Esau **who became** clan leaders: The sons of his firstborn son Eliphaz **who became** clan leaders were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, <sup>16</sup> Korah, Gatam, and Amalek. They were the clan leaders **who descended** from Eliphaz and lived in the land of Edom. They were **all** grandsons of Adah and Esau.

<sup>17</sup> The sons of Esau's son Reuel **who became** clan leaders were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. They were the clan leaders **who descended** from Reuel and lived in the land of Edom. They were **all** grandsons of Esau and his wife Basemath.

<sup>18</sup> The sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah **who became** clan leaders were Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. They were the clan leaders **who descended** from Esau and his wife Oholibamah, **who was** Anah's daughter.

<sup>19</sup> All those clan leaders were the descendants of Esau, that is, Edom, and each one led his own family group.

## *Seir's Descendants*

### **36:20-30**

<sup>20</sup> Here is a record of the descendants of Seir the Horite who were also living in that land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, <sup>21</sup> Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. They were the descendants of Seir who became clan leaders over the Horites in the land of Edom.

<sup>22</sup> Lotan's sons were Hori and Hemam, and his sister was Timna.

<sup>23</sup> Shobal's sons were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho and Onam.

<sup>24</sup> Zibeon's sons were Aiah and Anah. This is the same Anah who discovered some hot springs while he was out in the desert grazing his father's donkeys. <sup>25</sup> Anah's children were his son Dishon and his daughter Oholibamah. <sup>26</sup> Dishon's sons were Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran.

<sup>27</sup> Ezer's sons were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.

<sup>28</sup> Dishan's sons were Uz and Aran.

<sup>29</sup> The Horites who became clan leaders were Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, <sup>30</sup> Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. Those were the Horite clan leaders. They led their own family groups and lived in the land of Seir.

## *The Rulers over the Land of Edom*

36:31-43

### 1 Chronicles 1:43-54

<sup>31</sup> Here is a record of the kings who ruled over the people of the land of Edom before the Israelites had their own king. <sup>32</sup> Bela, who was the son of Beor, was the first king to rule over the people of the land of Edom. The name of his hometown that he ruled from was Dinhabah. <sup>33</sup> When King Bela died, Jobab, who was the son of Zerah, replaced him as king and ruled from his hometown of Bozrah. <sup>34</sup> When King Jobab died, Husham replaced him as king and ruled from his hometown, which was in the land where the Temanites lived. <sup>35</sup> When King Husham died, Hadad, who was the son of Bedad, replaced him as king. King Hadad is the one who defeated the Midianites in battle in the land of Moab. The name of his hometown that he ruled from was Avith. <sup>36</sup> When King Hadad died, Samlah replaced him as king and ruled from his hometown of Masrekah. <sup>37</sup> When King Samlah died, Shaul replaced him as king and ruled from his hometown of Rehoboth beside the Euphrates River. <sup>38</sup> When King Shaul died, Baal-Hanan, who was the son of Acbor, replaced him as king. <sup>39</sup> When King Baal-Hanan died, Hadar replaced him as king, and the name of his hometown that he ruled from was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel, who was the daughter of Matred and the granddaughter of Me-Zahab.

<sup>40</sup> Here are the names of more of the clan leaders who descended from Esau; each clan leader led his own family group and ruled his own region that was named after him: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, <sup>41</sup> Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, <sup>42</sup> Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, <sup>43</sup> Magdiel, and Iram. All of those were clan leaders over the Edomites; they all led their own settlements in

the land that they controlled. This concludes the record about Esau, who was the ancestor of all the Edomites.

## *Joseph's Dreams Anger His Brothers*

37:1–11

**37** <sup>1</sup> Jacob continued to live in the region of Canaan where his father Isaac had lived for a while as a foreigner. <sup>2</sup> Here is more of the record about Jacob and his family: One day his seventeen-year-old son Joseph was taking care of the family's flocks of sheep and goats. Joseph was helping his brothers who were the sons of his father's servant wives Bilhah and Zilpah, and he told their father about the bad things they were doing.

<sup>3</sup> Now Israel, that is, Jacob, loved Joseph more than any of his other sons because he was born to him when he was old. So he made a special robe for Joseph that had many colors. <sup>4</sup> When Joseph's brothers realized that their father loved Joseph more than the rest of them, they hated him so much that they would not talk to him in a friendly manner.

<sup>5</sup> One night Joseph had a dream, and he told his brothers about it. That made them hate him even more than before. <sup>6</sup> This is what he told them, "Please listen to this dream that I had: <sup>7</sup> In it I saw us working out in a field cutting and tying bundles of grain stalks. Then suddenly the bundle that I had made stood up straight. Then I saw that the bundles you had made stood around my bundle and bowed down to my bundle to show respect." <sup>8</sup> His brothers responded to him, "Do you really expect to be our king? You will never rule over us!" So they hated him even more intensely than they did before because of what he had said to them about his dreams.

<sup>9</sup> Then Joseph had another dream that he also told to his brothers. He said, "Listen, I just had another dream, and in it I saw that the sun, the moon, and eleven stars bowed down to the ground before me to show respect." <sup>10</sup> Later Joseph told the same dream to both his father and his brothers, but his father scolded him by saying, "That is a strange dream that you had! Do you really expect your mother and me and your brothers to bow down before

you?” <sup>11</sup> So Joseph’s brothers were jealous of him, but his father continued to think about what it all could mean.

## *Joseph’s Brothers Sell Him as a Slave and He Is Taken to the Country of Egypt*

**37:12-36**

<sup>12</sup> Sometime after that, Joseph’s brothers took their father’s flocks of sheep and goats to graze in the fields near the city of Shechem. <sup>13</sup> Then one day Israel said to Joseph, “As you know, your brothers are tending our flocks near the city of Shechem. Get ready so that I can send you to them.” Joseph responded, “I am ready to go.” <sup>14</sup> Then Israel told him, “Please go and check on how your brothers and the flocks are doing. Then report back to me what you find out.” So Israel sent him on his way from their home in the valley near the city of Hebron, and Joseph traveled to the city of Shechem. <sup>15</sup> When he arrived there, a man saw him searching around in the nearby fields and asked him, “What are you looking for?” <sup>16</sup> He replied, “I am looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are tending their flocks?” <sup>17</sup> The man answered, “They were here and then left, but I overheard them say that they were going to the town of Dothan.”

So Joseph followed his brothers and caught up with them near the town of Dothan. <sup>18</sup> But they saw him while he was still some distance away, and before he reached them, they made plans to kill him. <sup>19</sup> They said to each other about him, “Look, here comes that expert dreamer! <sup>20</sup> Come on, let’s kill him and throw his body into one of the pits here. Then we can tell people that a vicious animal ate him up, and we will watch if his dreams come true!”

<sup>21</sup> But Reuben heard their plan, so he tried to rescue Joseph from them by urging them, “We should not kill him.” <sup>22</sup> Then he continued, “You must not take his life. Instead put him into this pit here in the desert, but you must not harm him.” Reuben was planning to rescue Joseph from them and take him back home to their father.

<sup>23</sup> When Joseph reached his brothers, they **took hold of him and** ripped off the colorful robe that he was wearing. <sup>24</sup> Then they grabbed him and put him into the pit. The pit was empty and **completely dry** inside.

<sup>25</sup> Then **some of Joseph's** brothers sat down to eat a meal. **While they were eating,** they looked around and noticed **that a large** group of Ishmaelite **traders** was traveling **toward them** from **the region of Gilead**. Their camels were loaded with **expensive** spices, healing salve, and incense **that they were taking down to the country of Egypt to sell there.** <sup>26</sup> So Judah urged to his brothers, "We will not gain anything by killing our brother and trying to hide it! <sup>27</sup> **Instead,** come on, let's sell him to those Ishmaelite **traders over there** so that we will not be guilty of harming him. After all, he **is** a member of our family, our own brother." Judah's brothers agreed **with him.** <sup>28</sup> So when the Midianite (**that is, Ishmaelite**) traders came by **them,** **some of Joseph's** brothers pulled Joseph up out of the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty **pieces of silver.** Then the Ishmaelites took him to **the country of Egypt.**

<sup>29</sup> Later Reuben came back to the pit, and he was shocked to see that Joseph was not there! So he tore his clothes **to show distress.** <sup>30</sup> Then he went to his brothers and exclaimed **to them,** "Joseph is gone! Now I do not know what to do!" <sup>31</sup> So Joseph's brothers killed a young goat and dipped Joseph's robe in the **goat's** blood.

<sup>32</sup> Then they had someone take the colorful robe back to their father and say **to him for them,** "We found this **robe.** Please look at it **to see** whether or not it is your son's." <sup>33</sup> Jacob recognized the robe and exclaimed, "**This is my son Joseph's** robe! Clearly a fierce animal has torn him to bits and eaten him up!" <sup>34</sup> Then Jacob tore his clothes **in grief,** put on mourning clothes, and for many days he mourned that his son had died. <sup>35</sup> All Jacob's sons and daughters came **to him and tried** to console him, but he did not let them comfort him. Instead he said **to them,** "**No,** I will continue to mourn **for my son** until I **die and** go down to be with him in the afterworld." So Joseph's father continued to mourn for him.

<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, in the country of Egypt, the Midianite traders sold Joseph to Potiphar, who was an officer under Pharaoh the king of Egypt; he was the captain over the palace guards.

