



Unlocked Dynamic Bible

Genesis

Unlocked Dynamic Bible

an unrestricted Bible intended for translation into any language

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GENESIS

Chapter 1

¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ² When he began to create the earth, it was shapeless and completely desolate. Darkness covered the surface of the deep water. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the water. ³ God said, "I command there to be light," and there was light. ⁴ God was pleased with the light. Then he made the light shine in some places at certain times, while in other places there was still darkness. ⁵ He named the light "day," and he named the darkness "night." This was an evening and morning, the first day.

⁶ Then God said, "I command that there be an empty space like a huge dome to separate the water into two parts." ⁷ And that is what happened. God made the empty space like a huge dome and it separated the water that is above it from the water on the earth that is below it. ⁸ God named the space like a huge dome "sky." This was an evening and morning, the second day.

⁹ Then God said, "I command the water that is below the sky to come together, and dry ground to appear and rise above it." And that is what happened. ¹⁰ God gave to the ground the name "earth," and he gave to the water that came together the name "oceans." God was pleased with the earth and the oceans. ¹¹ Then God said, "I command the earth to produce many kinds of plants that reproduce themselves—plants that will produce seeds and trees that will produce fruit with their seed in it." And that is what happened. ¹² Then plants grew on the earth. Each kind of plant began to produce its own kind of seed, and each kind of tree produced fruit with its seed in it. God was pleased with the plants

and trees. ¹³ This was an evening and morning, the third day.

¹⁴ Then God said, "I command many lights to shine in the sky. They will distinguish day from night. By the changes in their appearance they will indicate the time for various festivals and other things that people do at certain times and in certain years. ¹⁵ I also want these lights in the sky to shine down on the earth." And that is what happened. ¹⁶ God made two of them to be very big lights. The biggest one, the sun, he made to govern the day and the smaller one, the moon, he made to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set all of them in the sky to shine on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light of the daytime from the darkness of the nighttime. God was pleased with the lights. ¹⁹ This was an evening and morning, the fourth day. ²⁰ Then God said, "Fill the waters with all kinds of living things that I have made, and fill the sky with birds that fly above the earth." ²¹ So God created the very large creatures that live in the sea, and he created all the other living things that are found, in very great numbers, in the waters. He also created every kind of bird that has wings. All these creatures would be able to produce their own offspring. God looked at all that he had made and he was pleased with them. ²² So God blessed them. He said, "Produce offspring and become very numerous. I want the creatures in the water to live throughout all the bodies of water, and the birds also to become very numerous." ²³ This was an evening and morning, the fifth day. ²⁴ Then God said, "I command the earth to produce various kinds of animals that reproduce themselves to live on the earth. There will be many kinds of domestic animals, creatures that crawl on the ground, and large wild animals." And that is what happened. ²⁵ God made all

kinds of wild animals and domestic animals and all kinds of creatures that crawl on the ground. They could all produce more animals of their same kind. God was pleased with them.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make human beings to be like us. I want them to rule over the fish in the sea, over the birds in the sky, over all the domestic animals, and over all the other creatures that move across the surface of the ground." ²⁷ So God created human beings that were like him in many ways. He made them to be like himself. He created them as male and female. ²⁸ God blessed them, saying, "Produce many children, who should live all over the earth and rule over it. I want you to rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over all the creatures that move across the surface of the ground." ²⁹ God said, "Look! I have given you all the plants that produce seeds all over the earth, and all the trees that produce fruit. All these things are for you to eat. ³⁰ I have given all the green plants to be food for all the wild animals, for the birds, and for all the creatures that move across the surface of the ground, that is, for everything that has life-giving breath in it." And that is what happened. ³¹ God was pleased with everything that he had made. Truly, it was all very good. This was an evening and morning, the sixth day.

Chapter 2

¹ That is the way God created the heavens and the earth and the living things that filled them. ² By the time it was the seventh day, God had finished the work of creating everything, so he did not work anymore on that day. ³ God declared that each seventh day would have his favor. He set those days apart to be special days,

because on the seventh day God did not work anymore, after finishing all his work of creating everything. ⁴ What follows is how God created the heavens and the earth.

God, whose name is Yahweh, made the heavens and the earth. ⁵ At first there were no plants growing, because Yahweh God had not yet caused rain to fall on the ground. Furthermore, there was no one to plow the ground for planting crops. ⁶ Instead, mist rose up from the ground, so that there was water all over the surface of the ground. ⁷ Then Yahweh God took some soil and formed a man. He breathed into the man's nostrils his own breath that makes things alive, and as a result the man became a whole living person. ⁸ Yahweh God made a park in a place named Eden, which was east of the land of Canaan. There he placed the man that he had formed. ⁹ Yahweh God caused to grow from the ground every kind of tree that is beautiful to see and that produces fruit that is good to eat. He also placed in the middle of the park a tree whose fruit would enable those who ate it to live forever. He also placed there another tree whose fruit would enable those who ate it to know what actions were good to do and what actions were evil to do.

¹⁰ A river flowed from Eden to provide water for the park. Outside of Eden, the river divided into four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first river is Pishon. That river flows through all the land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² That gold is very pure. There is also a sweet-smelling gum called bdellium and valuable stones called onyx. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon. That river flows through all the land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris. It flows east of the city of Ashur. The name of the fourth river is Euphrates.

Chapter 3

¹⁵ Yahweh God took the man and put him in Eden to plow it and take care of it. ¹⁶⁻¹⁷ But Yahweh said to him, “I will not permit you to eat the fruit of the tree that will enable you to know what actions are good to do and what actions are evil to do. If you eat any fruit from that tree, on the day you eat it you will surely die. But I will permit you to eat the fruit of any of the other trees in the park.”

¹⁸ Yahweh God said, “It is not good for this man to be alone. So I will make someone who will be a suitable partner for him.” ¹⁹ Yahweh God had taken some soil and had formed all kinds of animals and birds, and he brought them to the man to hear what names he would give to them. And the man gave a name to every living animal that Yahweh had made. ²⁰ Then the man gave names to all the kinds of cattle, birds, and wild animals, but none of these creatures was a partner that was suitable for the man. ²¹ So Yahweh God caused the man to become deeply asleep. While the man was sleeping, Yahweh took out one of the man’s ribs. Then he immediately closed the opening in his body and healed it. ²² Yahweh then made a woman from the rib that he had taken from the man’s body, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man exclaimed, “Finally, this is truly someone like me! Her bones came from one of my bones, and her flesh came from my flesh. So I will call her woman, because she was taken from me, a man.”

²⁴ The first woman was taken from the man’s body, so that is why when a man and a woman marry, they must leave their parents. The man will join very closely to his wife, so that the two of them will be as though they are one person.

²⁵ Although the man and his wife were naked, they were not ashamed about being naked.

¹ Now the snake was more cunning than all the other wild animals that Yahweh God had made. The snake said to her, “Did God really say to you, ‘Do not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the park?’” ² The woman replied, “What God said was, ‘Do not eat the fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the park or touch it. If you do that, you will die.’” ³ But you can eat fruit from any of the other trees.” ⁴ The snake said to the woman, “No, you will certainly not die. God said that ⁵ only because he knows that when you eat fruit from that tree, you will understand new things. It will be as though your eyes were opened, and you will know what is good to do and what is evil to do, just as God does.” ⁶ The woman saw that the fruit on that tree was good to eat, and it was very beautiful. She desired it because she thought it would make her wise. So she picked some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, and he ate it. ⁷ Immediately it was as though their eyes were opened, and they realized that they were naked, so they were ashamed. So they picked some fig leaves and fastened them together to make clothes for themselves.

⁸ Late that afternoon, when a cool breeze was blowing, they heard the sound of Yahweh God as he was walking in the park. So the man and his wife hid themselves among the bushes in the park, so that Yahweh God would not see them. ⁹ But Yahweh God called to the man, saying to him, “Why are you trying to hide from me?” ¹⁰ The man replied, “I heard the sound of your footsteps in the garden, and I was naked, so I was afraid and I hid from you.” ¹¹ God said, “How did you find out you were naked? It must be because you ate some of the fruit from the tree that I told you, ‘Do not eat its fruit.’ Is that what

you have done?” ¹² The man said, “You gave me this woman to be with me. She is the one who gave me some of the fruit from that tree, so I ate it.” ¹³ Then Yahweh God said to the woman, “Why did you do such a thing?” The woman replied, “I ate it because the snake deceived me.” ¹⁴ Then Yahweh God said to the snake, “Because you did this, of all the domestic animals and the wild animals, I will curse you alone. As a result, you and all other snakes will crawl on the ground on your bellies, and so what you eat will have dirt on it as long as you live. ¹⁵ I will cause you and the woman to be enemies to each other, and I will cause your descendant and her descendant to be enemies toward each other. You will bite his heel, but he will crush your head.” ¹⁶ Then Yahweh said to the woman, “I will make you have great pain when you give birth to children. You will want to be with your husband, but he will rule over you.” ¹⁷ Then he said to the man, “You listened to what your wife said, and you ate some of the fruit of the tree about which I commanded you, ‘Do not eat it.’ So I will make it difficult to grow things in the ground because of what you did. You will have to work hard as long as you live to produce things from the ground to eat. ¹⁸ Thornbushes and thistle plants and other weeds will grow and prevent what you have planted from growing. And for food, you will have to eat things that just grow in your fields. ¹⁹ All your life you will sweat as you work hard to produce food to eat. Then you will die, and your body will be buried in the ground. I made you from soil, so your body will become soil again.”

²⁰ The man, whose name was Adam, named his wife Eve, which means “living,” because she became the ancestor of all living people. ²¹ Then Yahweh God killed some animals and made clothes from their skins for Adam and his wife.

²² Then Yahweh God said, “Look! Those two have become like us because they know what is good to do and what is evil to do. So now, it will not be good if they reach out and pick and eat some of the fruit from the tree which enables people who eat it to live forever!” ²³ So Yahweh God drove out the man and his wife from the park of Eden. Yahweh God had created Adam from the ground, and he forced him to plow the ground. ²⁴ After Yahweh God drove them out, on the east side of the park he placed cherubim and a flaming sword that flashed back and forth, in order to block the entrance, so that people could not go back to the tree that enables anyone who eats its fruit to live forever.

Chapter 4

¹ Adam slept with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son whom she named Cain, which means “produce,” because, she said, “By Yahweh’s help I have produced a son.”

² Some time later she gave birth to another son, and she named him Abel. After those boys grew up, Abel tended sheep and goats, and Cain became a farmer. ³ One day it happened that Cain harvested some of the crops he had grown and brought them to Yahweh as a gift for him, ⁴ and Abel took from his flock some of the first lambs that had been born and killed them and, as a gift, gave to Yahweh the fatty parts, which were the best parts. Yahweh was pleased with Abel and his offering, ⁵ but he was not pleased with Cain and his offering. So Cain became very angry, and his expression became unpleasant. ⁶ Yahweh said to Cain, “You should not be angry! You should not scowl like that! ⁷ If you do what is right, I will accept you. But

if you do not do what is right, the evil that you want to do will devour you, like a lion waiting outside your door to attack you. Your desire to sin wants to control you, but you must control it.”

⁸ But one day, Cain said to his younger brother Abel, “Come with me to the fields.” So they went together. And when they were in the countryside, suddenly Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

⁹ Then, even though Yahweh knew what Cain had done, he said to Cain, “Do you know where Abel, your younger brother, is?” Cain replied, “No, I do not know. My job is not to guard my younger brother!”

¹⁰ Yahweh said, “What you have done is terrible! Your brother’s blood that has soaked into the ground convicts you of your guilt. ¹¹ You have killed your younger brother, and, now that the ground has soaked up your younger brother’s blood, you are not welcome on it and your efforts to produce crops on it will fail. ¹² When you till the ground to plant crops, the ground will produce very little for you. You will continually wander around the earth, and not have any place to live permanently.” ¹³ Cain replied to Yahweh, “You are punishing me more than I can endure. ¹⁴ You are about to expel me from the ground that I have been tilling, and I will no longer be able to come into your presence. Furthermore, I will be continually wandering around the earth with no place to live permanently, and anyone who sees me will kill me.” ¹⁵ But Yahweh said to him, “No, that will not happen. I will put a mark on you to warn anyone who sees you that I will punish him severely if he kills you. I will punish that person seven times as severely as I am punishing you.” Then Yahweh put a mark on Cain. ¹⁶

So Cain left Yahweh and went to live in the land called Nod, which means ‘wan-

dering’, which was east of Eden.

¹⁷ Some time later, Cain slept with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, whom she named Enoch. Then Cain started to build a city, and he named the city ‘Enoch,’ the same name that his son had. ¹⁸ Enoch grew up and married and became the father of a son whom he named Irad. When Irad grew up he became the father of a son whom he named Mehujael. Mehujael grew up and became the father of a son whom he named Methushael. Methushael grew up and became the father of Lamech. ¹⁹ When Lamech grew up he married two women. The name of one was Adah and the name of the other was Zillah. ²⁰ Adah gave birth to a son named Jabal. Later, Jabal became the first person who lived in tents because he traveled from place to place to take care of livestock. ²¹ His younger brother’s name was Jubal. He was the first person who made a lyre and a flute. ²² Lamech’s other wife Zillah gave birth to a son whom she named Tubal-Cain. Later he learned how to make things out of bronze and iron. The name of Tubal-Cain’s younger sister was Naamah.