## *Judah and His Daughter-in-law Tamar*

38:1-30

**38** <sup>1</sup> About that time, Judah left his brothers and went down to the town of Adullam and stayed near the home of a man from there whose name was Hirah. <sup>2</sup> While he was living there, he met a Canaanite woman whose father was Shua, and he married her. Then he had marital relations with her, <sup>3</sup> and she became pregnant. When she gave birth, she had a son, whom Judah named Er. <sup>4</sup> Then Judah's wife became pregnant again and gave birth to another son, and she named him Onan. <sup>5</sup> Then she became pregnant yet again and gave birth to another son, and she named him Shelah. When she gave birth to Shelah, Judah was at the town of Chezib.

<sup>6</sup> When Judah's oldest son Er grew up, Judah arranged for him to marry a woman whose name was Tamar. <sup>7</sup> But Er did things that Yahweh considered to be evil, so Yahweh caused him to die.

<sup>8</sup> After that, Judah told his son Onan, "Marry your brother's widow Tamar according to our custom so that you fulfill your obligation to her as her brother-in-law and have children with her for your deceased brother." <sup>9</sup> However Onan knew that the children they would have together would not belong to him. So whenever he had marital relations with Tamar, he wasted his semen on the ground to keep her from getting pregnant and having any children for his brother. <sup>10</sup> Yahweh considered what Onan did to be evil, so he caused him to die too.

<sup>11</sup> Then Judah told his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Go and live at your father's house, and do not marry again until my son Shelah is old enough to marry you." Actually Judah did not want Shelah to marry Tamar because he was afraid that if he did, he would also die like his brothers had. So Tamar went home to her father's house and stayed there.

**12** After a long time, Judah's wife, the daughter of Shua, died. After Judah finished mourning for her, one day he decided to go to the town of Timnah to work with the men who were shearing his sheep there. He and his friend Hirah, who was from the town of Adullam, started traveling there together. **13** Meanwhile someone told Tamar, "Listen, your father-in-law Judah is on his way to the town of Timnah to shear his sheep." **14** So she changed from her clothes that showed she was a widow and covered her face with a thin headscarf and dressed herself like a prostitute. Then she went toward the town of Timnah and sat down near the gateway of the town of Enaim, which was along the way. She did that because she had noticed that Shelah was now old enough to marry, but Judah had not given her to him to marry as he was supposed to do.

**15** As Judah was traveling to Timnah, he saw Tamar beside the road, but since she had veiled her face with a scarf, he could not see who she was, and he assumed that she was a prostitute. **16** So he went over to where she was sitting beside the road and said to her, "Let me have sex with you." He did that because he did not recognize that she was his daughter-in-law Tamar. So she asked him, "What will you pay me so that you can have sex with me?" **17** He answered her, "I will send you a young goat from my flock." She replied, "I will agree, if you will give me something valuable of yours to keep until you deliver the goat to me." **18** So Judah asked, "What do you want me to leave with you?" She answered him, "Leave me your name seal with its cord that you have around your neck, and your walking stick that you are holding." So he gave those things to her. Then he had sexual relations with her, and she became pregnant from him. **19** After that, Tamar left Judah and returned home. Then she took off her scarf and put on her clothes that showed she was a widow.

**20** Meanwhile Judah sent a young goat with his friend Hirah, who was from the town of Adullam, to reclaim his things from the prostitute whom he had given them to. But when Hirah looked for her, he was not able to find her. **21** So he asked some men who lived near the place where she had been, "Where is the temple prostitute who was sitting beside the road near the town of Enaim?" But they answered him, "There has never been a temple prostitute around here." **22** So Hirah returned to Judah and told him, "I was not able to find the prostitute. In fact, the men who live near that town claim that there has never been a temple prostitute around there." **23** Then Judah said, "Stop looking for her and let her keep my things for herself. Otherwise everyone will make fun of us. Besides that, I did try to send this goat to her, but you were not able to find her."

<sup>24</sup> About three months later, someone told Judah, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar has acted like a prostitute. In fact, look, **she is now pregnant from doing that!**” Judah responded angrily, “Take her outside **the town** and burn her to death!” <sup>25</sup> So they went to get her, but as they were taking her out of **the town**, she sent a messenger to her father-in-law **along with his things** and told the messenger to say, “The man who owns these things is the one who got me pregnant. Please identify **the man** who owns this name seal with its cord and this walking stick.” <sup>26</sup> Judah recognized **his things** and confessed, “Tamar is right, and I am wrong, because I refused to have my son Shelah marry her **as I was supposed to!**” So they released Tamar, and **after that** Judah never had sexual relations with her again.

<sup>27</sup> Months later, when Tamar was ready to give birth, they realized that **there were** twins inside her! <sup>28</sup> While she was in labor, **one of them** stuck out his hand. So the midwife who was there tied a **bright red string** around his wrist and said, “This **baby** was born first.” <sup>29</sup> But then the baby pulled his hand back inside, and suddenly his brother was born **first instead**. So the midwife exclaimed **to the baby**, “What a dramatic way for you to burst out!” That is why he was named Perez, **which means “break out.”** <sup>30</sup> After that, his brother, who had the **bright red string** on his wrist, came out. So he was named Zerah, **which means “brightness.”**

## *Potiphar’s Wife Tries to Seduce Joseph*

**39:1-23**

**39** <sup>1</sup> Now **as you know**, some Ishmaelite traders had taken Joseph down to **the country** of Egypt, and an Egyptian named Potiphar had bought him **as a servant** from them. Potiphar was **one of King Pharaoh’s officers**, the captain over the king’s **personal guards**. <sup>2</sup> As Joseph worked in his Egyptian owner’s house, Yahweh was with him **and helped him**, so that he succeeded in everything he did. <sup>3</sup> His owner realized that Yahweh was with him and was helping him to succeed in everything that he did. <sup>4</sup> So Potiphar was pleased with Joseph and made him his personal servant. He also put him in charge of managing his household and taking care of everything **else that he owned**. <sup>5</sup> From the time **that Joseph’s Egyptian owner did that**, Yahweh blessed the household of that Egyptian **man** for Joseph’s sake. He blessed everything that belonged to him, **including everything** in his home and in his fields.

<sup>6</sup> In fact, after Joseph's owner put him in charge of everything that he owned, he did not need to concern himself with anything in his household except for personal matters like deciding what kind of food he wanted to eat.

Joseph was well-built and good-looking. <sup>7</sup> So after a while, his owner's wife started looking at him with desire and told him, "Come to bed with me!" <sup>8</sup> But Joseph refused and said to her, "Listen, because of me, my owner does not have to concern himself with anything that is in his house. In fact, he has put me in charge of everything that he owns, <sup>9</sup> so that he has no one in his household who has more authority than I do. He has given me freedom with everything in his household, except you, of course, because you are his wife. So there is no way I would ever sin against God by doing such an evil thing!" <sup>10</sup> Day after day Potiphar's wife kept pressuring Joseph to go to bed with her, but he refused her requests and stayed away from her.

<sup>11</sup> Then one day Joseph went to his owner's house as usual to do his work, but no other menservants from the household were there. <sup>12</sup> So Potiphar's wife saw her chance and grabbed hold of Joseph by his robe and demanded, "Come to bed with me!" But immediately he fled and left his robe in her hands as he ran outdoors. <sup>13</sup> As soon as she saw that Joseph had run outdoors and left his robe behind in her hands, <sup>14</sup> she summoned the other menservants from her household. Then when they arrived, she exclaimed to them, "Look, my husband brought this Hebrew servant here among us to make fools of us! He came here to rape me, but I screamed loudly for help! <sup>15</sup> Then as soon as he heard me scream like that, he left his robe with me and ran outdoors!"

<sup>16</sup> So Potiphar's wife kept Joseph's robe with her until her husband, Joseph's owner, returned home. <sup>17</sup> Then she told him the same story. She said, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought among us came here to make a fool of me! <sup>18</sup> But as soon as I screamed loudly, he left his robe with me and ran outdoors!" <sup>19</sup> When Joseph's owner heard what his wife said his servant had done to her, he became very angry. <sup>20</sup> So he had soldiers arrest Joseph and put him in the prison where they kept people who had committed crimes against the king.

Joseph remained there in prison, <sup>21</sup> but Yahweh was with him and was kind to him and caused the prison warden to be pleased with him, so that he treated him well. <sup>22</sup> So before long the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners who were in that prison, so

that he was the one who managed everything that they did there.<sup>23</sup> The warden did not need to pay attention to anything at all that Joseph was in charge of, because Yahweh was with Joseph and enabled him to succeed at everything he did.

## *The Head Wine-server's and Head Baker's Dreams*

40:1-23

**40** <sup>1</sup> Sometime after that, the head wine-server and the head baker disobeyed their master, who was Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. <sup>2</sup> As a result, King Pharaoh was furious with those two officers. <sup>3</sup> So he had his soldiers arrest them and put them in prison at the captain over the guards' house, in the same prison where Joseph was. <sup>4</sup> There the captain over the guards appointed Joseph to take care of them, so he served them, and they remained in prison for some time.

<sup>5</sup> One night the king of Egypt's wine server and baker each had a dream while they were in prison. Each one's dream had its own meaning. <sup>6</sup> The next morning, when Joseph came to serve them, he noticed that they looked sad. <sup>7</sup> So he asked them, "Why do you look so unhappy today?" <sup>8</sup> They answered him, "We each had a dream last night, but there is no one here who can tell us what our dreams mean." Joseph replied, "God is the only one who gives someone the ability to interpret the meaning of dreams. Please tell me what you dreamed."