²³ One day Lamech said to his two wives, “Adah and Zillah, my two wives, listen carefully to what I am saying. A young man struck me and wounded me, so I killed him. ²⁴ Yahweh said long ago that he would avenge and punish anyone who killed Cain seven times as much as he punished Cain. So if anyone tries to kill me, may he be punished seventy-seven times as much.”

²⁵ Adam continued to sleep with his wife, and she again became pregnant and gave birth to another son, whom she named Seth. She said, “I name him Seth because God has given me another child to take the place of Abel, since Cain killed him.” ²⁶ When Seth grew up, he became the father

of a son whom he named Enosh. About that time people began to worship Yahweh.

Chapter 5

¹ This is a list of those who descended from Adam. When God created humans, he made them to be like him in many ways. ² He created one man and one woman. He blessed them, and on the day that he created them, he called them ‘human beings.’ ³ When Adam was 130 years old, he became the father of a son who was just like him. That was the son he named Seth. ⁴ After Seth was born, Adam lived eight hundred more years, and during those years he became the father of other sons and daughters. ⁵ Adam lived 930 years altogether, and then he died. ⁶ When Seth was 105 years old, he became the father of Enosh. ⁷ After Enosh was born, Seth lived 807 more years, and became the father of other sons and daughters. ⁸ Seth lived 912 years altogether, and then he died. ⁹ When Enosh was ninety years old, he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰ After Kenan was born, Enosh lived 815 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. ¹¹ Enosh lived 905 years altogether, and then he died. ¹² When Kenan was seventy years old, he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³ After Mahalalel was born, Kenan lived 840 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. ¹⁴ Kenan lived 910 years altogether, and then he died. ¹⁵ When Mahalalel was sixty-five years old, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶ After Jared was born, Mahalalel lived 830 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. ¹⁷ Mahalalel lived 895 years altogether, and then he died. ¹⁸ When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹ Jared lived eight hundred years after

Enoch was born, and he became the father of other sons and daughters. ²⁰ Jared lived 962 years altogether, and then he died. ²¹ When Enoch was sixty-five years old, he became the father of Methuselah. ²² Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for three hundred years after Methuselah was born, and he became the father of other sons and daughters. ²³ Enoch lived 365 years. ²⁴ He was in close fellowship with God, and one day he disappeared, because God took him away to be with him. ²⁵ When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶ Methuselah lived 782 years after Lamech was born, and became the father of other sons and daughters. ²⁷ Methuselah lived 969 years altogether, and then he died. ²⁸ When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son, ²⁹ whom he named Noah, because, as he said, “He will bring us relief from all the hard work we have been doing to produce food from the ground that Yahweh cursed.” ³⁰ Lamech lived 595 years after Noah was born and became the father of other sons and daughters. ³¹ Lamech lived 777 years altogether, and then he died. ³² When Noah was five hundred years old, he became the father of sons whom he named Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Chapter 6

¹ When people began to become very numerous all over the earth, and many daughters were born to them, ² some of the heavenly beings saw that the human women were very beautiful. So they took whichever ones they chose to become their wives. ³ Then Yahweh said, “My breath will not remain in people forever, to keep them alive. They are made of weak flesh. They will live not more than 120 years before they die.”

⁴ When these heavenly beings slept with human women, they gave birth to children. These were the giants who lived on the earth at that time and also later. These giants were heroic fighters; they were famous men from long ago.

⁵ Yahweh saw that people on the earth had become very wicked, and everything they thought in their inner beings was evil continually. ⁶ Yahweh was sorry that he had made people on the earth and it made him sad. ⁷ So Yahweh said, "I will completely destroy the people I made. I will also destroy all the larger animals and the creatures that move close to the ground and the birds. None of them will remain on the earth, because I regret that I made them."

⁸ But Yahweh was pleased with Noah. ⁹ This is what happened: Noah was a man whose behavior was always righteous. No one who lived at that time could criticize him about anything. Noah lived in close fellowship with God. ¹⁰ Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹ God could see that everyone else on earth was very wicked, and everywhere on the earth, people were acting cruelly and violently toward each other. ¹² God looked at everyone and saw how evil people were, because all people on the earth had begun to behave in an evil way. ¹³ So God said to Noah, "I have decided to destroy all people, because all over the earth people are acting violently toward each other. So I am about to get rid of them as well as everything else on the earth. ¹⁴ Make for yourself a large boat from cypress wood. Make rooms inside it. Cover the outside and the inside with tar to make it waterproof. ¹⁵ This is how you must make it: It must be 138 meters long, twenty-three meters wide, and fourteen meters high. ¹⁶ Make a roof for the boat. Leave a space of about half a meter

between the sides and the roof to let air and light enter. Make it with three decks inside, and put a door in one side. ¹⁷ Listen carefully! I am about to bring a flood that will destroy everything that lives beneath the sky. Everything on the earth will die. ¹⁸ But I will make my covenant with you. You and your wife, your sons and their wives will enter the boat. ¹⁹ You must also bring two of all living creatures, a male and a female, into the boat with you, so that they also may remain alive. ²⁰ Two of every kind of creature will come to you in order for you to keep them alive. They will include two of each kind of bird and two of each kind of larger animal and two of each kind of creature that moves close to the ground. ²¹ You must also take some of every kind of food that you and all these creatures will need, and store it in the boat." ²² So Noah did everything that God told him to do.

Chapter 7

¹ Then Yahweh said to Noah, "I have seen that from all the people who are now living, you alone always act righteously. So I want you and all your family to go into the boat. ² Take with you seven pairs of every kind of animal that I have said I will accept for sacrifices. Take seven males and seven females. Also take one male and one female from every kind of animal that I have said that I will not accept for sacrifices. ³ Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird from to keep their descendants alive all over the earth. ⁴ Do this because seven days from now I will cause rain to fall on the earth. It will rain constantly for forty days and nights. In this way, I will destroy everything that I have made that is on the earth."

⁵ Noah did everything that Yahweh told him to do. ⁶ Noah was six hundred years

old when the flood came on the earth. ⁷ Before it started to rain, Noah and his wife and his sons and his sons' wives all went into the boat to escape from the flood water. ⁸ Pairs of animals, those that God said that he would accept for sacrifices and those that he would not accept for sacrifices, and pairs of birds and pairs of all the kinds of creatures that move close to the ground, ⁹ males and females, came to Noah and then went into the boat, just as God told Noah that they would do. ¹⁰ After seven days had ended, it started to rain and a flood began to cover the earth. ¹¹ When Noah was six hundred years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the water that is under the surface of the earth burst out, and it began to rain so hard that it was as though a dam in the sky burst open. ¹² Rain fell on the earth constantly for forty days and nights. ¹³ On the day that it started to rain, Noah went into the boat with his wife, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives. ¹⁴ They and some of every kind of wild animal, and every kind of domestic animal, and every kind of creature that moves close to the ground, and every kind of bird, and every other creature that has wings, all entered the boat. ¹⁵ Pairs of all creatures that breathed came to Noah and entered the boat. ¹⁶ There were a male and a female of each creature that came to Noah, just as God had said they would do. After they were all in the boat, Yahweh shut the door.

¹⁷ For forty days the water kept coming and the flood increased and lifted the boat up above the ground. ¹⁸ The rushing water rose higher and higher on the earth, and the boat floated on the surface of the water. ¹⁹ The water rushed higher and higher all over the earth until it covered all the mountains and everything under heaven. ²⁰ Even the highest mountains were covered by more than six meters of

water. ²¹ As a result, every living being on the surface of the earth died. That included the birds, the domestic animals, the wild animals, and all the other creatures that move around on the ground, as well as all the people. ²² Everything that breathed, that was a creature of the land, died. ²³ In this way every living thing on the earth perished—the people, the larger animals, the creatures that crawl, and the birds. The only ones that remained alive were Noah and those who were in the boat with him. ²⁴ The waters remained at full flood like that on the earth for 150 days.

Chapter 8

¹ But God did not forget about Noah, or about all the wild animals and all the kinds of domestic animals that were with him in the boat. So one day God sent a wind to blow across the earth, and the wind caused the water to begin to recede. ² God caused the water that was under the earth to stop bursting out, and he caused the floodgates of water from the sky to close so that it stopped raining. ³ The water on the earth gradually receded. By one hundred fifty days after the flood began, much of the water was gone. ⁴ On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the boat came to rest on one of the mountains in the region of Ararat. ⁵ The water continued to recede until, on the first day of the tenth month of that year, the tops of other mountains became visible. ⁶ Forty days later, Noah opened the window that he had made in the side of the boat, and sent out a raven. ⁷ The raven flew back and forth to and from the boat until the water dried up from the surface of the ground. ⁸ Then Noah sent out a dove to find out if the water had all receded from the surface of the ground. ⁹ But the dove did not find any place to perch, so it flew back

to Noah in the boat, because there was still water all over the surface of the earth. So Noah reached out his hand and took the dove back inside the boat. ¹⁰ Noah waited seven more days. Then he sent the dove out of the boat again. ¹¹ This time the dove returned to him in the evening and, surprisingly, there was a leaf from an olive tree that the dove had just plucked in its beak. Then Noah knew that the water had truly receded from the surface of the ground. ¹² Noah waited again seven more days. Then he sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

¹³ Noah was now 601 years old. By the first day of the first month of that year, the water had completely drained away from the ground. Noah removed the covering on top of the boat, and he was surprised to see that the surface of the ground was dry. ¹⁴ By the twenty-seventh day of the next month, the ground was completely dry. ¹⁵ Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶ "Leave the boat, along with your wife, your sons, and their wives. ¹⁷ Bring out with you all the birds, the domestic animals, and all the kinds of creatures that move close to the ground, in order that they can spread all over the earth and become very numerous." ¹⁸ So Noah left the boat, along with his wife, his sons, and their wives. ¹⁹ Then all the creatures, including all those that move close to the ground, all the birds, and every animal that moves on the earth, left the boat. They left the boat in groups of their own kind.

²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to Yahweh. He took some of the animals and birds that were acceptable as sacrifices and killed them. Then he burned them whole on the altar. ²¹ When Yahweh smelled the pleasant odor, he was pleased with the sacrifice. Then he said to himself, "I will never again devastate everything on the earth because of the sinful things people

do. Even though all that people think in their minds is evil from the time they are young, I will not destroy all the living beings again, as I did this time. ²² As long as the earth exists, the seasons for planting seeds and seasons for harvesting crops, the times when it is cold and times when it is hot, the summer and winter, the daytime and nighttime will continue."

Chapter 9

¹ Then God blessed Noah and his sons. He said to them, "I want you to have many children who will live all over the earth. ² All the larger animals on the earth, all the birds, all the creatures that move close to the ground, and all the fish, will be very afraid of you. I place them under your authority. ³ Previously I allowed you to eat green plants for food, but now you may eat everything that lives and moves. ⁴ But you must not eat meat that still has the blood in it, because the life is in its blood. ⁵ I punish any creature who kills a human being—that they answer to Yahweh—whether it be an animal or from a human being. I demand that murderers must suffer for their crimes and pay with their own lives. Even when an animal kills a person, that animal must also have their life taken because they have taken the life of a human being. ⁶ For I made people to be like myself. So I insist that if someone murders another human being, another person must kill him. Anyone who pours another's blood out must himself lose his own blood.

⁷ As for you, I want you to produce many children, in order that they and their descendants may live all over the earth."

⁸ God also said to Noah and his sons, ⁹ "Listen carefully. I am now making a covenant with you and with your descen-

dants,¹⁰ and with every creature with you, that is alive—including the birds, the domestic animals, and the wild animals—every living animal creature on the earth that came out of the boat with you.¹¹ This is the covenant that I am making with you: I will never again destroy all living beings by a flood, or destroy everything else on the earth by a flood.”

¹² Then God said to him, “This is the sign to guarantee that I will keep the covenant that I am making with you and with all living beings, a covenant that I will keep forever:¹³ From time to time I will put a rainbow in the sky. It will be the sign of my covenant with you and with everything on the earth.¹⁴ When I cause rain to fall from the clouds, and a rainbow appears in the sky,¹⁵ it will remind me about the covenant that I have made with you and with all living creatures, my promise that there will never again be a flood that will destroy all living creatures.¹⁶ Whenever there is a rainbow in the sky, I will see it, and I will think about the covenant that I have made with every living being that is upon the earth, a promise that I will keep forever.”

¹⁷ Then God said to Noah, “The rainbow will be the sign of the covenant that I have made with all living beings on the earth.”

¹⁸ The sons of Noah who came out of boat were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham later became the father of Canaan.¹⁹ All the people on the earth are descended from these three sons of Noah.

²⁰ Noah began to farm the land. He planted grapevines.²¹ After they produced grapes, he made wine from them. One day, when he had drunk too much of the wine, he became drunk, and he lay naked in his tent.²² Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father lying naked in the tent. So he went outside and told his two older brothers what he had seen.

²³ Then Shem and Japheth took a large cloth and placed it across their backs, and walked backwards into the tent. They covered their father’s naked body with the cloth. Their faces were turned away from their father, so they did not see him naked.

²⁴ When Noah woke up and was sober again, he found out how badly Ham, his youngest son, had behaved toward him.²⁵ He said, “I am cursing Ham’s son, Canaan, and his descendants. They will be like slaves to their uncles.

²⁶ I praise Yahweh, whom Shem worships. May Canaan’s descendants be servants to Shem’s descendants.²⁷ But may God make the Japheth’s territory larger. May he allow Japheth’s descendants to live peacefully among the descendants of Shem. May Canaan’s descendants be their slaves.”

²⁸ Noah lived 350 more years after the flood.²⁹ He died when he was 950 years old.

Chapter 10

¹ These are the descendants of Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. They became the fathers of many children after the flood.

² The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.³ The sons of Gomer were Askenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.⁴ The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.⁵ The sons and their families who were descended from Javan lived in the islands and in the lands close to the ocean. Their descendants became people groups, each with its own language, clans, and territory.⁶ The sons of Ham were Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan.

⁷ The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtah. The sons of

Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

⁸ Another one of Cush's sons was Nimrod. Nimrod was the first person on earth who became a mighty warrior. ⁹ Yahweh saw that he had become a great hunter. That is why people say to a great hunter, "Yahweh sees that you are a great hunter like Nimrod." ¹⁰ Nimrod became a king who ruled in Babylonia land. The first cities over which he ruled were Babel, Erech, Akkad, and Kalneh. ¹¹ From there he went with other people to Assyria, and there they built the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, ¹² and Resen. Resen was a large city between Nineveh and Calah.

¹³ Ham's son, Egypt, became the ancestor of the Lud, Anam, Lehab and Naphthuh, ¹⁴ Pathrus, Casluh and Caphtor people groups. The Philistine people were descended from Casluh.

¹⁵ Ham's youngest son, Canaan, became the father of Sidon, who was his eldest son, and Heth, his younger son. ¹⁶ Canaan was also the ancestor of the Jebus, Amor, Girgash, ¹⁷ Hiv, Ark, Sin, ¹⁸ Arved, Zemar and Hamath people groups. Later the descendants of Canaan scattered over a large area. ¹⁹ Their land extended from the city of Sidon in the north as far south as Gaza near Gerar, and then east toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboyim towns, as far as the town of Lasha.

²⁰ Those are the descendants of Ham. They became people groups that had their own clans, their own languages, and their own lands.

²¹ Shem, the older brother of Japheth, also had sons, and he became the ancestor of all the descendants of Eber. ²² The sons of Shem were Elam, Ashur, Arphachshad, Lud, and Aram. ²³ The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. ²⁴ Arphachshad became the father of Shehlah. Shehlah became the father of Eber.

²⁵ Eber became the father of two sons. One of them was named Peleg, which means "division," because during the time he lived, people on the earth became divided and scattered everywhere. Peleg's younger brother was Joktan. ²⁶ Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸ Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹ Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan. ³⁰ The areas in which the clans began to live extended from Mesha to Sephar, which is in the hill country in the east. ³¹ They are descendants from the sons of Shem. They became people groups that had their own clans, their own languages, and their own land.

³² All these clans descended from the sons of Noah. Each clan had its own genealogy and each became a separate people group. Those people groups formed after the flood and spread all around the earth.

Chapter 11

¹ At this time, all the people in the world spoke the same language. ² As people moved around in the east, they arrived at a plain in the region of Babylon and began to live there. ³ Then they said to each other, "Let us make bricks and bake them to make them hard, for building!" So they used bricks instead of stones, and used tar instead of mortar to hold them together. ⁴ They said, "Let us build a city for ourselves! We also ought to build a very high tower that reaches up to the sky! In that way people will know who we are! If we do not do this, we will be scattered all over the earth!"

⁵ One day Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower that the people were building. ⁶ Yahweh said, "These people are one group that all speak the same lan-

guage. If they have begun to do this, then there is nothing that they will decide to do that will be impossible for them! ⁷ So, let us go down there and make the people speak different languages, so that they will not be able to understand what each other is saying.”

⁸ By doing this, Yahweh caused them to scatter all over the earth, and the people stopped building the city. ⁹ The city was called Babel, because there Yahweh caused the people all over the earth to no longer speak only one language. And Yahweh caused them to scatter all over the earth from that place.

¹⁰ These are those who descended from Shem. Two years after the flood, when Shem was one hundred years old, he became the father of Arphaxad. ¹¹ After Arphaxad was born, Shem lived five hundred more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

¹² When Arphachshad was thirty-five years old, he became the father of Shelah. ¹³ After Shelah was born, Arphaxad lived 403 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

¹⁴ When Shelah was thirty years old, he became the father of Eber. ¹⁵ After Eber was born, Shelah lived 403 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

¹⁶ When Eber was thirty-four years old, he became the father of Peleg. ¹⁷ After Peleg was born, Eber lived 430 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

¹⁸ When Peleg was thirty years old, he became the father of Reu. ¹⁹ After Reu was born, Peleg lived 209 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

²⁰ When Reu was thirty-two years old, he became the father of Serug. ²¹ After

Serug was born, Reu lived 207 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

²² When Serug was thirty years old, he became the father of Nahor. ²³ After Nahor was born, Serug lived two hundred more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

²⁴ When Nahor was twenty-nine years old, he became the father of Terah. ²⁵ After Terah was born, Nahor lived 119 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters.

²⁶ After Terah was seventy years old, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

²⁷ This is what happened concerning the descendants of Terah: Terah's sons were Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran's son was named Lot. ²⁸ Haran's father was with him when Haran died in the city of Ur, in the country of the Chaldeans. This is the land where he was born. ²⁹ Abram and Nahor both married. Abram's wife was named Sarai, and Nahor's wife was named Milkah. Milkah and her sister Iskah were the daughters of Haran. ³⁰ Sarai was unable to have any children.

³¹ Terah decided to leave Ur and go to live in the land of Canaan. So he took his son Abram and his grandson Lot son of Haran, and Abram's wife Sarai with him. But instead of going to Canaan, they stopped at the town of Haran and lived there. ³² When Terah was 205 years old, he died in Haran.

Chapter 12

¹ Then Yahweh said to Abram, "Leave this country where you are now living. Leave your father's clan and his family, and go to a land that I will show you. ² I will cause

your descendants to become a large nation. I will bless you and cause you to become famous. What I do for you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who do evil things to you. I will bless all the clans on earth through you.”

⁴ So Abram left Haran, as Yahweh told him to do. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left there along with his family and Lot’s family. ⁵ Abram took his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot; he also took with himself all the possessions and slaves that they had accumulated in Haran. They left from there and went to the land of Canaan. ⁶ In Canaan they traveled as far as Shechem and camped by a tall tree called the tree of Moreh. When this happened, the Canaanite people were living in that land.

⁷ Then Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, “I will give this land to your descendants.” Then Abram built an altar to offer a sacrifice to Yahweh, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From Shechem, Abram and his family traveled to the hills that were east of Bethel. Bethel was to the west of where they set up their tent, and Ai was to the east. There he built another altar and offered a sacrifice and worshiped Yahweh there. ⁹ Then they left there and continued traveling south to the Negev desert.

¹⁰ There was a famine in that land, so they went further south to live for awhile in the land of Egypt, because the lack of food in the land where they were was very severe. ¹¹ When they were coming near to the land of Egypt, Abram said to his wife Sarai, “Listen, I know that you are a very beautiful woman. ¹² When the people in Egypt see you, they will say, ‘This woman is his wife!’ and they will kill me, but they will not kill you. ¹³ So I ask you to tell them that you are my sister, so that I will be safe

and so they will spare my life because of you.”

¹⁴ And that was what happened. As soon as they arrived in Egypt, the people in Egypt saw that his wife was indeed very beautiful. ¹⁵ When the king’s officials saw her, they told the king how beautiful she was. Then the king took her into his palace. ¹⁶ The king treated Abram kindly because of Sarai, and he gave Abram sheep and cattle and donkeys and male and female slaves and camels. ¹⁷ But because the king had taken Sarai, Abram’s wife, Yahweh caused the king and the others in his household to be inflicted with terrible diseases. ¹⁸ So the king summoned Abram and said to him, “You have done a terrible thing to me! Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? ¹⁹ Why did you say that she is your sister, so that I took her to be my wife? You should not have done that! So now take your wife, leave here and go!” ²⁰ Then the king ordered his officials to take Abram and his wife and all his possessions out of Egypt.

Chapter 13

¹ So Abram and Sarai left Egypt and went back to the southern Judean wilderness. They took along all their possessions, and Lot went with them. ² Abram was very rich. He owned a lot of livestock, silver, and gold. ³ They continued traveling from place to place from the southern Judean wilderness toward Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where they had previously set up their tents. ⁴ This is also where Abram had built an altar; there he worshiped Yahweh again. ⁵ Lot, who was traveling with Abram, also had flocks of sheep and goats and herds of cattle and tents. ⁶ The two of them had so many animals that they could not

all stay in the same area. There was not enough land to provide water and food for all their animals. ⁷ Furthermore, the men who took care of Abram's livestock started quarreling with the men who took care of Lot's livestock. The descendants of Canaan and Perez were also living in that area. ⁸ Then Abram said to Lot, "Since we are close relatives, it is not good for us to quarrel, or for the men who take care of your animals to quarrel with the men who take care of my animals. ⁹ There is plenty of land for both of us. So we should separate. You can choose whatever part you want. If you want the area over there, I will stay here. If you want the area here, I will go over there." ¹⁰ Lot looked toward Zoar and saw that there was plenty of water all over the plain near the Jordan River. This was before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah which were on that plain. In those days, it was like the garden of Yahweh, like the land in Egypt near the Nile River. ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself the land in the plain of the Jordan River. He left his uncle, Abram, and moved east. ¹² Abram stayed in the land of Canaan, and Lot went to live near the cities in the plain of the Jordan River, and he set up his tents near Sodom. ¹³ Now the people who lived in Sodom were extremely wicked and sinned terribly against Yahweh.

¹⁴ After Abram and Lot separated, Yahweh said to Abram, "Look around at this whole area where you are. Look north and south, look east and west. ¹⁵ I will give to you and to your descendants all the land that you see; I will give it to you forever. ¹⁶ I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as particles of dust! If a man tried to count the particles of dust, it would be the same as if he tried to count your descendants. ¹⁷ Walk through the land in every direction, because I am going to give it all to you." ¹⁸ So Abram took down his tents and moved to Hebron and

settled by the big trees of Mamre. He built a stone altar there to make sacrifices to Yahweh.

Chapter 14

¹ There were four kings who were allies. They were King Amraphel of Babylonia, King Arioch of Ellasar, King Chedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim. ² They prepared to attack a group of five kings: King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboyim, and the king of Bela, the city that is now called Zoar. ³ Those five kings and their armies gathered together in the Valley of Siddim, which is also called the Valley of the Dead Sea, to fight against the four kings and their armies. ⁴ For twelve years King Chedorlaomer had ruled them. But in the thirteenth year, they rebelled against King Chedorlaomer and refused to give him any more tribute money. ⁵ The next year, King Chedorlaomer and the other kings that were with him gathered their armies and started coming toward the area of the five kings. They defeated the Rephate people in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzite people in Ham, and the Emite people in Shaveh Kiriathaim. ⁶ They also defeated the Horite people in their hill area of Seir as far as El Paran near the desert. ⁷ Then they turned around and went to En Mishpat, which is now called Kadesh. They conquered all the land belonging to the Amalekite people and the Amorite people who were living in Hazazon Tamar.

⁸ Then the armies of the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboyim and Bela marched out to fight the armies of the four kings in Siddim Valley. ⁹ They fought against the armies of Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, Tidal the king of Goiim, Amraphel the king of Shinar, and Arioch the

king of Ellasar. The armies of four kings were fighting against the armies of five kings. ¹⁰ The Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits. So when the armies of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah tried to run away, many of the men fell into these pits. The others escaped and ran away to the hills. ¹¹ As they fled, their enemies seized all of the valuable things in Sodom and Gomorrah, including all the food. ¹² They also captured Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom at that time. ¹³⁻¹⁴ At that time, Abram was living near the big trees that belonged to Mamre, who belonged to the Amor clan. Abram had made an agreement with Mamre and his two brothers, Eshcol and Aner, that they would help each other if there was a war. One of the men who escaped from the battle told Abram the Hebrew what had happened and that the enemy had captured his nephew, Lot, and taken him away. So Abram summoned 318 men who were his servants, men who had been with Abram since they were born and who knew how to fight as warriors. They all went together and pursued their enemies as far as the city of Dan. ¹⁵ During the night, Abram divided the men into several groups, and they attacked their enemies from various directions and defeated them. They pursued them as far as Hobah, which was north of the city of Damascus. ¹⁶ Abram's men recovered all of the goods that had been taken. They also rescued Lot and all his possessions and also the women and others who their enemies had taken.