<sup>9</sup> Then the head wine-server told Joseph what was in his dream. He said, "While I was dreaming, I saw a vine in front of me <sup>10</sup> that had three branches. Soon buds started forming on the branches. Then the buds became flowers, and the flowers became bunches of ripe grapes. <sup>11</sup> Next I was holding King Pharaoh's cup, and I picked grapes from the vine and squeezed juice from them into the cup. Then I handed the cup to Pharaoh and he drank from it."

<sup>12</sup> Joseph said to him, "This is what your dream means: The three branches represent three days. <sup>13</sup> In three days King Pharaoh will summon you and give you back your job, so

that you will again serve wine to him, as you used to do when you were his wine-server.

**14** When you are out of prison and everything is going well for you, please remember that I was here with you, and please be kind to me and mention my situation to King Pharaoh so that he releases me from this prison. **15** People brought me here by force from the land where my people, the Hebrews, live. Even here in Egypt I have done nothing wrong to deserve being in a dungeon.”

**16** When the head baker heard the positive meaning that Joseph gave for the first dream, he told him, “I also had a dream, and while I was dreaming, I saw three bread baskets stacked on my head. **17** In the top basket there were many kinds of bread and cakes for King Pharaoh to eat, but some birds were gobbling them up from the basket.”

**18** Joseph said to him, “This is what your dream means: The three baskets represent three days. **19** In three days King Pharaoh will have his soldiers chop off your head and impale your body on a sharp pole, where vultures will eat all your flesh off your bones.”

**20** Then sure enough, three days later it was King Pharaoh’s birthday, and he invited all his officers to attend a banquet. During the banquet, he had soldiers bring his head wine-server and head baker to the banquet in front of all his other officers. **21** Then he returned the head wine-server to his former work, so that he again served wine to him. **22** But he had his soldiers execute the head baker and impale his body on a pole. Everything happened exactly the way Joseph had explained their dreams to them.

**23** However the head wine-server completely forgot about Joseph and did not remember to tell Pharaoh about him.

## *Joseph Explains the Meaning of Pharaoh’s Dreams*

**41:1-36**

**41** **1** Two whole years later, King Pharaoh had a dream. In the dream he saw himself standing beside the Nile River. **2** Suddenly, seven healthy-looking, fat cows walked up out of the river and started eating the tall grass beside the river. **3** Next he saw that seven

sickly-looking, scrawny cows walked up out of the river and stood next to the **first** cows on the river bank. <sup>4</sup> Then the sickly-looking, scrawny cows devoured the seven healthy-looking, fat cows. **Just** then Pharaoh woke up.

<sup>5</sup> Then he went **back** to sleep and had a second **dream**. **This time** he saw seven plump, well-formed heads of grain growing on the same plant. <sup>6</sup> Suddenly, seven small heads of grain that the **hot** desert wind had dried out started growing **on the same plant** beside the first heads. <sup>7</sup> Next, the small heads of grain gobbled up the seven big, well-formed heads. At that point, Pharaoh woke up and realized that **he had been** dreaming.

<sup>8</sup> The next morning Pharaoh was upset **about the dreams**, so he had **servants** summon all the sorcerers and **other** scholars in **the country** of Egypt. **When they arrived**, he told them what he had dreamed, but none of them was able to explain to him **what the dreams meant**.

<sup>9</sup> Then the head wine-server said to Pharaoh, “**Sir**, today I remember **the time** when I offended you. <sup>10</sup> **Some time ago**, **King Pharaoh**, you were angry with your officials, **including** me and the head baker, and you put us in prison at the captain of the guards’ house. <sup>11</sup> **While we were there**, one night we **each** had a dream, **and** each of our dreams had a different meaning. <sup>12</sup> There was a young Hebrew man with us **who was** a servant for the captain over the guards. After we told him **our dreams**, he explained them to us. He told us what each of our dreams meant. <sup>13</sup> And sure enough, everything happened exactly the way he had explained **the dreams** to us: you returned me to my **former work as your wine-server**, and you **had your soldiers** execute the baker.”

<sup>14</sup> **When Pharaoh heard that**, **immediately** he had **servants** summon Joseph. So they went right away and got him out of the prison. Then after he shaved **his head and face** and changed into appropriate clothing, he went before Pharaoh. <sup>15</sup> Then Pharaoh said to him, “I had a dream, but no one has been able to explain **to me** what it means. But someone told me about you, **that** when you hear a dream, **you are able** to explain what it means.”

<sup>16</sup> Joseph replied to him, “**Sir**, I do not have that ability **on my own**, **but** God will explain **your dream** so that **you, King Pharaoh**, will have peace **in your heart**.”

<sup>17</sup> So Pharaoh told Joseph, “As I was dreaming, I saw myself standing beside the Nile River. <sup>18</sup> Then suddenly, seven fat, healthy-looking cows walked up out of the river **onto the bank** and started eating the tall grass **that was there**. <sup>19</sup> Suddenly seven other cows walked up **out of the river** behind the first cows; **they were** in terrible condition, very sickly-looking and scrawny. **In fact**, I have never seen such awful-looking cows anywhere in the

land of Egypt! <sup>20</sup> Then the scrawny, sickly cows devoured the seven fat ones. <sup>21</sup> But even after they had swallowed them, no one would ever know that they had devoured them, because they still looked just as terrible as before. That's when I woke up.

<sup>22</sup> Then I went back to sleep and had another dream. This time I saw that there were seven big, well-formed heads of grain growing on the same plant. <sup>23</sup> Then suddenly, seven small heads of grain sprouted on the same plant next to the first heads. These had wilted because the hot desert wind had dried them out. <sup>24</sup> Then the small heads of grain gobbled up the seven well-formed ones. I told my dreams to my sorcerers, but none of them could explain to me what the dreams meant."

<sup>25</sup> Then Joseph told King Pharaoh, "Your Majesty, both of your dreams mean the same thing. Through them, God is revealing to you what he is going to do. <sup>26</sup> The seven healthy cows represent seven years, and the seven well-formed heads of grain represent the same seven years. Both dreams mean the same thing. <sup>27</sup> The seven scrawny and sickly cows that walked up out of the river behind the first cows represent a different seven years, and so do the seven small heads of grain that the desert wind had dried out. They both mean that there will be a famine that lasts seven years. <sup>28</sup> King Pharaoh, that is what I was talking about when I told you that God is revealing to you what he is going to do. <sup>29</sup> Listen, first there will be seven years when people will have more than enough food to eat throughout the entire country of Egypt. <sup>30</sup> But after that, there will be a famine that lasts seven years. As a result, the people in Egypt will forget what it was like in their country during all the years when they had more than enough food to eat, because the famine will devastate the country so that many people will starve. <sup>31</sup> That's right, people will completely forget about the years when there was plenty of food, because the famine that comes after that will be so severe. <sup>32</sup> The fact that you, King Pharaoh, had two different dreams that mean the same thing shows that God has decided what he is going to do, and he will make it happen soon.

<sup>33</sup> So now, your Majesty, I recommend that you look for a man who is intelligent and knows what to do, and put him in charge over the country of Egypt. <sup>34</sup> Sir, you should also appoint regional administrators in charge of the country, and have them collect one-fifth of the crops that people harvest throughout the country during the seven years when harvests are plentiful. <sup>35</sup> Have them collect all that surplus grain during the prosperous years ahead when there will be plenty of food. Using your authority, King Pharaoh, have them stockpile that grain in storehouses in the cities and have soldiers guard it, so that there will be food for

the people. <sup>36</sup> That food should stay in storage for the people of the country to eat during the famine that will last seven years in the country of Egypt, so that they will not starve to death because of the severe lack of food.”

## *Joseph Becomes the Governor over the Country of Egypt and Stores Up Food*

### **41:37-57**

<sup>37</sup> What Joseph proposed seemed like a good plan to Pharaoh and all his officials. <sup>38</sup> So Pharaoh exclaimed to them, “**Certainly** we cannot find anyone else more qualified than this man whom God’s Spirit guides!” <sup>39</sup> Then he said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, no one else is as intelligent as you are or knows what to do in this situation. <sup>40</sup> So I am putting you in charge of my household and my kingdom, so that all the people in my country must obey whatever you command. Only I who am king will have higher authority than you.” <sup>41</sup> Then Pharaoh said, “Listen, I hereby put you in charge of the whole country of Egypt.” <sup>42</sup> Then he took off his official identification ring and put it on Joseph’s finger to show that he had appointed him. He also gave Joseph expensive linen clothes to wear and put a chain made of gold around his neck. <sup>43</sup> Then Pharaoh had Joseph ride around in the chariot that showed he was the second highest ruler in the country. As he rode, messengers walked in the road ahead of him calling out to everyone, “Make way!” In that way, Pharaoh officially appointed Joseph to be in charge of the whole country of Egypt.

<sup>44</sup> Pharaoh also told Joseph, “I, Pharaoh, hereby command that throughout the whole country of Egypt, everyone must only do what you tell them to do!” <sup>45</sup> Then Pharaoh gave Joseph the Egyptian name Zaphenath-Paneah, which means “the one who explains/reveals secrets,” and he gave him a woman named Asenath to be his wife. She was the daughter of Potiphera, who was a priest at the temple in the city of On. Then Joseph started his duties and traveled throughout the country of Egypt.