¹⁷ As Abram was returning home after he and his men had defeated the armies of King Chedorlaomer and the other kings who had fought alongside him, the King of Sodom went north to meet him in Shaveh Valley, which people also call the King's Valley. ¹⁸ Melchizedek, the king of the city of Salem, was also a priest of the supreme

God. He brought some bread and wine to Abram. ¹⁹ Then he blessed Abram and said, "I ask the supreme God, the one who created heaven and earth, to bless you. ²⁰ I praise the supreme God, because he has enabled you to defeat your enemies." Then Abram gave to Melchizedek a tenth part of all the things he had captured. ²¹ The King of Sodom said to Abram, "You can keep all the goods you recovered. Just let me take back the people from my city whom you captured." ²² But Abram said to the King of Sodom, "I have solemnly promised Yahweh, the supreme God, the one who created heaven and earth, ²³ that I will not take even one thread or a thong of a sandal from anything that belongs to you. As a result, you will never be able to say, 'I caused Abram to become rich.' ²⁴ The only thing I will accept is the food that my men have eaten. But Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre went with me and fought alongside me, so let them have a share of the goods we brought back."

Chapter 15

¹ Some time later, Abram had a vision in which Yahweh spoke to him and said, "Do not be afraid of anything, I will protect you and I will give a great reward." ² But Abram replied, "Lord Yahweh, how can you give me what I truly want, because I have no children, and the one who will inherit all my possessions is my servant Eliezer, from Damascus!" ³ Abram also said, "You have not given me any children, so a servant in my household will inherit everything that I own!" ⁴ Yahweh replied, "No! He will not be the one who will inherit it. Instead, you yourself will be the father of the one who will inherit everything you own." ⁵ Then Yahweh took Abram outside of his tent and said, "Look up at the sky! Can you count the stars?"

No, you cannot count them because there are so many of them, and your descendants will be as numerous as the stars.”⁶ Abram believed that what Yahweh said would happen. Because of that, Yahweh considered him as good.⁷ Yahweh also said to him, “I am Yahweh. I am the one who brought you from Ur in the land of Chaldea. I brought you here to give you this land to possess.”⁸ But Abram replied, “Lord Yahweh, how can I know for sure that this land will belong to me?”⁹ God said to him, “Bring a three year old heifer and a three year old goat to me, and a dove and a pigeon.”¹⁰ So Abram brought all of them. He killed them and cut each of the animals in half. He arranged the halves of each one, side by side. But he did not cut the pigeon and dove in half.¹¹ Birds that eat dead animals came down to eat the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.¹² As the sun was going down, Abram fell sound asleep, and suddenly everything around him became dark and frightening.¹³ Then Yahweh said to Abram, “I want you to know that your descendants will become foreigners living in a land that does not belong to them. They will become slaves of the owners of that land. The owners of the land will mistreat them for four hundred years.¹⁴ But then I will punish the people of that country where they are slaves. Then your descendants will leave that country, taking many possessions with them.¹⁵ But as for you, you will die peacefully and be buried when you are very old.¹⁶ After your descendants have been slaves for four hundred years, they will come back here. They will take control of this land and defeat the Amor people. This will not happen before that time, because the Amor people have not yet sinned to the degree that I would punish them like that for it.”¹⁷ When the sun had set and it was dark, unexpectedly a blazing torch and a clay

pot containing burning coals from which smoke was rising appeared and went between the halves of the animals.¹⁸ On that day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram. Yahweh told him, “I will give to your descendants all the land between the river that is on the eastern border of Egypt to the south, and north to the Euphrates River.¹⁹ That is the land where the Ken, the Keniz, the Kidmon,²⁰ the Heth, the Perez, the Repha,²¹ the Amor, the Canaan, the Girgash, and the Jebus people groups live.”

Chapter 16

¹ Up to that time, Abram’s wife Sarai had not given birth to any children for Abram. But she had a female slave from Egypt, whose name was Hagar.² Sarai said to Abram, “Listen to me! Yahweh has not allowed me to become pregnant. So sleep with my slave Hagar. Perhaps she will bear children whom I can consider to be mine.” Abram agreed to do what Sarai said.³ This happened ten years after Abram and Sarai went to live in Canaan land. In this way Abram took Hagar, Sarai’s slave from Egypt, to be his second wife.⁴ So he slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When she realized that she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress Sarai.⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, “It is your fault! I put my servant into your arms so that you could sleep with her. Now she is pregnant, and she despises me because I have no children. May Yahweh find you guilty for doing this to me!”⁶ So Abram said to Sarai, “Listen to me! She is your servant, so act toward her in the way you consider best.” Then Sarai started to mistreat her, so Hagar ran away.⁷ The angel of Yahweh went to her as she was near a spring of water in the desert. It was the spring that

was alongside the road to Shur. ⁸ He said to her, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She replied, "I have run away from Sarai, my mistress." ⁹ The angel of Yahweh said, "Go back to your mistress and continue to obey her." ¹⁰ The angel of Yahweh also said to her, "I will enable you to bear so many descendants that no one will be able to count them!" ¹¹ The angel of Yahweh also said to her, "Listen to this! You are pregnant. You will give birth to a son. You must name him Ishmael, which means 'God listens,' because Yahweh has heard you crying because you feel so miserable. ¹² But your son will be as uncontrollable as a wild donkey. He will oppose everyone, and everyone will oppose him. He will live far away from all his relatives." ¹³ Hagar said to herself, "I continue to live, even though Yahweh has seen me!" So she called Yahweh, "God, the one who sees me." ¹⁴ That is why people call the well there "Beer Lahai Roi," which means, "the well of the living one who sees me!" It is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵ So Hagar later gave birth to a son for Abram, and she named him Ishmael. ¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar gave birth to Abram's son Ishmael.

Chapter 17

¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram again and said to him, "I am God Almighty. I want you to live your life in the way that I want. I want you to not do anything wrong. ² I will confirm my covenant between us, and I will cause you to have a very great number of descendants." ³ Abram bowed down with his face on the ground. Then God said to him, ⁴ "Listen to this! This is the covenant I am making with you: You

will be the father of many groups of people. ⁵ Your name will be Abram no longer. Instead, your name will be Abraham, because I will make you the father of many groups of people. ⁶ I will cause you to have very, very many descendants, and I will cause nations and kings to be among them. ⁷ I will make this covenant between me and you and the generations of your descendants after you forever. Because of this covenant, you will worship and follow me as God, and so will your descendants. ⁸ I will give to you and to your descendants the land of Canaan, the whole land of Canaan, where you are now living. It will be an everlasting possession for them, and I will be their God."

⁹ Then God said to Abraham, "Now you must keep your part of the covenant that I am making with you, and your descendants must also obey it, for all generations. ¹⁰ This is a requirement of the covenant that I am making between myself and you and all your descendants: Every male among you must be circumcised. ¹¹ Cutting the foreskins of them will be the sign that you have accepted the covenant that I am making with you. ¹² Every male child among you must be circumcised when he is eight days old, in all future generations. That includes baby boys in your household and those born from slaves that have been bought, and foreigners who live among you but do not belong to your household. ¹³ It does not matter whether their parents are members of your household or slaves that you have bought; they must all be circumcised. Your bodies will have this mark to show you have accepted this everlasting covenant that I am making. ¹⁴ You must drive out from your community any male who has not been circumcised, because that person has disobeyed my covenant."

¹⁵ God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai,

your wife, you must not call her Sarai any longer. I will change her name also. Her name will now be Sarah. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and she will surely give birth to a son for you. And I will bless her so much that she will be the ancestor of people of many nations. Kings and people groups will be descended from her.”

¹⁷ Abraham lay down with his face on the ground in respect before God. But then he laughed as he said to himself, “Can a man who is a hundred years old become a father of a son? And since Sarah is ninety years old, how can she bear a child?” ¹⁸ Then Abraham said to God, “Perhaps you will let Ishmael receive your blessing and inherit all I possess.” ¹⁹ Then God replied, “No! Your wife Sarah will bear a son for you. You must name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him, one that will be an everlasting covenant with him and his descendants. ²⁰ As for Ishmael, I have heard what you asked me to do for him. I will bless him so that he also will have many descendants. Among his descendants will be the leaders of twelve tribes. And I will cause his descendants to become a great nation. ²¹ But it is with Isaac that I will establish my covenant—Isaac, the son whom Sarah will give birth to at this time next year.” ²² When God finished talking to Abraham, God disappeared from his sight.

²³ On that same day, Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the males that were in his household, including the sons of all the slaves he had bought, and circumcised them. He cut off their foreskins, just as God told him to do. ²⁴ Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, ²⁵ and Ishmael was thirteen years old when Abraham circumcised him. ²⁶ It was on that very same day that Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. ²⁷ All the males in his house-

hold, the ones who had been born there and those Abraham had bought from foreigners, were also circumcised.

Chapter 18

¹ One day during that year, at the time of day when it was hot, Yahweh appeared to Abraham again near the big trees that belonged to Mamre. Abraham was sitting in the entrance to his tent. ² Abraham looked up and was surprised to see three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran to meet them. He prostrated himself with his face on the ground in respect. ³ He said to one of them, “Lord, if you are pleased with me, stay here for a little while. ⁴ Allow my servants to bring a little water and wash your feet, and then rest under this tree. ⁵ Since you have come here to me, allow me to bring you some food so that you can gain strength before you leave.” The men replied, “All right, do as you have said.” ⁶ Then Abraham hurried into the tent and said to Sarah, “Quick, get twenty kilograms of our best flour and make some bread!” ⁷ Then he ran to the herd of cattle and selected a calf whose meat would be tender and tasty. He gave it to one of his servants, who hurried to kill and cook it. ⁸ When the meat was cooked, Abraham brought some curds, milk, and the meat that the servant had prepared. He placed them in front of them. Then he stood near them under a tree while they ate. ⁹ After they ate, they asked him, “Where is Sarah, your wife?” He replied, “She is in the tent.” ¹⁰ Then the leader of the group said, “I will return to you in the springtime next year, and listen, your wife Sarah will have an infant son.” It happened that Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind the man who was speaking. ¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were very old,

and Sarah was far past the time of child-bearing. ¹² So Sarah laughed to herself, thinking, "My body is worn out, and my husband is old. So how can I have the pleasure of having a baby?" ¹³ Yahweh said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh? Why was she thinking, 'I am too old, so how can I bear a child'?" ¹⁴ Is there anything too difficult for me? I will return about this time next year in the springtime, the time I have fixed, and Sarah will have an infant son." ¹⁵ Then Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh." But Yahweh said, "Do not deny it! You did laugh."

¹⁶ When the three men got up to leave, they looked down into the valley toward the city of Sodom. Abraham was walking with them to say "Farewell" to them. ¹⁷ Yahweh said to himself, "It is not right for me to prevent Abraham from knowing what I plan to do. ¹⁸ Abraham's descendants will become a great and powerful people group. And people of all people groups will be blessed because of what I do for him. ¹⁹ I have chosen him in order that he will direct his children and their families so that they will obey me and do what is right and fair, so that I will do for Abraham what I have promised to do for him." ²⁰ So Yahweh said to Abraham, "I have heard the terrible things that some people have been saying about the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Their sins are very great. ²¹ So I will go down now, and I will see if all the terrible things that I have heard are true or not true." ²² Then the two other men turned and started walking toward Sodom. But Abraham kept standing in front of Yahweh. ²³ Abraham came closer to him and said, "Will you really destroy people who have done nothing wrong along with the wicked ones? ²⁴ What will you do if there are fifty people in the city who have done nothing wrong? Will you really destroy them all, and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty

righteous people who have done nothing wrong? ²⁵ Certainly you would not do such a thing, to kill good people along with wicked ones, and treat good people and wicked people the same way. You could not do that, because you, who are the judge of everyone on the earth, will certainly do what is right regarding the people of Sodom!" ²⁶ Yahweh replied, "If I find fifty people in Sodom who have done nothing wrong, I will spare the whole place for their sake." ²⁷ Abraham replied, "I should not be bold like this and speak to you, my Lord, because I am as worthless as dust and ashes. ²⁸ But what will you do if there are only forty-five people who have done nothing wrong? Will you destroy everyone in the whole city because there are only forty-five and not fifty good people?" Yahweh replied, "I will not destroy it if I find that there are forty-five good people." ²⁹ Abraham continued to speak to him like this, saying, "What will you do if you find that there are only forty good people there?" Yahweh replied, "I will not destroy them all, for the sake of the forty." ³⁰ Abraham said, "Please do not be angry now. Let me speak again. What will you do if there are only thirty good people?" He replied, "I will not do it if I find that there are thirty there." ³¹ Abraham said, "I should not be bold and speak to you like this, my Lord. But what will you do if you find that there are only twenty good people there?" He replied, "I will not destroy the whole city, for the sake of those twenty." ³² Finally, Abraham said, "My Lord, do not be angry now. Just let me speak one time more. What will you do if you find that there are only ten good people there?" Yahweh answered, "I will not destroy the city for the sake of those ten." ³³ Abraham said no more. As soon as Yahweh finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham went home.

Chapter 19

¹ That evening, the two angels arrived in Sodom. Lot was sitting at the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to greet them and prostrated himself with his face on the ground. ² He said to them, "Gentlemen, please stay in my house tonight. You can wash your feet, and early tomorrow you can continue your journey." But they said, "No, we will just sleep in the city square." ³ But Lot kept insisting strongly that they sleep in his house. So they entered his house with him, and he prepared a meal for them. He baked some bread without yeast, and they ate it. ⁴ After they finished eating, before they went to bed, the men of the city of Sodom, all of them, from the young ones to the old ones, surrounded the house. ⁵ They called out to Lot, saying, "Where are the men who came to your house this evening? Bring them out, so that we can sleep with them!" ⁶ Lot went outside the house and shut the door behind him, so that they could not go inside. ⁷ He said to them, "My friends, do not do such an evil thing!" ⁸ Listen to me. I have two daughters who have never slept with any man. Let me bring them out to you now, and you can do with them whatever pleases you. But do not do anything to these men, because they are guests in my house, so I must protect them!" ⁹ But they replied, "Get out of our way! You are a foreigner; so you have no right to tell us what is right! We will do worse things to you than we will do to them!" Then they lunged toward Lot, and tried forcefully to break down the door. ¹⁰ But the two angels opened the door carefully, reached out their hands, and pulled Lot inside the house. Then they quickly shut the door. ¹¹ Then they caused all the men who were outside the door of the house, young and old, to become blind, so that they could

not find the door. ¹² Then the two angels said to Lot, "Who else is with you here? If you have sons or sons-in-law or daughters or anyone else in the city who is related to you, take them out of the city, ¹³ because we are going to destroy this place. Yahweh has heard many terrible things that some people have said about this city, and he has sent us to destroy it." ¹⁴ So Lot went and spoke to the men who had pledged to marry his daughters. He said to them, "Hurry! Get out of this city, because Yahweh is about to destroy it!" But his future sons-in-law thought he was joking. ¹⁵ As it was about to dawn the next morning, the two angels urged Lot, saying, "Get up quickly! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here with you and leave! If you do not, you will be swept away when we destroy the city!" ¹⁶ When Lot hesitated, the angels grasped his hand and his wife's hand and the hands of his two daughters. They led them outside the city safely. The angels did that because Yahweh was acting mercifully toward them. ¹⁷ When they were outside the city, one of the angels said, "If you want to stay alive, run away quickly! Do not look back! And do not stop anywhere in the valley! Flee to the hills! If you do not, you will die!" ¹⁸ But Lot said to one of them, "No, sir, do not make me do that!" ¹⁹ Please, listen. You have been pleased with me and have been very kind to me and spared my life. But I cannot flee to the mountain. If I try to do that, I will die in this disaster. ²⁰ Listen to me. There is a town nearby. Let me run there now. It is only a small town, and if you do not destroy it, our lives will be saved if we go there." ²¹ One of the angels said to Lot, "I will allow you to do what you have requested. And I will not destroy the town you are talking about. ²² But hurry! Run there, because I cannot destroy anything until you arrive." People later called the

name of the town Zoar, which means ‘not-important,’ because Lot said that it was a small village.

²³ As the sun was rising, Lot and his family arrived in the town which is now called Zoar. ²⁴ Then Yahweh caused fire and burning sulfur to fall down on Sodom and Gomorrah like rain from the sky. ²⁵ In that way, he destroyed those cities and all the people who were living in those cities. He also destroyed everything in the valley, including all the plants. ²⁶ But Lot’s wife stopped and looked back to see what was happening, so she died, and her body later became a pillar of salt.

²⁷ That morning, Abraham got up and went to the place where he had stood in front of Yahweh. ²⁸ He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and he was surprised to see that all over the valley, smoke was rising, like the smoke of a huge furnace.

²⁹ So when God destroyed those cities in the valley, he did not forget to help Abraham, and he rescued Lot from the disaster that occurred in the cities where Lot lived.

³⁰ Lot was afraid to stay in Zoar, so he left there and moved with his two daughters to the mountain, and they lived in a cave.

³¹ One day the older daughter said to the younger daughter, “Our father is old, and there is no man in this area who will sleep with us, as people all over the earth do.

³² Let us make our father drink wine until he gets drunk. Then we can sleep with him without him knowing it. In that way he will cause us to become pregnant and we can bear children who will be our father’s descendants.” ³³ So that night they caused their father to become drunk. And the older daughter went in and slept with her father, but he was so drunk that he did not know when she lay down with him or when she got up. ³⁴ The next

day, his older daughter said to his younger daughter, “Listen to me. Last night I slept with our father. Let us cause him to become drunk again tonight! This time you can go and sleep with him. If he sleeps with you, you can become pregnant, and that way you can have a child, too.” ³⁵ So that night, they caused their father to become drunk with wine again, and then his younger daughter went and slept with him. But again, he was so drunk that he did not know when she lay down with him or when she got up. ³⁶ So Lot caused his two daughters to become pregnant. ³⁷ The older one later gave birth to a son, whom she named Moab. He became the ancestor of the Moab people group. ³⁸ The younger one also gave birth to a son, whom she named Ben-Ammi. He became the ancestor of the people that are now called the Ammon people group.

Chapter 20

¹ Abraham left Mamre and moved southwest to the Negev desert. There he lived between Kadesh and Shur. He lived as a foreigner in the town of Gerar. ² While he was there, he told people that Sarah was his sister, not his wife. Then King Abimelech of Gerar sent some of his men to get Sarah, and they brought her to him to be his wife. ³ But God appeared to Abimelech in a dream during the night and said to him, “Listen to me! You are going to die because the woman you took is another man’s wife.” ⁴ But Abimelech had not slept with her, so he said, “Lord, since the people of my nation and I are innocent, will you kill us?” ⁵ Abraham told me, ‘She is my sister,’ and she also said, ‘He is my brother.’ I did not intend to do anything wrong; neither have I done anything wrong.” ⁶ God said to him, “Yes, I know that you did not want to do

anything wrong. That is why I prevented you from sinning against me. I did not allow you to touch her. ⁷ Therefore, return this man's wife to her husband, because he is a prophet. He will pray for you so that you may live. But if you do not return her to him, you will certainly die, and all the members of your household will also certainly die." ⁸ Early the next morning, Abimelech summoned all his officials and told them everything that had happened. When they heard that, his men were very afraid that God would punish them. ⁹ Abimelech then summoned Abraham, and said to him, "You should not have done that to us! Did I do something wrong to you? Did I make you want me and my people to become guilty of a great sin? You have done things to me that you should not have done!" ¹⁰ Why did you do this?" ¹¹ Abraham replied, "I said that she was my sister because I thought, 'The people in this place certainly do not respect God. Certainly they do whatever wrong things they wish. So they will kill me to get my wife.'" ¹² Besides, Sarah really can be considered my sister, because she is the daughter of my father, although she is not the daughter of my mother. She is the daughter of another woman, and I married her. ¹³ Later, when God told me to move away from my father's household, I said to her, 'This is the way you can show that you are faithful to me: Everywhere we go, say about me, "This is my brother."'" ¹⁴ So Abimelech brought some sheep and cattle and gave them to Abraham. He also gave him some male and female slaves. Then he returned Abraham's wife Sarah to him. ¹⁵ And Abimelech said to him, "Look! My land is in front of you. Live in whatever place you wish!" ¹⁶ And he said to Sarah, "Look! I am giving a thousand pieces of silver to your brother. This is to ensure that no one will bring up this matter again and say that you have

done anything wrong." ¹⁷ Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech's wife and his slave girls so that they could have children. ¹⁸ This was because Yahweh had caused it to be impossible for any of the women in Abimelech's household to bear children, because Abimelech had taken Abraham's wife Sarah.

Chapter 21

¹ Yahweh acted very kindly toward Sarah, just as he said he would do. He did for Sarah exactly what he promised to do, ² for she became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Abraham when he was very old, at the time God promised it would happen. ³ Abraham gave the name "Isaac" to the son Sarah delivered. ⁴ He also circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, just as God had commanded him to do. ⁵ Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born. ⁶ Sarah said, "Although I was sad before because I did not have any children, God has now enabled me to laugh with joy, and everyone who hears about what God has done for me will laugh with me." ⁷ She also said, "No one would have said to Abraham that some day I would nurse a child, but I have given birth to a son when Abraham is very old."

⁸ The baby grew. The day came when he was taken off his mother's milk. On that day, Abraham prepared a large feast to celebrate. ⁹ One day Sarah noticed that Hagar's son Ishmael was making fun of Isaac. ¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman from Egypt and her son! I do not want the son of that slave woman to take what my son Isaac will inherit." ¹¹ Abraham was very upset about the matter, because he was also concerned about his son Ishmael. ¹² But

God said to Abraham, "Do not be upset about your son, Ishmael, and about your servant Hagar. Listen to everything that Sarah tells you to do, and do it, because Isaac is the one who will be the forefather of the descendants I promised to give you.

¹³ But I will also cause the son of your servant Hagar to be the ancestor of a great people group, because he is also your son."

¹⁴ So Abraham got up early the next morning. He got some food ready, put water in a bag, and gave it to Hagar. He put the bag on her shoulder, handed her Ishmael, and sent them away into the wilderness of Beersheba.

¹⁵ After Hagar and her son had drunk all the water in the bag, she put the boy under one of the bushes there. ¹⁶ Then she went and sat nearby, about as far as someone can shoot an arrow. She thought, "I cannot endure seeing my son die!" As she sat there, she began to cry loudly. ¹⁷

Soon God heard the sound of Ishmael, so he sent one of his angels to call out from heaven to Hagar. He said, "Hagar, what is the matter with you? Do not be afraid, because God has heard the boy crying there.

¹⁸ Go lift the boy up and help him be brave, because I will cause his descendants to become a great people group." ¹⁹ Then God showed her a well of water. So she went to the well and filled the container with water, and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God helped the boy as he grew up in the wilderness, and he became a good archer.

²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran. Hagar got a wife for him from Egypt.

²² At that time, King Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, said to Abraham, "It is clear that God helps you in all that you do. ²³ So now, solemnly promise to me here, as God is listening, that you will not deceive me and my children, or my descendants. Act faithfully toward me and toward all the people here in the coun-

try where you are now living. Act faithfully toward me, as I have acted toward you." ²⁴ So Abraham swore an oath to do that.

²⁵ Abraham also complained to Abimelech about one of Abraham's wells of water that Abimelech's servants had taken control of. ²⁶ But Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done that. You did not tell me previously, and I did not hear about it until today." ²⁷ So Abraham brought some sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them solemnly agreed to have peace between themselves.

²⁸ Abraham went to his flock and chose seven female lambs from it. ²⁹ Abimelech asked Abraham, "Why have you taken these seven female lambs from your flock?" ³⁰ Abraham replied, "I want you to accept these female lambs from me. In this way, my gift to you will be proof to everyone that this well belongs to me because I dug it." ³¹ So Abimelech accepted the lambs. Then Abraham named that place Beersheba, which means 'Well of the oath,' because he and Abimelech had sworn an oath there to be peaceful toward each other. ³² After they made the treaty at Beersheba, Abimelech and his army commander, Phicol, left and returned to the land of the Philistines. ³³

Abraham planted a tamarisk tree there, and there he worshiped Yahweh, the eternal God. ³⁴ Abraham stayed as an outsider in the land of the Philistine people for a long time.

Chapter 22

¹ Several years later, God tested Abraham to find out whether Abraham would obey him. He called out to Abraham, and Abraham replied, "I am here." ² God said, "Your son, Isaac, whom you love very

much, is the only son I promised to give you. Take him with you and go together to the land of Moriah, and go up a mountain I will show you, and offer him as a burnt offering.”³ So Abraham got up early the next morning, put a saddle on his donkey, and took with him two of his servants along with his son, Isaac. He also chopped some wood for a fire for a burnt offering. Then they started traveling to the place God told him about.⁴ On the third day that they were traveling, Abraham looked up and saw in the distance the place where God wanted him to go.⁵ Abraham said to his servants, “You two stay here with the donkey while the boy and I go over there. We will worship God there, and then we will come back to you.”⁶ Then Abraham took the wood to start a fire for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac for him to carry. Abraham carried in his hand something for starting a fire. He also carried a knife, and the two of them walked along together.⁷ Then Isaac spoke to his father Abraham, saying, “My father.” Abraham replied, “Yes, my son, I am here!” Isaac said, “Look, we have wood and coals to light a fire, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”⁸ Abraham replied, “My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.” So the two of them continued walking along together.⁹ They arrived at the place God had told him about. There, Abraham built a stone altar and arranged the wood on top of it. Then he tied his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.¹⁰ Then Abraham took the knife and reached out to kill his son.¹¹ But the angel of Yahweh called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham! Abraham!” Abraham replied, “I am here!”¹² The angel said, “Do not harm the boy, because now I know that you respect and obey God. I know this because you have not refused to sacrifice your only son.”

¹³ Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram nearby, in a thicket that had caught its horns. So Abraham went over and grabbed the ram and killed it, and sacrificed it on the altar as a burnt offering, instead of his son.¹⁴ Abraham named that place “Yahweh will provide.” To the present day people say, “On Yahweh’s mountain, he will provide.”