<sup>46</sup> Joseph was thirty years old when he started serving Pharaoh, the king over Egypt. After Pharaoh appointed him, Joseph left him and traveled throughout the whole country of Egypt doing his work. <sup>47</sup> During the seven years when food was plentiful, the land produced huge amounts of grain. <sup>48</sup> So Joseph had his helpers collect all the surplus grain

that people harvested during those seven years in the country of Egypt, and he had them stockpile that grain in the cities. In each city he had them store the grain that people harvested from the surrounding fields. <sup>49</sup> In that way, Joseph stockpiled so much grain that it was as plentiful as the grains of sand on the seashore. In fact, it was so plentiful that he stopped keeping records of it because it was too much to keep track of.

<sup>50</sup> Before the seven famine years started, Joseph had two sons with his wife Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara, who was a priest in the city of On. <sup>51</sup> Joseph named his oldest son Manasseh, which means “forget,” and he explained, “It is because God has helped me to forget about all my troubles and about how much I have missed my father and the rest of my family back home.” <sup>52</sup> And he named his second son Ephraim, which means “twice prosperous,” and he explained, “It is because God has helped me to prosper in the country where I have suffered so much.”

<sup>53</sup> Finally the seven years were over when food was plentiful in the country of Egypt. <sup>54</sup> Then the seven years began when there was a severe lack of food, which is exactly what Joseph had predicted would happen. The famine spread to every country, but throughout the whole country of Egypt there was still food in the storehouses. <sup>55</sup> When everyone in Egypt became very hungry because of the famine, they begged King Pharaoh for food. So he commanded them, “Go ask Joseph for help, and do whatever he commands you to do.” <sup>56</sup> Since the severe food shortage was affecting the whole country, Joseph had his helpers open up all the storehouses full of grain, and he started selling the grain to the people of Egypt. Then the famine became worse and worse throughout the country of Egypt. <sup>57</sup> In fact, people from all over the world started coming to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the food shortage was so terrible throughout the whole world.

## *Joseph’s Brothers Come to Egypt to Buy Grain*

42:1-38

**42** <sup>1</sup> Meanwhile back in the region of Canaan, when Jacob heard that there was grain for sale in the country of Egypt, he told his sons, “Do not just stand around doing nothing!

<sup>2</sup> Listen to this! I heard that there is grain for sale in the country of Egypt. So go down there and buy some for us and our families to eat, so that we can stay alive and not starve to death.”<sup>3</sup> So Joseph’s ten older brothers left home and traveled down to Egypt to buy some grain there.<sup>4</sup> But Jacob did not allow Joseph’s younger brother Benjamin to go to Egypt with the rest of his brothers, because Jacob was afraid that something bad might happen to him.

<sup>5</sup> Israel’s sons arrived in Egypt along with many other people who were coming there to buy food, because the severe food shortage was also affecting everyone in the region of Canaan.<sup>6</sup> Since Joseph was the administrator over the country of Egypt, he was the one selling grain to people who came to him from all over the country. So Joseph’s brothers also went before him like everyone else and bowed down with their faces to the ground to show him respect.<sup>7</sup> When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended that he did not know them. In fact, he spoke to them sternly and asked them, “What country are you from?” They answered him, “Sir, we are from the region of Canaan to buy some grain.”<sup>8</sup> Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not realize who he was.

<sup>9</sup> Then Joseph remembered what he had dreamed about his brothers long ago, so he accused them, “You are secretly gathering information about our country! You came here to find out where our country is weak!”<sup>10</sup> But his brothers replied to him, “Sir, we are not spies. Rather, we are humble men who have come here only to buy some grain.”<sup>11</sup> We are all brothers who have the same father. We are humble, trustworthy men, not spies.”

<sup>12</sup> But Joseph accused them, “That is not true! You have definitely come here to find out where our country is weak!”<sup>13</sup> But they replied to him, “Sir, there were twelve of us brothers. We are sons of the same father who lives in the region of Canaan. Our youngest brother is with our father right now, but our other brother has died.”

<sup>14</sup> But Joseph accused them, “What I told you is true! You are spying on our country!”<sup>15</sup> So now, this is how I will verify whether or not you told me the truth: As certain as King Pharaoh lives, I swear that you will definitely never leave Egypt until your youngest brother is here.<sup>16</sup> So one of you must go back home and bring your youngest brother back here. The rest of you must stay here in prison. That way I can verify whether you told me the truth. But if you are lying, as certain as King Pharaoh lives, that means you really are spying on our country!”<sup>17</sup> Then Joseph had his soldiers lock up his brothers in prison for three days.

<sup>18</sup> Three days later, Joseph said to them, “I am a man who reveres God. So if you do what I say, I will let you live. <sup>19</sup> Since you claim to be trustworthy men, I will make just one of you brothers stay where you have been, in prison. The rest of you may go and carry food back home for your hungry families. <sup>20</sup> But you must bring your youngest brother back here to me. That way I will know that you are telling the truth, and I will let you live.” So Joseph’s brothers agreed to do what he said.

<sup>21</sup> While they were still standing there, they said to each other, “Surely what we did to our brother Joseph long ago was very wrong. We saw how he was suffering when he begged us not to harm him, but we refused to listen to him. That is why we are suffering now.”

<sup>22</sup> Reuben scolded them by saying, “I told you that you should not do anything bad to him! But you refused to listen to me, and now look, God is holding us responsible for causing him to die!” <sup>23</sup> Joseph’s brothers did not realize that he could understand what they were saying to each other, because he had been speaking to them using a translator as if he did not know their language. <sup>24</sup> When Joseph heard what they were saying, he turned his back to them and started crying. Then after he recovered, he turned back around and spoke to them again. Then he chose Simeon from among them and had his soldiers bind him with chains while they watched.

<sup>25</sup> Then Joseph told his servants to fill his brothers’ sacks with grain. He also told them to secretly put in each brother’s sack the money they had paid for the grain and to provide them with food to eat on their trip home. After Joseph did that for his brothers, <sup>26</sup> his brothers loaded their sacks of grain onto their donkeys’ backs and started traveling home.

<sup>27</sup> Later, when they stopped at a place to stay for the night, one of them opened his sack to get some grain to feed his donkey. There in the top of his sack he saw the money that he had used to buy grain! <sup>28</sup> So he exclaimed to the others, “Somebody has returned my money to me! Here it is in my sack!” When they saw it, they were completely shocked, and they shook with fear. They asked each other, “Why is God doing this to us?”

<sup>29</sup> When they reached their home in the region of Canaan where their father Jacob was, they told him everything they had experienced. They said, <sup>30</sup> “The man who governs the country of Egypt spoke to us sternly and accused us of spying on their country! <sup>31</sup> But we told him, ‘We are trustworthy men; not spies. <sup>32</sup> There were twelve of us brothers, and we are the sons of the same father. One of our brothers has died, and the youngest brother is at home with our father right now in the region of Canaan.’

<sup>33</sup> But the man who governs the country told us, ‘This is how I will know if you are trustworthy men: You must leave one of you here with me, and the rest of you go home with food for your starving families.’ <sup>34</sup> But bring your youngest brother back here to me. Then I will know that you are trustworthy men and not spies. Then I will return your brother to you from prison, and you can travel around my country and trade freely.’”

<sup>35</sup> Then Joseph’s brothers started emptying their sacks of grain, and there inside each man’s sack was his bag of money that he had paid for the grain! When they and their father Jacob saw the money bags, they were terrified. <sup>36</sup> Then their father exclaimed to them, “You have caused me terrible loss! Joseph is gone! Simeon is gone! And now you want to take Benjamin away from me too! Everything is going terribly for me!”

<sup>37</sup> Reuben replied, “Father, let me be responsible for taking Benjamin down to Egypt. If I fail to bring him back to you safely, you can punish me by killing my two sons.” <sup>38</sup> But his father replied, “No, I will not let my son Benjamin go down to Egypt with you. His brother is dead, so he is the only son I have left from his mother. So if anything bad happened to him on your journey, you would cause me, your elderly father, to grieve so badly that I would die and go down to the afterworld!”

## *Joseph’s Brothers, including Benjamin, Return to the Country of Egypt*

**43:1-34**

**43** <sup>1</sup> The famine continued to be severe in the region of Canaan. <sup>2</sup> So when Jacob and his family finished eating all the grain that his sons had brought from the country of Egypt, he said to them, “Go back to Egypt and buy some more grain for us and our families.” <sup>3</sup> But his son Judah replied to him, “The governor there sternly warned us that we cannot go to him again to buy grain if our youngest brother is not with us. <sup>4</sup> So if you will allow our youngest brother to go with us, then we can go to Egypt and buy more grain for you. <sup>5</sup> However if you refuse to let him go with us, we cannot go there, because the governor warned us that we cannot go to him again if our youngest brother is not with us.”

**6** Then **their father** Israel asked **them**, “Why did you cause trouble for me by telling the governor that you have a younger brother?” **7** They answered **him**, “The governor asked **us** many questions about ourselves and about our family. He asked **us** if our father was still alive and if we had **another** brother. We **just** answered his questions honestly. There is no way we could have known that he would require us to take our brother down **there to him!**”

**8** Then Judah urged his father Israel **about Benjamin**, “Entrust the young man to me to **take care of** so that we can go immediately to **Egypt to buy grain**. Then all of us, including our children, can survive and not starve to death. **9** I personally promise to keep him safe. You can hold me responsible for him, **so that** if I do not bring him **back** to you safely, I will be guilty of this sin against you for the rest of my life. **10** **In any case**, if we had not waited **this long**, we could have made two **round trips there and back** by now.” **11** Then their father Israel said to them, “Since that is how it must be, then do this: Put **some** of the best things from **our** land in your sacks, and take **them** to the governor **as** gifts. **Include** some healing salve, some honey, **some** spices and incense, **and some** pistachio nuts and almonds. **12** **Also** take with you **twice as much money as you took the first time**, because you must take back the money that someone gave **back to you** in your sacks. Maybe they did that by mistake. **13** **So now**, take your **youngest** brother and immediately go back to the governor. **14** I pray that God **who is** all-powerful will cause him to treat you kindly so that he will let your other brother and Benjamin come **back home** with you. **But if not, and if I must** lose them and grieve **for them, then I will** grieve.”