¹⁵ The angel of Yahweh called out to Abraham from heaven a second time.¹⁶ He said, “I, Yahweh, declare to you that you did what I told you, and you have not held back your only son. So I solemnly swear, with myself as my witness,¹⁷ that some day your descendants will be as many as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants will defeat their enemies and capture their cities.¹⁸ You obeyed me, so by means of your descendants the people of all the nations on the earth will be blessed.”¹⁹ Then Abraham and Isaac returned to where his servants were waiting, and they went back together to Beersheba, and Abraham and his people continued to stay there.

²⁰ After these things happened, someone told Abraham, “Your brother Nahor’s wife, Milkah, has also given birth to children.”²¹ Now the oldest son was Uz. The next was Buz. After him was Kemuel, the father of Aram.²² After Kemuel was Kesed, then Hazo, then Pildash, then Jidlaph, then Bethuel.²³ Bethuel was the father of Rebekah. Those were the eight sons of Milkah, wife of Abraham’s brother, Nahor.²⁴ Nahor also had a concubine, whose name was Beumah. She gave birth to four sons: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

Chapter 23

¹ When Sarah was 127 years old, ² she

died at the city of Kiriath Arba, which is now called Hebron, in the land of Canaan. Then Abraham mourned over her. ³ He left the body of his wife and spoke to some of the descendants of Heth. He said, ⁴ "I am a temporary settler living among you, so I do not own any land here. Sell me some land here so that I can bury my wife's body." ⁵ They replied to him, ⁶ "Sir, you are a powerful man among us. Choose one of our finest tombs and bury your wife's body in it. None of us will refuse to sell land to you for a tomb for your wife's body." ⁷ Then Abraham stood up and bowed in respect in front of the people who owned the land, the descendants of Heth. ⁸ He said to them, "If you say that you are willing for me to bury my wife's body here, listen to me, and ask Ephron son of Zohar, ⁹ to sell me the cave in the Machpelah area, which is at the end of his field. Ask him to sell it to me for the full price he wants, and to sell it to me in front of you all. In this way I can have a burial ground." ¹⁰ Now Ephron was sitting among the people at the city gate where many descendants of Heth had gathered. He had heard what Abraham said to them. ¹¹ Ephron said, "No, sir, listen to me. I will give to you the field and the cave in it, without charge, with the people here as witnesses. Please bury your wife there." ¹² Abraham again bowed before the people who lived in the land, ¹³ and said to Ephron, as all the others were listening, "No, listen to me. If you are willing, I will pay for the field. You tell me what the price is, and I will give it to you. If you accept it, the field will become mine, and I can bury my wife's body there." ¹⁴ Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, ¹⁵ "Sir, listen to me. The land is worth four hundred pieces of silver. But the price is not important to you and me. Give me the money and bury your wife's body there." ¹⁶ Abra-

ham agreed with Ephron about the price, and weighed for Ephron the four hundred pieces of silver he had suggested, as everyone was listening. He used the standard weights for silver used by people who sold things.

¹⁷ So Ephron's field in the Machpelah area, near Mamre, and the cave in the field, and all the trees that were in the field and those marking the land's boundary, they all became Abraham's possession. ¹⁸ This is how Abraham bought the property, as all the descendants of Heth were listening there at the city gate. ¹⁹ After that, Abraham buried his wife Sarah's body in the cave in the field in the Machpelah area near Mamre, which is now called Hebron, in the land of Canaan. ²⁰ So the field and the cave in it were officially sold to Abraham by the descendants of Heth, for him to use as a burial ground.

Chapter 24

¹ Abraham was now a very old man. Yahweh had blessed Abraham in many ways. ² One day Abraham said to the chief servant of his household, the man who was in charge of all Abraham owned, "Put your hand between my thighs to solemnly promise you will do what I tell you." ³ Knowing that Yahweh, God who created the heavens and the earth, is listening, promise that you will not get a wife for my son, Isaac, from the daughters of the Canaan people among whom I am now living. ⁴ Instead, go to my country and to my relatives. Get a wife for my son Isaac from among them." ⁵ The servant asked him, "If I find a woman among your relatives, what should I do if she is not willing to come back with me to this land? Should I take your son back there to the country you came from, so he can find a

wife and live there?" ⁶ Abraham replied to him, "No! Be certain that you do not take my son there! ⁷ Yahweh, the God who created the heavens, brought me here. He brought me from my father's household and from the land where my relatives lived. He spoke to me and made a solemn promise to me. He said, 'I will give this land of Canaan to your descendants.' He will send an angel who will go there ahead of you and enable you to get a wife for my son and bring her to live here. ⁸ But if the woman you find will not come back with you, you are free to disregard the promise you are making. The only thing that you must not do is to take my son to live there." ⁹ So the servant put his hand between Abraham's thighs and made a solemn promise about the matter.

¹⁰ Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and loaded them with all kinds of goods that his master gave him to take along. Then he left to go to Aram Naharaim, which is in northern Mesopotamia. He arrived in the city of Nahor. ¹¹ When the servant arrived at Nahor, it was in late afternoon, at the time when the women go to the well to get water. He made the camels kneel down near the well, which was outside the city. ¹² The servant prayed, "Yahweh, God whom my master Abraham worships, enable me to be successful today! Keep faith with my master, Abraham! ¹³ Listen to me. I am standing near a well of water, and the daughters of the people of the city are coming to get water. ¹⁴ I am asking you this: I will say to one of the girls, 'Please lower your jar so that I may drink some water.' If she says, 'Drink some water, and I will draw some water for your camels, too,' I will know that she is the woman whom you chose to be a wife for your servant, Isaac, and I will know that you have kept faith with my master." ¹⁵ Before he finished praying, a young woman

named Rebekah arrived there, carrying a jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milkah, the wife of Abraham's younger brother Nahor. ¹⁶ She was very beautiful and a virgin. No man had ever slept with her. She went down to the edge of the well, filled her jar with water, and then came back up. ¹⁷ Abraham's servant immediately ran to meet her, and said, "Please give me a little water from your jar." ¹⁸ She replied, "Drink some, sir!" She lowered her jar from her shoulder to her hands and gave him a drink. ¹⁹ After she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will also get some water for your camels, until they have had enough to drink." ²⁰ She quickly emptied the water in her jar into the animals' water trough. Then she ran back to the well, and kept getting water for all the camels. ²¹ The servant just watched her, without saying anything. He wanted to know if Yahweh had caused his trip to be successful or not. ²² Finally, after the camels finished drinking, the servant took out a gold nose ring that weighed six grams, and two gold bracelets for her arms, each weighing about 110 grams, gave them to Rebekah, and told her to put them on. ²³ Then he said, "Tell me whose daughter you are. Also, tell me, is there room in your father's house for me and my men to sleep there tonight?" ²⁴ She replied, "My father's name is Bethuel. He is the son of Nahor and his wife Milkah. ²⁵ Yes, we have room where you all can sleep tonight, and we also have plenty of straw and grain to feed the camels." ²⁶ The servant bowed and worshiped Yahweh. ²⁷ He said, "I thank Yahweh, God whom my master Abraham worships. He has continued to show that he is faithful and trustworthy toward my master. Yahweh led me on this journey straight to the house of my master's relatives!" ²⁸ The girl ran and told everyone in her mother's household about what had happened. ²⁹

Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. Laban went quickly to the servant, who was outside by the well. ³⁰ He was surprised to have seen the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's arms and to have heard Rebekah tell what the man had said to her. So he went out and saw the man standing near the camels, close to the well. ³¹ He said to the man, "You who have been blessed by Yahweh, come! Why are you standing out here? I have prepared a room for you in the house, and a place for the camels to stay." ³² So the servant went to the house, and Laban's servants unloaded the camels. They brought straw and grain for the camels, and water for him and the men with him to wash their feet. ³³ They set food in front of him for him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I tell you what I need to tell you." So Laban said, "Tell us!" ³⁴ So the servant said, "I am Abraham's servant. ³⁵ Yahweh has greatly blessed my master so that he has become very rich. Yahweh has given him many sheep and cattle, a lot of gold and silver, male and female servants, camels and donkeys. ³⁶ My master's wife, Sarah, bore a son for him when she was very old, and my master has given to his son everything he owns. ³⁷ My master made me solemnly promise, saying, 'Do not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaan people, in whose land we are living. ³⁸ Instead, go back to my father's family, to my own clan, and get from them a wife for my son.' ³⁹ Then I asked my master, 'What shall I do if the woman they give me will not come back with me?' ⁴⁰ He replied, 'Yahweh, whom I have always obeyed, will send his angel with you, and he will cause your journey to be successful. He will make you able to get a wife for my son from my clan, from my father's family. ⁴¹ But if my clan refuses to allow her to return with you, you will be freed from being cursed because

you could not obey me.'

⁴² When I came today to the well, I prayed, 'Yahweh, God whom my master, Abraham, worships, if you are going to make me successful on this journey, please do this for me: ⁴³ I am standing alongside a well, where girls will come to draw water. I am asking you that if I say to a girl, "Please, give me a little water to drink from your jar," ⁴⁴ and if she says to me, "Certainly, drink some, and I will also draw some water for your camels," then let that be the woman whom you have chosen for my master's son!' ⁴⁵ Before I finished praying, Rebekah approached with her water jar on her shoulder. She went down to the well and got some water. I said to her, 'Please give me a drink!' ⁴⁶ She quickly lowered her jar and said, 'Drink some! And I will draw water for your camels, too.' So I drank some water, and she also got water for the camels. ⁴⁷ Then I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor and his wife, Milkah.' I had her put the ring in her nose and put the bracelets on her arms. ⁴⁸ Then I bowed and worshiped Yahweh, and I thanked Yahweh God, the one my master Abraham worships, the one who led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother to be a wife for my master's son. ⁴⁹ Now, if you act faithfully toward my master as part of his extended family, tell me that you will do what I am asking. If you will not do that, tell me that also, so I may know what to do." ⁵⁰ Laban and Bethuel answered, "This clearly has come from Yahweh. So we two cannot say that it is the right thing or the wrong thing to do. ⁵¹ Rebekah is here in front of you. Take her and go, and let her be a wife for your master's son, just as Yahweh has indicated."

⁵² When Abraham's servant heard these words, he bowed down to the ground to

Yahweh. ⁵³ Then the servant brought out silver and gold jewelry and clothes, and gave them to Rebekah. And he gave gifts to her brother Laban and to her mother. ⁵⁴ Then they ate a meal and drank. The men who were with Abraham's servant also slept there that night. The next morning, the servant said, "Allow me now to return to my master." ⁵⁵ But her brother and her mother replied, "Let the girl remain with us for about ten days. After that, you may take her and go." ⁵⁶ But he replied to them, "Yahweh has made my journey successful, so do not delay me. Let me take her back to my master now!" ⁵⁷ They said, "Let us call the girl and ask her to say what she wants to do." ⁵⁸ So they summoned Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man now?" She replied, "Yes, I will go." ⁵⁹ So they sent Rebekah, along with the female servant who had cared for her all her life, to go with Abraham's servant and the men who had come with him. ⁶⁰ Then they asked God to bless Rebekah and said to her, "Our sister, we ask that Yahweh will cause you to have millions of descendants, and allow them to completely defeat all those that hate them." ⁶¹ Then Rebekah and her servant girls got ready. They got on their camels and went with Abraham's servant. He took Rebekah and left.

⁶² Now Isaac was living in the southern Judean wilderness. He had come from Beer Lahai Roi. ⁶³ One evening he went out into the field to meditate as he walked. He looked up and was surprised to see some camels coming. ⁶⁴ Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got off the camel ⁶⁵ and asked the servant, "Who is that man who is approaching?" The servant replied, "That is Isaac, my master." So she took her veil and covered her face, in order to show modesty in front of him. ⁶⁶ The servant told Isaac all that had happened. ⁶⁷ Then Isaac took Rebekah into

the tent that had belonged to his mother, Sarah, and she became his wife. He loved her. In this way Isaac was comforted about his mother's death.

Chapter 25

¹ Some time after Sarah died, Abraham married another woman, whose name was Keturah. ² She later gave birth to six sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. ³ Jokshan became the father of two sons, Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the people groups of the Assyrians, the Letush, and the Leum. ⁴ The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanok, Abida, and Eldaah. They were all descendants of Keturah.

⁵ Abraham declared that after he died, Isaac would inherit everything he owned. ⁶ But while Abraham was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them away to live in a land to the east, to keep them far from his son. ⁷ Abraham lived until he was 175 years old. ⁸ He died at a very old age and joined his ancestors who had died previously. ⁹ His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried his body in the cave at Machpelah area, near Mamre, in the field that Abraham had bought from Ephron son of Zohar, a descendant of Heth. ¹⁰ It was there that Isaac and Ishmael buried his body, where Abraham previously buried the body of his wife Sarah. ¹¹ After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. Isaac continued living near Beer Lahai Roi.

¹² These are those who descended from Abraham's son, Ishmael, whom Sarah's female slave, Hagar from Egypt, gave birth to. ¹³ These were their names, in the order in which they were born: Ishmael's oldest son was named Nebaioth. After him were born Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴

Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵ Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. ¹⁶ The twelve sons of Ishmael became the leaders of the tribes that had those names. They each had their own settlement and campsite. ¹⁷ Ishmael lived until he was 137 years old. Then he died and joined his ancestors who had previously died. ¹⁸ His descendants settled in the area between Shur and Havilah, near the border of Egypt as a person travels toward Asshur. But they did not live in peace together.