**15** Then the brothers packed those gifts **in their sacks** along with twice as much money **as the grain would cost**. Then they **took** Benjamin **with them** and quickly traveled down to **the country of** Egypt and went directly to Joseph. **16** When Joseph saw Benjamin with his **other** brothers, he commanded his head house-servant, “Escort these men to **my** house. Then butcher a calf and prepare **a feast**, because **I want** them to eat with me **today** at noon.”

**17** The servant did exactly what Joseph **had told him to do** and escorted the brothers to Joseph’s house. **18** But when the brothers **saw** that he had taken them to Joseph’s house, they were afraid, and they said **to each other**, “He has taken us here because of **our** money that someone gave back to us in our sacks **on our first trip here**. **He intends to have his** soldiers attack us and overpower us and make us **his** servants, along with our donkeys!”

**19** Then they approached Joseph’s head house-servant **outside** the door to **his** house to speak to him. **20** And said, “Excuse us, sir, one time before this, we traveled all the way

down here to Egypt to buy some grain. <sup>21</sup> But on our way home, when we arrived at the place where we lodged for the night, we opened our sacks. There in the top of each of our sacks was the money we had paid to you for the grain! The money was all there! So we brought it all back with us to give to you. <sup>22</sup> We have also brought more money with us so that we can buy some more grain now. We have no idea who put the money in our sacks.”

<sup>23</sup> But Joseph’s servant replied to them, “It is all right, so do not worry about it. The God whom you and your father serve must have put the money in your sacks, because I definitely received your money that you paid for the grain.” Then Joseph’s servant brought Simeon out of prison to his brothers.

<sup>24</sup> Then Joseph’s servant brought the brothers into Joseph’s house and provided them with water to wash the road dust off their feet. He also fed their donkeys. <sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, Joseph’s brothers got their gifts ready to give to Joseph when he came home at noon, because they had heard that they were going to eat a meal with him there.

<sup>26</sup> When Joseph came home, his brothers gave to him the gifts that they had brought with them into the house, and they bowed down before him with their faces to the ground to show respect. <sup>27</sup> Then Joseph asked them how they were doing, and he asked them, “Is your elderly father well whom you mentioned to me? Is he still living?” <sup>28</sup> They answered him, “Yes sir, our father, who highly respects you, is still alive and well.” Then they bowed their heads and bowed down to the ground again.

<sup>29</sup> Then Joseph looked around and saw his brother Benjamin, who had the same mother that he had, and he said to them, “So this must be your youngest brother whom you told me about.” Then he said to Benjamin, “I pray that God will be kind to you, young man.” <sup>30</sup> Suddenly Joseph rushed out of the room because he felt overwhelmed with emotions about his brother and was about to cry. So he went to his bedroom, where he cried privately.

<sup>31</sup> After he had gotten control of his emotions and stopped crying, he washed the tears off his face and came back out of his room. Then he commanded his servants, “Serve the food to us.” <sup>32</sup> So they served food to Joseph at his own table, and his brothers at their own table, and the Egyptians who were eating with him at their own table. Egyptians do not eat at the same table as Hebrew people, because Egyptians consider it unacceptable to do that.

<sup>33</sup> Joseph’s brothers were sitting at a table facing his table in the order of their ages, from the oldest to the youngest. When they noticed that, they were amazed and stared at one

another.<sup>34</sup> Then Joseph **had his servants** serve food to his brothers from his table, but he **had them** serve Benjamin five times more **food** than **they** served to any of the rest of his **brothers**. Then his brothers feasted and drank **wine** freely with him.

## *Joseph Tests His Brothers*

44:1-17

**44** <sup>1</sup> Later Joseph ordered his head house-servant, “Fill the men’s **grain** bags with as much grain as they can take **with them**, and in the top of their bags, put the money that each **of them** paid for the **grain**.<sup>2</sup> Also put my silver cup in the top of the youngest **one**’s bag, along with the money that he paid for the grain.” So the servant did exactly what Joseph had ordered **him to do**.

<sup>3</sup> Early the next morning, **Joseph** sent the brothers **on their way**, along with their donkeys.<sup>4</sup> **But** they had not gone very far out of the city when he ordered his head servant, “**Hurry and** pursue those men. When you catch up with them, ask them, ‘Why have you treated **my master** so badly **after he was so good to you**?<sup>5</sup> The cup **you stole** is the cup that my master drinks from. He **also** uses it to find out secret things! What you have done is **very wrong!**’”

<sup>6</sup> Then the servant **left**, and when he caught up with the men, he repeated to them what Joseph had told him **to say**.<sup>7</sup> But they replied, “Sir, why do you say such things? **We assure you, sir, that** we would never do anything like that!<sup>8</sup> Remember that we returned to you the money that we discovered in our **grain** bags **last time**. **We brought it all the way** from our home in the region of Canaan! So we would never steal silver **things** or gold **things** or **anything else** from your master’s house!<sup>9</sup> **In fact**, sir, if you find that one of us does have the cup, then **you may** execute that person, and **the rest of us, sir,** will become your slaves.”

<sup>10</sup> Joseph’s servant replied **to them**, “Okay then, I will do as you suggest **except for this**: The one whom I find with my master’s cup **is the only one** who will become my slave. **The rest of you** will be innocent and **free to go**.”<sup>11</sup> So each of the brothers quickly took his **grain** bag **off his donkey** and put it on the ground, and each of them opened his **own** bag.<sup>12</sup> Then Joseph’s servant searched **their bags**. He started with the oldest **brother** and

continued until he came to the youngest **brother**, and **there** he found the cup in Benjamin's bag! <sup>13</sup> In response to **that**, the brothers tore their clothes **in distress**. Then each of **them** put his bag **back** on his **own** donkey, and they **all turned around** and went back to the city.

<sup>14</sup> When Judah and his brothers arrived at Joseph's house, Joseph was there **waiting for them**. So they prostrated themselves on the ground before him **to show respect**. <sup>15</sup> Then Joseph exclaimed to them, "What you have done is terrible! You should have known that someone in my position knows how to discover the secret things **that people do!**" <sup>16</sup> Judah replied **to him**, "Sir, there is nothing **convincing** that we can say **to you**. There is no way that we can explain **this**. There is no way we can prove **to you** that we are innocent. God is punishing us for our **past sin**. **So now**, sir, we are **all** here to be your slaves, including **the one** whom **your house-servant** found with your cup **in his bag**." <sup>17</sup> But Joseph told **them**, "No, I would never **even** consider doing such a thing! **Rather only** the man whom **my servant** found with my cup **in his bag** will be my slave. **The rest of you** are free to go **back home** to your father."

## *Judah Begs Joseph to Set Benjamin Free*

### **44:18-34**

<sup>18</sup> Then Judah approached Joseph and said **to him**, "Please, sir, I humbly ask you to let me speak freely to you. Please do not be angry with me, **especially** since you are as **powerful** as **King Pharaoh himself**." <sup>19</sup> Sir, **previously** you asked us if our father was **still** alive and if we had **any other** brothers. <sup>20</sup> And we told you, sir, **that** we have an elderly father and **also** a younger brother who was born when our father was **already** old. That brother's mother only had one other son, who is now dead. So our father **especially** loves our youngest brother.

<sup>21</sup> Then you told us, sir, to bring our youngest brother **here** to you, so that you could see him for yourself. <sup>22</sup> But we told you, sir, that the young man should not leave his father **and come here**, because if he did, his father would die **from anxiety**. <sup>23</sup> But then, sir, you told us **that** unless our youngest brother came with us, we could never see you again.

<sup>24</sup> When we returned **home** to our father, who highly respects you, we reported to him what you told us. <sup>25</sup> **Months** later our father told us, 'Go **back to Egypt** and buy some **more**

grain for us.’<sup>26</sup> But we replied **to him**, ‘We cannot go **there** unless our youngest brother is with us. Then we can go. The governor **who sells grain there** will not allow us to see him **again** if our youngest brother is not with us.’<sup>27</sup> Then our father said to us, ‘As you know, my wife **Rachel** and I **only** had two **sons** together.’<sup>28</sup> **One of her sons** left here **one day**, and I have not seen him since then. I am sure that **a wild animal** must have **killed him and** torn him apart.<sup>29</sup> So if you also take her other son **away** from me, and anything harms him, you will cause me, your gray-haired father, so much grief that I will **die and** go down to the afterworld.’

<sup>30</sup> So now, **sir**, if we go **home** to our father without his youngest son, since our father’s life depends on his son’s life,<sup>31</sup> if he sees that his son is gone, he will die! **Yes**, we will cause our gray-haired father so much grief that he will **die and** go to the afterworld!

<sup>32</sup> Besides that, **sir**, I promised my father that I would return his son to him safely. I told **him** that if I did not bring his son **back** to him, I would be guilty of sinning against him forever.

<sup>33</sup> So then, **sir**, I beg you to let me stay **here** and be your slave in place of our youngest **brother**, and let him go back **home** with his **other** brothers.<sup>34</sup> There is no way I can go back to my father if his youngest **son** is not with me! I could not bear to see how terribly my father would suffer!”

## *Joseph Reveals Who He Is to His Brothers*

45:1-28

**45** <sup>1</sup> **When Joseph heard that**, he could no **longer** keep himself from crying in front of all his servants, so he shouted **to them**, “All of you leave my presence!” **Immediately the servants left the room**, so that no one else was with Joseph when he told his brothers who he was.<sup>2</sup> But he started crying so loudly that **many** Egyptians heard **him**, including Pharaoh’s family.<sup>3</sup> Then he exclaimed to his brothers **in their language**, “**I am your brother Joseph!** Is my father still alive?” But Joseph’s brothers could not reply to him, because they felt very afraid to be standing in front of him.

<sup>4</sup> So Joseph said to them, “Please come here next to me.” After they went closer to him, he said to them, “I really am your brother Joseph, whom you sold to be a slave in the country of Egypt.” <sup>5</sup> But now, do not be upset or angry with yourselves for selling me, because it was actually God who sent me here before you came, to save many people’s lives. <sup>6</sup> For two years now there has been a famine throughout this region, and for another five years it will be so severe that no one will be able to plant seeds or harvest crops. <sup>7</sup> That is why God sent me here before you came, to save your lives in this amazing way so that you will survive and have descendants on the earth. <sup>8</sup> So then, you were not the ones who caused me to come here, but rather it was God who sent me. He has also made me like a father to King Pharaoh, so that I am the one in charge of his entire household and also the governor over the entire country of Egypt.

<sup>9</sup> Hurry back to our father and tell him that his son Joseph has sent him this message: ‘God has appointed me governor over the entire country of Egypt. So please come down here to live near me, and do not delay. <sup>10</sup> You can live in Goshen Province. That way you will live close to me with your children and your grandchildren, along with your flocks of sheep and goats, your herds of cattle and everything else that you own. <sup>11</sup> I will take care of you there, since the famine will last five more years. Please come so that the famine will not cause you and your family to lose everything you own and die.’”

<sup>12</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Look! All of you, including my brother Benjamin, can see that it really is me, Joseph, who is talking to you. <sup>13</sup> So go and tell our father all about how powerful I am in Egypt and about everything else that you have seen here. Then quickly bring him down here to me.”

<sup>14</sup> Then Joseph hugged his brother Benjamin tightly and cried for joy, and Benjamin also cried as he hugged Joseph. <sup>15</sup> Then Joseph kissed all his brothers on their cheeks as he continued to cry for joy. After he did that, his brothers started talking with him.

<sup>16</sup> When Pharaoh’s household heard the news that Joseph’s brothers had come there, Pharaoh and all his servants were happy. <sup>17</sup> So Pharaoh told Joseph, “Give your brothers this message from me: ‘Load your donkeys with grain and go quickly back to Canaan. <sup>18</sup> Then bring your father and your families back here to me. I will give you the best area in the country of Egypt to live in, so that you will live well with the best of everything in the country.’”

**19** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I also want you to tell them to take some of my wagons with them from the country of Egypt for their wives and young children to travel in. Then tell them to bring their father back here to live.” **20** They should not worry about leaving some of their belongings behind, because the best things in all the country of Egypt will be theirs.”

**21** So Israel’s sons agreed to do that. Then Joseph gave them wagons to use as King Pharaoh had commanded, and he supplied them with food to eat as they traveled home.

**22** He also gave a new set of clothes to each one of his brothers, but to Benjamin he gave five new sets of clothes and 300 pieces of silver money. **23** He also gave them the following gifts to give to his father: ten male donkeys that were carrying some of the best things from Egypt, and ten female donkeys that were carrying grain, bread, and other food for him and his family to eat as they traveled to Egypt. **24** Then Joseph sent his brothers off on their way home. As they were leaving, he told them, “Do not argue with each other on the way.”

**25** Then Joseph’s brothers left Egypt and traveled home to their father Jacob in the region of Canaan. **26** When they arrived, they announced to him, “Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is the governor over the entire country of Egypt!” When their father heard that news, he was stunned and silent, because he could not believe them. **27** But after they told him everything that Joseph had said to them, and after he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him and his family to Egypt, he recovered from the shock. **28** Then he exclaimed to them, “That’s enough! It must be true! My son Joseph really is alive! I must go now and see him again before I die.”

## *Jacob and His Family Move to the Country of Egypt*

**46:1-27**

**46** **1** So Israel and his family started traveling toward Egypt with all their belongings. When they reached the city of Beersheba, he offered some of his animals on an altar there as sacrifices to God, whom his father Isaac had worshiped. **2** During the night God called to Israel in a vision, “Jacob! Jacob!” Jacob replied, “Yes, Lord?” **3** Then God said to him, “I am God, the God whom your father worshiped. Do not be afraid of moving down to the

country of Egypt, because I will make your descendants multiply and become a large people group while they live there. <sup>4</sup> I will personally go with you down to Egypt and take care of you there. Later I will definitely bring your descendants back here to Canaan. When you die, Joseph will be with you.”

<sup>5</sup> After that, Jacob left the city of Beersheba, and his sons took him and their wives and children in the wagons that King Pharaoh had provided for them to ride in to Egypt. <sup>6</sup> They also brought with them their livestock and their other belongings that they had gotten in the region of Canaan. Then Jacob and all of his descendants arrived in Egypt. <sup>7</sup> He brought his entire extended family with him to Egypt, including his sons and daughters, and his grandsons and granddaughters.

<sup>8</sup> Here is a list of the names of Israel’s descendants who came with him to Egypt, that is, the names of Jacob’s descendants: Reuben, who was his oldest son, <sup>9</sup> and Reuben’s sons, who were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. <sup>10</sup> Simeon and Simeon’s sons, who were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul, who had a Canaanite mother. <sup>11</sup> Levi and Levi’s sons, who were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. <sup>12</sup> Judah and Judah’s sons, who were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah; actually, Er and Onan had already died in the region of Canaan. Perez’s sons were Hezron and Hamul. <sup>13</sup> Issachar and Issachar’s sons, who were Tola, Puvah, Job, and Shimron. <sup>14</sup> Zebulun and Zebulun’s sons, who were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. <sup>15</sup> Those were the sons and grandsons whom Jacob and his wife Leah had together in the region of Paddan Aram. They also had a daughter named Dinah. The total number of those descendants was thirty-three.

<sup>16</sup> Jacob’s other descendants who came with him included his son Gad and Gad’s sons, who were Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. <sup>17</sup> He also took his son Asher and Asher’s sons, who were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah, and their sister Serah. Beriah’s sons were Heber and Malkiel. <sup>18</sup> Those were the children and grandchildren that Jacob had with Zilpah, who was the servant woman that Laban had given to his daughter Leah. Those descendants that Zilpah and Jacob had together totaled sixteen persons.

<sup>19</sup> The sons that Jacob had with his wife Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. <sup>20</sup> Joseph’s sons who were born in the country of Egypt were Manasseh and Ephraim. Their mother was Joseph’s wife Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, who was the priest at the city of On. <sup>21</sup> Benjamin’s sons were Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim,

Huppim, and Ard. <sup>22</sup> Those were the sons and grandsons whom Jacob and his wife Rachel had together, a total of fourteen descendants.

<sup>23</sup> Other descendants who came with Jacob included: his son Dan and Dan's son Hushim.

<sup>24</sup> Naphtali and Naphtali's sons, who were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. <sup>25</sup> Those were all the sons and grandsons that Jacob had with Bilhah, the servant woman whom Laban had given to his daughter Rachel. The total number of those descendants was seven.

<sup>26</sup> Altogether Jacob had sixty-six blood relatives who went with him to Egypt. That number does not include his wives or his sons' wives. <sup>27</sup> If you include Jacob, Joseph, and Joseph's two sons, who were born in Egypt, then there was a total of seventy members of Jacob's family in Egypt.

## *Jacob Reunites with His Son Joseph and Meets King Pharaoh*

### **46:28-47:12**

<sup>28</sup> When they reached Egypt, Jacob had Judah go to Joseph ahead of them to get directions from him to Goshen Province. After that, Jacob's family traveled to Goshen.

<sup>29</sup> Then Joseph got his chariot ready and went to Goshen to meet his father Israel. There Joseph greeted his father and hugged him tightly and cried for joy on his shoulder for a long time. <sup>30</sup> Then Israel exclaimed to Joseph, "Now when I die I will be at peace, because I have seen you in person and know that you are still alive!"

<sup>31</sup> Then Joseph announced to his brothers and the rest of his father's family, "I will go to King Pharaoh and inform him, 'My brothers and the rest of my father's family have traveled here from the region of Canaan to live near me. <sup>32</sup> The men of my family raise sheep and goats. In fact, they raise all kinds of livestock for a living, and they have brought with them all their sheep and goats and cattle, and everything else that they own.' <sup>33</sup> So then, when the king summons you and asks you what your occupation is, <sup>34</sup> you should tell him, 'Sir, ever since the time we were young until now, we have been raising livestock, which is the same occupation that our ancestors had.' That way he will allow you to live

separately in Goshen Province, especially since Egyptians despise everyone who raises sheep.”