¹⁹ This is what happened concerning Abraham's son, Isaac. Abraham became the father of Isaac. ²⁰ When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel. Bethuel was one of the descendants of Aram from Paddan Aram. Rebekah was the sister of Laban, who belonged to the Aram people. ²¹ For a long time after they were married, Rebekah still had no children. So Isaac prayed to Yahweh concerning his wife, and Yahweh answered his prayer. His wife Rebekah became pregnant. ²² There were two babies in her womb, and they kept jostling each other. So she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she asked Yahweh about it. ²³ Yahweh said to her, "Two nations will come from the twins within you. And those two nations will separate from each other, and one will be stronger than the other. And the older will serve the younger."

²⁴ When Rebekah gave birth, it was true! Twin boys were born! ²⁵ The first one born was red, and his body had hair all over it, like a garment made of hair. So they named him Esau. ²⁶ Then his brother was born, grasping Esau's heel. So they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born.

²⁷ When the boys grew up, Esau became a very good hunter of wild animals. He

spent a lot of time out in the fields. However, Jacob was a quiet man who stayed close to the campsite. ²⁸ Isaac liked Esau more, because he enjoyed the taste of the meat of the animals that Esau killed. But Rebekah liked Jacob more.

²⁹ One day while Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came home from the field, very hungry. ³⁰ He said to Jacob, "Give me some of that red stew to eat right now, because I am starving!" (That is why Esau's other name was Edom.) ³¹ Jacob said, "I will give you some if you sell me your right as firstborn to inherit most of our father's wealth." ³² Esau replied, "Well, I am about to die from being so hungry. If I die now, my rights will not help me." ³³ Jacob said, "Swear to me that you are giving me your rights as firstborn!" So that is what Esau did. He sold his firstborn rights to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave to Esau some bread and some stew made of lentils. Esau ate and drank, and then he got up and left. By doing that, Esau showed that he was not interested in his rights as firstborn.

Chapter 26

¹ Some time later there was a severe famine in the land. That was different from the famine that occurred when Abraham was alive. So Isaac went southeast to the city of Gerar to talk to Abimelech, the king of the Philistine people. ² But Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt! Live in the land that I tell you! ³ Stay in this land, and I will help you and bless you, because it is to you and your descendants that I will give all these lands, and I will do what I solemnly promised to your father. ⁴ I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as the stars in the sky. I will give to your descendants all these lands, and I will cause

your descendants to be a blessing to all the people groups on the earth. ⁵ I will do that because Abraham obeyed me. He obeyed all that I told him to do, all that I commanded him to do, all that I declared and all the laws that I gave him.”

⁶ So Isaac stayed in Gerar along with his wife and sons.

⁷ When the men in Gerar asked who that woman was, Isaac said, “She is my sister.” He said that because he was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He thought, “Rebekah is very beautiful, so they will want her. They will kill me to get her.” ⁸ When Isaac had been there a long time, one day Abimelech, the king of the Philistine people, looked down from a window in his palace and was surprised to see Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah. ⁹ So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said to him, “Now I realize that she is really your wife! So why did you say, ‘She is my sister?’” Isaac replied to him, “I said that because I thought that someone here might kill me to get her.” ¹⁰ Abimelech said, “You should not have done this to us! One of our people might have slept with your wife, and you would have caused us to be guilty of a great sin!” ¹¹ Then Abimelech commanded all his people, saying, “Do not harm this man or his wife! Anyone who does that will surely be executed!”

¹² Isaac planted grain in that land that year, and he harvested a very large crop, because Yahweh had blessed him. ¹³ Isaac continued to acquire more and more possessions, until finally he became very wealthy. ¹⁴ He had large herds of sheep, goats, and cattle, and many slaves. Because of that, the Philistine people envied him. ¹⁵ So all the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug, the people filled up with earth. ¹⁶ Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “You have become more numerous than we are, so I want you to leave

from our area.” ¹⁷ So Isaac and his family moved from there. They went and set up their tents in the Valley of Gerar and settled there. ¹⁸ There were several wells in that area that had been dug when Isaac’s father Abraham was living, but Philistine people had filled them up with earth after Abraham died. But Isaac and his servants dug the wells out again, and Isaac gave the wells the same names that his father had given to them. ¹⁹ Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water. ²⁰ But the men who herded animals in the Valley of Gerar argued with the men who took care of Isaac’s animals. They said, “The water in this well is ours!” So Isaac named the well Esek, which means “dispute,” because they disputed about who owned it. ²¹ Then Isaac’s servants dug another well, but they quarreled about who owned that one also. So Isaac named it Sitnah, which means “opposition.” ²² They moved on from there and dug another well, but this time no one quarreled about who owned it. So he named it Rehoboth, which means “empty place,” saying, “Yahweh has given us an empty place to live in, a place that is not wanted by other people, and we will become very prosperous here.”

²³ From there Isaac went up to Beersheba. ²⁴ The first night that he was there, Yahweh appeared to him and said, “I am the God whom your father Abraham worshiped. Do not be afraid of anything. I will help you and bless you, and because of what I promised my servant Abraham, I will greatly increase the number of your descendants.” ²⁵ So Isaac built an altar there and offered a sacrifice to worship Yahweh. He set up their tents there, and his servants started to dig a well.

²⁶ While they were digging the well, King Abimelech came to Isaac from Gerar, along with Ahuzzath, his advisor, and Ph-

icol, the commander of his army. ²⁷ Isaac asked them, "You acted in a hostile way toward me before and sent me away. So why have you come to me now?" ²⁸ One of them answered, "We have seen that Yahweh helps you. So we said to each other, 'We should have an agreement between ourselves and Isaac.' So we should make a peace treaty with you, ²⁹ stating that you will not harm us, in the same way that we did not molest you. We always treated you well, and we sent you away peacefully. And now Yahweh is blessing you." ³⁰ So Isaac made a feast for them, and they all ate and drank. ³¹ Early the next morning they all swore to each other that they would do what they had promised. Then Isaac sent them home peacefully.

³² That day Isaac's servants came to him and told him about the well that they had finished digging. They said, "We found water in the well!" ³³ Isaac named the well Shibah, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means "oath." To the present time the town there has the name Beer-sheba which means "peace treaty well."

³⁴ When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith, the daughter of Beeri, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. Both of those women were descendants of Heth, not from Isaac's clan. ³⁵ Esau's two wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.

Chapter 27

¹ When Isaac was old, he became almost blind. One day he summoned Esau, his firstborn son, and said to him, "My son?" He replied, "Here I am!" ² Isaac said, "Listen to me. I am very old, and I do not know when I will die. ³ So take now your bow and quiver full of arrows and go out into

the countryside, and hunt for a wild animal for me. ⁴ Kill one and prepare the kind of tasty meat that I like. Then bring it to me so that after I eat it, I can give you a blessing before I die." ⁵ Rebekah was listening as Isaac said that to his son, Esau. So when Esau left the tent to go hunting, ⁶ Rebekah said to her son, Jacob, "Listen to me. I heard your father talking to your brother, Esau, saying, ⁷ 'Go and kill some wild animal and bring it here, and prepare the meat in a tasty way, so that I may eat it. Then before I die I will give you my blessing while Yahweh is listening.' ⁸ So now, my son, do what I am telling you. ⁹ Go out to the flock and kill two nice young goats and bring the meat to me. Then I will prepare some tasty food for your father, the way he likes it. ¹⁰ Then you can take it to your father, in order that he can eat it, and then he will give you his blessing before he dies."

¹¹ But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, "My brother Esau's skin has hair all over it, and my skin is not like that! My skin is smooth! ¹² What will happen if my father touches me? He will realize that I am tricking him, and I will bring a curse on myself, not a blessing!" ¹³ His mother said to him, "If that happens, my son, let the curse be on me. You do what I am telling you. Go and get the goats for me!" ¹⁴ So Jacob went and killed two goats and brought them to his mother. Then his mother prepared some tasty food, just the way his father liked. ¹⁵ Then Rebekah took her older son Esau's best clothes that were with her in the tent, and she put them on her younger son Jacob. ¹⁶ She also put the skins of the young goats on his hands and the smooth part of his neck. ¹⁷ Then she put into his hands some bread and the tasty food that she had prepared.

¹⁸ Jacob took it and went to his father and said, "My father!" Isaac replied, "I am

here; which of my sons are you?" ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau, your firstborn son. I did what you told me to do. Sit up and eat some of the meat so that you can bless me." ²⁰ But Isaac asked his son, "My son, how is it that you were able to find and kill an animal so quickly?" Jacob replied, "Because Yahweh, whom you worship, enabled me to be successful." ²¹ Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near to me, my son, so that I can touch you and find out whether you are really my son Esau." ²² So Jacob went close to his father, Isaac. Isaac touched him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands feel hairy, like the hands of his older brother, Esau." ²³ Isaac did not recognize him, because he was blind and because Jacob's hands were hairy, like those of his older brother, Esau. So Isaac got ready to bless him. ²⁴ But first Isaac asked, "Are you really my son Esau?" Jacob replied, "Yes, I am." ²⁵ Isaac said, "My son, bring me some of the meat that you have cooked, so that I may eat it and then give you my blessing." So Jacob brought him some, and he ate it. Jacob also brought him some wine, and he drank it. ²⁶ Then his father, Isaac, said to him, "My son, come here and kiss me." ²⁷ So Jacob went to him, and his father kissed him on the cheek. Isaac smelled the smell of the clothes Jacob was wearing. They smelled like Esau's clothes. So he said, "Truly, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that Yahweh has blessed." ²⁸ I ask that God will send down to you dew from heaven to water your fields, and cause you to have abundant crops from the soil, and good harvests of grain, and grapes for wine. ²⁹ I ask that people of many people groups serve you and bow down to you. I ask that you rule over your brothers, and that your mother's descendants also bow down to you. I ask that God curse those who curse you, and bless those who bless you."

³⁰ After Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had just left the room where his father was, his older brother, Esau, returned from hunting. ³¹ Esau cooked some tasty meat and brought it to his father. He said to his father, "My father, please sit up and eat some of the meat that I have cooked, so that you can then give me your blessing!" ³² His father, Isaac, said to him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am Esau, your firstborn son!" ³³ Then Isaac began to tremble very violently. He said, "Then who is it that brought me some meat from an animal that he had hunted and killed, and I ate it all? He was here just before you came. I blessed him, and I cannot take back that blessing." ³⁴ When Esau heard those words of his father, he cried loudly. He was very disappointed. He said to his father, "My father, bless me, too!" ³⁵ But his father said, "Your brother came, tricked me, and took your blessing!" ³⁶ Esau said, "It is right that his name is Jacob, because he tricked me two times. The first time he took my rights as firstborn, and this time he took my blessing!" Then he asked, "Do you not have any blessing left for me?" ³⁷ Isaac answered and said to Esau, "I have declared that your younger brother will rule over you, and I have declared that all his relatives will serve him. And I have said that God will give him plenty of grain and grapes for wine. So, my son, what can I do for you?" ³⁸ Esau said to his father, "My father, do you have only one blessing? My father, bless me, too!" Then Esau cried very loudly. ³⁹ His father Isaac answered and said to him, "The place where you will live will be far from the fertile soil and from the dew that God sends from heaven to water the fields." ⁴⁰ You will rob and kill people in order to get what you need to live,

and you will be as though you are your brother's slave.

But when you decide to rebel against him, you will free yourself from his control.”

⁴¹ Because of the blessing that his father had given to Jacob, Esau hated his brother. Esau said to himself, “After my father dies and we finish mourning for him, I will kill Jacob!” ⁴² But Rebekah found out what her older son, Esau, was thinking. So she summoned her younger son, Jacob, and said to him, “Listen to me. Your older brother, Esau, is comforting himself by planning to kill you, to get revenge for you tricking your father. ⁴³ So now, my son, listen carefully to what I am telling you. Escape quickly and go and stay with my brother Laban, in Haran. ⁴⁴ Stay with him a while, until your older brother is no longer angry. ⁴⁵ When he forgets what you did to him, I will send a message to you to tell you to return from there. If Esau killed you, then others would kill him, and then both my sons would die at the same time!”

⁴⁶ Rebekah then said to Isaac, “These foreign women whom Esau has married, who are descendants of Heth, are making my life miserable. If Jacob also marries a woman from the descendants of Heth in this area, my life will be worthless!”

Chapter 28

¹ Then Isaac summoned Jacob and gave him a blessing. He told him this: “Do not marry a woman from the women of the Canaanite people. ² Instead, go right away to Paddan Aram, to the house of your mother’s father Bethuel. Ask one of the daughters of your mother’s brother Laban to marry you. ³ I will pray that God Almighty bless you, and enable you to have many descendants, in order that they will become many different people groups. ⁴ I also will pray that he bless you

and your descendants by enabling you to possess the land in which you are now living as a foreigner, the land that God promised to give to Abraham and his descendants.” ⁵ So Isaac sent Jacob to Paddan Aram to live with Rebekah’s brother Laban son of Bethuel, who belonged to the people group of the Arameans. (It was this Rebekah who would later give birth to Jacob and Esau.)