**47** <sup>1</sup> So Joseph went to **King Pharaoh** and informed **him**, “My father and my brothers and their families have come to **Egypt** from the region of Canaan and are now in Goshen Province. They brought with them their sheep, goats, cattle, and everything else that they own.” <sup>2</sup> Then Joseph brought five of his brothers before Pharaoh and introduced them to **him**. <sup>3</sup> Then Pharaoh asked them, “What is your occupation?” They answered him, “Your Majesty, we raise sheep for a living, just like our ancestors did.” <sup>4</sup> They also said to him, “We have come here to live for a while in your country. The famine is so severe in the region of Canaan where we come from that there is not enough grass in the fields for our flocks. So then, sir, please let us live in Goshen Province.”

<sup>5</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Now that your father and brothers have come to live near you, <sup>6</sup> you may choose any part of the land of Egypt for them to live in. In fact, they may live in the best land in the country, in Goshen Province. And if you know that some of them are especially talented at raising livestock, then put them in charge of raising my livestock also.”

<sup>7</sup> Then Joseph took his father Jacob and introduced him to **King Pharaoh**, and Jacob asked **God** to bless Pharaoh. <sup>8</sup> Then Pharaoh asked Jacob, “Sir, how old are you now?” <sup>9</sup> Jacob answered him, “I have been living in this world for 130 years. My life has been short, with many hardships. In fact, I have not lived nearly as long as my ancestors did during their time on earth.” <sup>10</sup> Then Jacob again asked **God** to bless Pharaoh and left him.

<sup>11</sup> After that, Joseph did what Pharaoh had told him to do: He helped his father and brothers settle in the country of Egypt. He gave them the choicest property in **Egypt**, which was in **Goshen Province**, also known as **Rameses Province**. <sup>12</sup> Joseph also provided his

father and brothers and all the rest of his father's family with as much food as each family needed to feed all the people in their family.

## *How Joseph Ruled Egypt During the Rest of the Famine*

### 47:13-26

<sup>13</sup> Now after a while, the famine became so severe in the entire world that there was very little food available anywhere. The people of the country of Egypt and the region of Canaan were suffering badly because they did not have enough to eat. <sup>14</sup> So they bought grain from Joseph until there was no more money left in the country of Egypt or the region of Canaan. Joseph had his servants take the money to Pharaoh's palace. <sup>15</sup> When the people in Egypt and Canaan had spent all their money, people from all over Egypt went to Joseph and begged him, "Sir, we have no more money! Please give us food so that we do not starve to death!" <sup>16</sup> Joseph responded, "Since your money is gone, bring me your livestock to pay for the food that I will give you." <sup>17</sup> So the people brought their livestock to Joseph. They gave him their horses, sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys to pay for the food that he gave them. In that way Joseph supplied the people with food that year, and they gave him all their livestock to pay for it.

<sup>18</sup> After that year was over, the people went to Joseph again in the following year and pleaded with him, "Sir, as you know, our money is gone and all our livestock belong to you. The only way we can pay you for food is to give you our farmland and work for you, sir.

<sup>19</sup> Please do not just watch us die or let our land become wasteland. Instead, please take us and our land in exchange for food. Then we will be King Pharaoh's slaves, and our land will also be his. Please give us seeds to plant so that we can stay alive and not starve to death, and so that the land will not become a desert!"

<sup>20</sup> So Joseph agreed and acquired all the land in the country of Egypt for Pharaoh. All the Egyptians sold their fields to him in exchange for food, because the food shortage was so severe. In that way, all the land became Pharaoh's property. <sup>21</sup> Joseph also relocated the people to the cities throughout the entire country of Egypt. <sup>22</sup> The only land that he did not buy was the priests' land, because they regularly received a certain amount of food from

Pharaoh, and they had enough to eat from what he gave to them. That is why they did not need to sell their land to buy food.

<sup>23</sup> Next Joseph announced to the Egyptian people, “Listen, now that you and your farmland belong to King Pharaoh, here are some seeds for you so that you can plant them in the fields.” <sup>24</sup> Then every harvest season, you must give him one-fifth of the crops you harvest. The rest of what you harvest will be yours to use to plant in the fields and as food for you and your families, including your children.” <sup>25</sup> The people replied to him, “You have saved our lives! Please continue to be kind to us, sir, and we will agree to be King Pharaoh’s servants.” <sup>26</sup> So Joseph made a law that required people to give to Pharaoh one-fifth of all the crops they harvested from the fields in Egypt. That law is still in effect today. The priests’ land was the only land in Egypt that did not belong to Pharaoh.

## *Jacob Asks His Son Joseph to Bury His Body in the Land of Canaan*

47:27-31

<sup>27</sup> Now Jacob, whose other name was Israel, was living with his family in Goshen Province in the country of Egypt, and they acquired many possessions there. They had many children and became very numerous. <sup>28</sup> After Jacob had lived in the country of Egypt for seventeen years, he was 147 years old. <sup>29</sup> When it was almost time for him to die, he summoned his son Joseph and urged him, “Please do this favor for me: Put your hand under my leg, and promise me that after I die, you will be kind and faithful to me. Please promise that you will not bury my body here in the country of Egypt.” <sup>30</sup> Rather, after I die and join my ancestors who have died, take my body out of Egypt to the region of Canaan and bury it in the same burial place where their bodies are.” Joseph promised him, “I will do what you

requested.”<sup>31</sup> But his father insisted, “Vow to me before God that you will do it.” So Joseph vowed that he would do it. Then his father Israel bowed down to worship God beside his bed.

## *Jacob Blesses Joseph’s Sons Ephraim and Manasseh*

48:1-22

48 <sup>1</sup> Some time after those things happened, someone told Joseph, “Listen, your father is sick.” So Joseph went to visit his father and took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. <sup>2</sup> When they got there, someone informed Jacob, “Look, your son Joseph has come to visit you.” Immediately Israel exerted himself and sat up at the head of his bed and they greeted each other. <sup>3</sup> Then Jacob told Joseph, “God who is all-powerful appeared to me long ago in the region of Canaan at the town of Luz. He blessed me there <sup>4</sup> by saying to me, ‘Listen, I will give you many descendants who will increase in number and become a community of peoples. I will also give this land to your descendants to own forever.’”

<sup>5</sup> Then Jacob said to Joseph, “Now then, your two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you here in the country of Egypt before I joined you here, I will treat as my sons, just like my sons Reuben and Simeon. <sup>6</sup> If you have any more children, they will be yours, so that what they inherit from me will be some of what their brothers Ephraim and Manasseh inherit from me. <sup>7</sup> I am doing this because as our family was returning home from the region of Paddan Aram, your mother Rachel died beside me in the region of Canaan while we were still traveling and some distance away from the town of Ephrath. As you know, I buried her body there by the road that goes to Ephrath, which now has the name Bethlehem.”

<sup>8</sup> Then Israel noticed Joseph’s two sons and asked him, “Who are these young men?” <sup>9</sup> Joseph answered him, “These are my sons whom God gave to me here in Egypt.” Then Israel said to Joseph, “Please bring them closer to me so that I can ask God to bless them.” <sup>10</sup> Now Israel was almost blind because of old age, so that he could not see very clearly. So Joseph took his sons closer to his father, and his father kissed them on the cheeks and hugged them. <sup>11</sup> Then Israel exclaimed to Joseph, “I never thought I would see you again,

but **now** look, God has even let me meet your children!” **12** Then Joseph had his sons move away from beside his father’s knees, and he bowed **before his father** and touched the ground with his forehead **to show him respect**.

**13** Then he brought his sons close to his father **again**. He had Ephraim stand in front of Israel’s left **side**, and he had Manasseh stand in front of Israel’s right **side**. **14** But Israel **intentionally** reached out his right hand and put **it** on Ephraim’s head, even though Ephraim was **Joseph’s** younger son. Then he crossed his arms and **put** his left hand on Manasseh’s head, **even though Manasseh was Joseph’s oldest son**. **15** Then Israel blessed Joseph **and his sons** by saying,

“I pray that the God whom my ancestors Abraham and Isaac served **will bless your sons**.

He is the God who has taken care of me my entire life.

**He is also the** Angel who saved me **continually** from every harm.

I pray that he will cause **these** young men to prosper **greatly**,

so that my family line and the family line of my ancestors Abraham and Isaac will continue through them

and so that they will have many descendants on the earth.”

**17** **When** Joseph noticed that his father had put his right hand on Ephraim’s head, he thought it was a mistake. So he took hold of his father’s hand **in order** to move it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. **18** Then he said to his father, “That is the wrong son, Father. The other **one is my oldest son**. **So you need to** have your right hand on his head.”

**19** But his father would not **move his hands** and replied, “I know **it**, my son, I know **what I am doing**. **In fact**, your oldest son will also be a great man, and he will become **the ancestor** of a people group. However, his younger brother will be **even** greater than he **will be**, and his **younger** brother’s descendants will become many people groups.” **20** So Israel blessed Ephraim and Manasseh that day by saying **to them**,

“**The people of** Israel will use your names when they bless **people** and say,

‘May God prosper you like **he prospered** Ephraim and Manasseh.’”

In that way, Israel made Ephraim greater than Manasseh.

**21** After that, Israel **turned** to Joseph **and said to him**, “As you can see, I am about to die, but God will **always** be with you and your brothers **and all your descendants to help you**. He will also take you back to the land that **he gave** to your ancestors. **22** Besides that, as

part of your inheritance from me, I hereby give you the city of Shechem, which I captured from the Amorites when I defeated them in battle. This is more land than I am giving to your brothers.”

## *Jacob’s Last Words to His Twelve Sons*

**49:1-28**

**49** <sup>1</sup> Then Jacob summoned all his sons. He said to them, “Come together here, so that I can tell you what will happen to you and your descendants in the years ahead.

My sons, gather around me, your father Jacob, and listen to me.

I, your father Israel, have something important to tell you.

Reuben, you are my oldest son,

the result of my strength and the first child I had as a young man.

You had high status and great authority in our family.

However, you are unstable like rushing water, so you will no longer have your important status in our family,

because you got into my bed with my concubine

and dishonored me! You actually climbed into my couch!

Simeon and Levi, you are partners.

You use your swords to do violent things together.

I will never participate with you when you plan evil things!

I refuse to make evil plans with you,

because you became angry and murdered many people,

and just to entertain yourselves you crippled some cattle.

May God curse you for being so fiercely angry

and malicious!

I ask God to scatter you and your descendants among the descendants of Jacob.

That’s right, I ask him to scatter you throughout the land of Israel.

Judah, you and your brothers and their descendants will highly praise you and your descendants.

You will conquer your enemies.

Then my other sons will prostrate themselves before you and your descendants in respect.

Judah, my<sup>9</sup>son, you are powerful like a young lion

that has returned to its den after killing its prey.

It stretches out and lies down to sleep.

No one dares to disturb that lion.

Judah, the<sup>10</sup> will always be one of your descendants ruling as king.

In fact, your descendants will rule

until the highest king comes

and the peoples of the earth obey him.

You and your<sup>11</sup> descendants will be so wealthy that you could tie your donkeys to your grapevines to eat the valuable fruit.

It will not matter if your donkeys' colts eat your best grapevine branches.

You will still have so much wine from other vines

that you could even use it like water to wash your clothes.

Your eyes<sup>12</sup> will be bright from drinking abundant wine,

and your teeth will be white from drinking abundant milk.

Zebulun, <sup>13</sup> you and your descendants will live near the coast,

where there will be a safe harbor for ships.

Your territory will extend as far north as the city of Sidon.

Issachar, <sup>14</sup> you and your descendants will be like a sturdy donkey

that is resting on the ground between two loads.

You will <sup>15</sup> have a good place to rest,

in a land that is pleasant,

but you will work hard and carry heavy loads.

You will have to work very hard for others as slaves.

Dan, you <sup>16</sup> and your descendants will rule your own people

and have equal status with the rest of the tribes of Israel.

You will <sup>17</sup> be like a poisonous snake

lying beside a road

that strikes the feet of its enemy's horse,

so that it rears up and the enemy falls off backward to the ground.”

Then Jacob <sup>18</sup> paused and exclaimed, “Yahweh, I am looking expectantly to you to save me!”

Then he <sup>19</sup> continued, “As for you, Gad, a group of robbers will attack you and your descendants,

but you will chase them and defeat them.

Asher, you <sup>20</sup> and your descendants will be wealthy and eat the best food.

In fact, you will produce delicious foods that are fit for kings to eat.

Naphtali, <sup>21</sup> you and your descendants will be swift like a deer that is free to run wherever it wants.

You will also speak eloquently.

Joseph, you <sup>22</sup> and your descendants will become very numerous like fruit on a productive tree that is growing next to a stream of water,

with branches full of fruit that hang over a nearby wall.

Enemy warriors <sup>23</sup> will fiercely attack you and your descendants and shoot arrows at you and try to destroy you.

But the Mighty God whom I worship will keep you strong and help you use your weapons well as you fight back.

He takes care of his people the way a shepherd takes care of his sheep.

He is like a rock fortress who protects Israel and his descendants.

That strength/power <sup>25</sup> comes from the God who has always taken care of me, your father.

He is the all-powerful God who will help you and your descendants and bless you all with rain from above

and water from deep in the ground.

He will also bless you with many children and much livestock.

God has <sup>26</sup> blessed me more than he blessed my ancestors.

He has blessed me with riches that are greater than the riches that come from the ancient mountains.

I pray that God will abundantly bless you too, Joseph, as the one he chose to set apart and honor above your brothers.

Benjamin <sup>27</sup> you and your descendants will be like a fierce wolf.

You will always defeat your enemies

and take their possessions and wealth.”

**28** Those **twelve sons are the ancestors** of the twelve tribes that descended from Israel, and those **were** the blessings that their father spoke to them. He blessed each one of them with blessings that were appropriate for them **and their descendants**.

## *Jacob Dies and Is Buried*

### **49:29-50:14**

**29** Then Jacob instructed his sons by saying to them, “I am about to **die and** join my ancestors **who have already died**. Bury my body next to their **bodies** inside the cave that **is** in the field that Ephron the Hittite used to own. **30** That cave and field are in the Machpelah **area** that is near **the city of Mamre** in the region of Canaan. **That is the cave that my grandfather** Abraham bought, along with the field, from Ephron the Hittite, in order to have a place to bury **his dead relatives**. **31** That is where **the bodies of** Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried, **and where the bodies of** Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried, and that is where I buried **the body of my wife Leah**. **32** **Abraham** bought that field and cave from the descendants of Heth.” **33** When Jacob had finished giving those instructions to his sons, he **lay down and** pulled his feet **up** into **his** bed. Then he took his last breath **and died** and joined his ancestors **who had died before him**.

**50** **1** Then Joseph hugged his father **in sorrow**, and he cried over him and kissed him **goodbye on the cheek**. **2** Then he ordered his doctors who served him to prepare his father’s **body** for burial. So they did that. **3** The process took forty days, which is how long it **normally** takes to prepare a body. The people in Egypt mourned for Israel **for** seventy days.

**4** After that time of mourning Israel’s death, Joseph said to Pharaoh’s officials, “Please do this favor for me: please take a message to **King Pharaoh for me** and tell **him** **5** that when my father was about to die, he had me vow to him that I would bury his body in the region of Canaan, in a tomb that he had prepared for himself there. So **ask the king to** please let me **go to Canaan** and bury my father’s **body there**. After that, I will come back **here**.” **6** **When Pharaoh heard Joseph’s message**, he replied, “Tell Joseph that he may go to **Canaan** and bury his father’s **body** just as his father made him vow **that he would do**.”

<sup>7</sup> So Joseph started the trip to Canaan to bury his father's body, and all Pharaoh's officials escorted him, including the important leaders from Pharaoh's court and all the other important leaders in the country of Egypt. <sup>8</sup> All of Joseph's family also went with him, including his brothers and the rest of his father's family. They only left behind their children and their livestock in Goshen Province. <sup>9</sup> Many soldiers also escorted Joseph, including those who were riding chariots and those who were riding horses, so that the entire group was very large.

<sup>10</sup> They traveled to the other side of the Jordan River and stopped at a grain threshing place owned by a man named Atad. There Joseph and the others mourned for his father very loudly and sorrowfully for seven days. <sup>11</sup> When the Canaanites who lived in the area saw them mourning like that at Atad's threshing place, they exclaimed to each other, "Wow! Those people from Egypt are mourning very sorrowfully for someone who died!" That is why the name of that place on the other side of the Jordan River is Abel Mizraim, which means "Egyptians' mourning place."

<sup>12</sup> Jacob's sons did everything for him just as he had instructed them to do: <sup>13</sup> They took his body to the region of Canaan and buried it in the cave that is in the field in the Machpelah area, near the city of Mamre. It was the field and cave that Abraham had bought from Ephron the Hittite as a place to bury his dead relatives. <sup>14</sup> After Joseph buried his father's body, he returned to the country of Egypt, along with his brothers and everyone else who had accompanied him to his father's funeral.

## *Joseph Reassures His Brothers That He Has Forgiven Them*

### **50:15-21**

<sup>15</sup> Now that their father was no longer alive, Joseph's brothers were worried and said to each other, "If Joseph is angry at us for the terrible way that we treated him, he might punish us severely for what we did." <sup>16</sup> So they sent a messenger to Joseph to tell him, "Before our father died, he told us <sup>17</sup> to ask you to please forgive us, your brothers, for sinning against you and treating you so badly. So then, as servants of God whom our father worshiped, we beg you to forgive us for sinning against you." When Joseph heard his

brothers' message to him, he was very sad and cried. <sup>18</sup> Then his brothers came to him, prostrated themselves before him to show respect, and said to him, "Here we are, we will be your servants!" <sup>19</sup> But Joseph replied to them, "You do not need to be afraid. After all, I am not God! So I have no right to punish you. <sup>20</sup> It is true that you planned to harm me, but God is using that to benefit us all. Right now he is doing what he planned, to keep many people from dying. <sup>21</sup> So then, you do not need to be afraid. I myself will provide everything that you and your children need." In that way, Joseph assured them that he had forgiven them, and he also said other things to encourage them.

## *Joseph Dies in Egypt*

### **50:22-26**

<sup>22</sup> Joseph continued to live in the country of Egypt, along with the rest of his father Jacob's family, until he was 110 years old. <sup>23</sup> He lived long enough to see his son Ephraim's children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. The children of his grandson Machir, who was Manasseh's son, also grew up during his lifetime.

<sup>24</sup> Then one day Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will definitely help you and take you and your descendants from this country to the land that he vowed to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. <sup>25</sup> When God does that, you must take my body back to Canaan with you and bury it there." Then Joseph had his brothers and the rest of the descendants of Israel vow that they would do that.

<sup>26</sup> So Joseph died at the age of 110 years. Then his doctors prepared his body for burial, and they put it in a burial box in the country of Egypt.