⁶ Esau found out that his father Isaac had blessed Jacob and then sent him to Paddan Aram. He also found out that when his father blessed Jacob, he told him, “Do not marry a woman from the Canaanite people,” ⁷ and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother, and had gone to Paddan Aram. ⁸ Esau also realized that his father Isaac did not approve of women from the Canaan people. ⁹ Because of that, Esau went to see his relative Ishmael and married Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael. Mahalath was the sister of Nabaioth and the granddaughter of Abraham.

¹⁰ Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and started to go toward Haran. ¹¹ When he arrived at a certain place, he stopped there because the sun had gone down. He took one of the stones there and put it under his head to use as a pillow. Then he lay down and slept there. ¹² While he was sleeping, he had a dream in which he saw a stairway. The bottom of the stairway was on the earth and the top was in the sky. Jacob also saw that God’s angels were going up and down the stairway. ¹³ Then he saw Yahweh standing at the top of the stairway, saying “I am Yahweh God, whom your grandfather Abraham worshiped and whom Isaac worships. I will give to you and to your descendants the land on which you are lying. ¹⁴ Your descendants will be as numerous as the particles of dust that are on the earth, and their territory will be very large. It will ex-

tend in all directions, to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south. I will bless all the clans and people groups on earth through you and your descendants.

¹⁵ I will help you and protect you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you; I will do for you all that I have promised to do.”

¹⁶ During the night, when Jacob woke up from sleeping, he thought, “Surely Yahweh is in this place, and until now I was not aware of it!” ¹⁷ He was afraid, and he said, “This place is terrifying! This is surely the place where God lives, and this is the entrance to heaven!” ¹⁸ The next morning Jacob got up, took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up on its end to mark the place where God had appeared to him. He poured some olive oil on top of the stone to set it apart for God. ¹⁹ He named that place Bethel, which means “house of God.” Previously its name was Luz.

²⁰ Jacob solemnly promised God, saying, “If you will help me and protect me while I am taking this journey, and if you give me enough food to eat and clothes to wear, ²¹ in order that I can later return safely to my father’s house, then you, Yahweh, will be the God that I will worship. ²² This stone that I have set up will mark the place where you appeared to me. And I will give back to you a tenth of everything that you give to me.”

Chapter 29

¹ Jacob continued on the road, and he reached the land that was east of the land of Canaan. ² There he saw a well in a field, and three flocks of sheep were lying near the well. It was the well from which shepherds normally got water for their sheep. There was a large stone covering

the top of the well. ³ When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would work together to roll the stone away from the top of the well and get water for the sheep. When they finished doing that, they would put the stone back in its place over the top of the well.

⁴ On that day, Jacob asked the shepherds who were sitting there, “Where are you from?” They replied, “We are from the city of Haran.” ⁵ He asked them, “Do you know Laban, the grandson of Nahor?” They replied, “Yes, we know him.” ⁶ Jacob asked them, “Is Laban well?” They replied, “Yes, he is well. Look! Here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep!” ⁷ Jacob said, “But the sun is still high in the sky. It is not time for the flocks to be gathered for nighttime. Why do you not give the sheep some water and then take them back to graze in the pastures?” ⁸ They replied, “No, we cannot do that until all the flocks are gathered here and the stone is removed from the top of the well. After that, we will give water to the sheep.”

⁹ While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep. She was the one who took care of her father’s sheep. ¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother’s brother, and Laban’s sheep, he went over and by himself rolled away the stone that covered the top of the well, and he got water for his uncle’s sheep. ¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel on the cheek, and he cried loudly because he was so happy. ¹² Jacob told Rachel that he was one of her father’s relatives, the son of her aunt Rebekah. So she ran and told that to her father.

¹³ As soon as Laban heard that Jacob, his sister’s son, was there, he ran to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him on the cheek. Then he brought him to his home, and then Jacob told him all that had happened to him. ¹⁴ Then Laban said to him,

“Truly, you are part of my family!”

Jacob stayed there and worked for Laban for a month. ¹⁵ Then Laban said to him “You should not work for me for nothing just because you are a relative of mine! Tell me how much you want me to pay you.” ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters. The older one was named Leah, and the younger one was named Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah had pretty eyes, but Rachel had a very attractive figure and was beautiful. ¹⁸ Jacob was in love with Rachel, and he said, “I will work for you for seven years. That will be my payment for you giving me permission to marry your younger daughter, Rachel.” ¹⁹ Laban replied, “It is better for me to let you marry her than for her to marry some other man! You should stay here with us.” ²⁰ So Jacob worked for Laban for seven years to get Rachel, but to him it seemed like it was only a few days, because he loved her so much.

²¹ After the seven years were ended, Jacob said to Laban, “Let me marry Rachel now, because the time we agreed upon for me to work for you has ended, and I want to marry her.” ²² So Laban gathered together all the people who lived in that area and made a feast. ²³ But that evening, instead of taking Rachel to Jacob, Laban took his older daughter, Leah, to him. But because it was already dark, he could not see that it was Leah and not Rachel, and he slept with her. ²⁴ (Laban had already given his slave girl Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.)

²⁵ The next morning, Jacob was shocked to see that it was Leah who was with him! So he went to Laban and told him very angrily, “What you have done to me is disgusting! I worked for you to get Rachel, did I not? So why did you deceive me?” ²⁶ Laban replied, “In this land, it is not our custom to give a younger daughter to be married before we let someone marry our

firstborn daughter. ²⁷ After we finish this week of celebration, we will let you marry the younger one also. But in return, you must pay for Rachel by working for me for another seven years.”

²⁸ So that is what Jacob did. After the week of celebration was ended, Laban gave him his daughter, Rachel, to be his wife. ²⁹ Laban gave his slave girl, Bilhah, to Rachel to be her servant. ³⁰ Jacob married Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than he loved Leah. He worked for Laban for another seven years.

³¹ When Yahweh saw that Jacob did not love Leah very much, he enabled her to become pregnant. But Rachel was not able to become pregnant. ³² Leah gave birth to a son, whom she named Reuben. She said, “Yahweh has seen that I was miserable, and because of that he has given me a son. Now, surely my husband will love me for giving birth to a son for him.”

³³ Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said, “Because Yahweh has heard that my husband does not love me, he has given me this son, too.” So she named him Simeon, which means “someone who hears.” ³⁴ Later she became pregnant again, and gave birth to another son. She said, “Now, finally, my husband will hold me close to him.” So she named him Levi, which means “hold close.” ³⁵ Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said, “This time I will praise Yahweh,” so she called his name Judah. After that, she did not give birth to any more children.

Chapter 30

¹ Rachel realized that she was not becoming pregnant at all. So she became jealous of her older sister, Leah, because Leah had given birth to four sons. She said to Ja-

cob, "Make me pregnant so I can have children. If you do not do that, I will die!"² Jacob became angry with Rachel and said, "I am not God! He is the one who has prevented you from becoming pregnant!"³ Then she said, "Look, here is my slave, Bilhah. Sleep with her so that she will have children in my place. In that way I will have legal children."⁴ So she gave him her slave, Bilhah, to be another wife for him, and Jacob slept with her.⁵ She became pregnant and bore Jacob a son.⁶ Rachel said, "God gave me justice. He has heard me when I prayed to him, and his justice was to give me a son." She named him Dan, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means "he gives me justice."⁷ Later, Rachel's slave Bilhah became pregnant again and gave birth to another son for Jacob.⁸ Then Rachel said, "I have had a great struggle to have children like my older sister, but truly I have a son." So she named him Naphtali, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means "struggle."

⁹ When Leah realized that she was not having any more children, she took her slave, Zilpah, and gave her to Jacob to be another wife for him.¹⁰ Zilpah soon became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Jacob.¹¹ Leah said, "I am truly fortunate!" So she named him Gad, which means "fortunate."¹² Later Leah's slave, Zilpah, gave birth to another son for Jacob.¹³ Leah said, "Now I am very happy, and people will call me happy." So she named him Asher, which means "happy."

¹⁴ During the time when they were harvesting wheat, Reuben went out into the fields and saw some mandrakes. He brought some of them to his mother Leah. But Rachel saw them and said to Leah, "Please give me some of those plants that your son brought to you!"¹⁵ But Leah said to her, "No! It was bad that you stole my husband! Now are you going to take

my son's mandrake plants?" So Rachel said, "All right, Jacob can sleep with you tonight, if you give me some of your son's mandrake plants." So Leah agreed with Rachel.

¹⁶ When Jacob returned from the wheat fields that evening, Leah went out to meet him. She said, "You must sleep with me tonight, because I gave Rachel some mandrake plants to pay her for allowing us to do that." So Jacob slept with her that night.¹⁷ God answered Leah's prayers, and she became pregnant and bore a fifth son to Jacob.¹⁸ Leah said, "God has rewarded me for giving my slave to my husband to be another wife for him." So she named him Issachar, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means "reward."

¹⁹ Leah became pregnant again and bore a sixth son for Jacob.²⁰ Leah said, "God has given me a precious gift. This time my husband will honor me, because I have given birth to six sons for him." So she named him Zebulun.

²¹ Later she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah.

²² Then God thought about what Rachel wanted. He heard her pray and enabled her to become pregnant.²³ She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She said, "God has caused me to be ashamed no longer for not having children."²⁴ She named him Joseph, which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean, "Yahweh gave me another son."

²⁵ After Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Now allow me to stop working for you and let me return to my own land."²⁶ You know the work that I have done for you. So let me take my wives and my children for whom I worked for you to get them, and leave."²⁷ But Laban said to him, "If you are pleased with me, stay here, because I have found out

by performing a magic ritual that Yahweh has blessed me because of what you have done for me. ²⁸ Tell me what you want me to pay you for continuing to work for me, and that is what I will pay you.” ²⁹ Jacob said to him, “You know how I have worked for you, and you know that your livestock have increased greatly as I have taken care of them. ³⁰ You had only a few animals before I came here. But now you have a large number of animals and Yahweh has caused them to increase into an even larger number everywhere I have taken them. But now I need to start taking care of the needs of my own family.” ³¹ Laban replied, “What do you want me to pay you?” Jacob replied, “I do not want you to pay me anything. But if you will do this one thing for me, I will continue to take care of your flocks and protect them. ³² Allow me to go and look at all of your flocks today and remove from them all the speckled sheep, all the spotted sheep, and every dark-colored lamb, all the goats that are speckled, and all the goats that are spotted. I want to keep them for myself. They will be my wages. ³³ In that way, in the future, you will be able to know whether I have been honest regarding what you have paid me. If any of my goats have no speckles or spots, and if any of my lambs are not dark-colored, you will know that I have stolen them from you.”

³⁴ Laban agreed and said, “Yes, we will do as you have said.” ³⁵ But on that same day, Laban removed all the male goats that had black and white stripes on them or were spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled or spotted, all the goats that were partly white, and all the dark-colored lambs. He separated them from the other animals and put his sons in charge of them. ³⁶ Then Laban and his sons took these animals and journeyed for three days from where Jacob was. Jacob continued to take care of the rest of La-

ban’s flocks.

³⁷ Then Jacob cut some branches of poplar, almond, and plane trees. He peeled strips of bark from the branches. In this way, where he peeled the bark off, the branches were light in color. ³⁸ Then he placed the peeled branches in the troughs where they put the water for the animals to drink, so that the flocks saw them when they were drinking water. ³⁹ The animals also mated in front of the branches, and later they gave birth to animals that were speckled, or to animals that were spotted, or to animals that had black and white stripes on them. ⁴⁰ During the several years following, Jacob often separated the female sheep in Laban’s flock from the other sheep and goats. When they mated, he made them look toward the animals that had black and white stripes, and toward the dark-colored animals. So they gave birth to animals with similar markings. Then he would separate these animals from Laban’s flocks and keep them for his own. ⁴¹ In addition, whenever the stronger female sheep were ready to mate, Jacob put some of those peeled branches in the troughs in front of them, so that they would mate in front of the branches. ⁴² But when weak animals were ready to mate, he did not put the branches in their troughs. So they gave birth to weak lambs, which remained in Laban’s flock, but the strong ones became part of Jacob’s flock. ⁴³ As a result, Jacob became very rich. He owned many large flocks. He also owned many male and female slaves, camels, and donkeys.

Chapter 31

¹ One day, someone told Jacob that Laban’s sons were complaining and saying, “Jacob has become very rich by taking everything that belonged to our father.” ²

Jacob noticed that Laban was not acting friendly toward him as he had done before. ³ Then Yahweh said to Jacob, “Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will help you there.”

⁴ So Jacob sent a message to Rachel and Leah, telling them to come out to the pastures where his flocks of sheep and goats were. ⁵ When they arrived, he said to them, “I see that your father does not act friendly toward me as he did previously. But God, whom my father worshiped, has helped me. ⁶ You two know that I have worked very hard for your father. ⁷ He has cheated me many times by decreasing my wages. But God has not allowed him to do me physical harm. ⁸ When Laban said, ‘The speckled animals are the ones that I will give you to be your wages,’ then all the animals gave birth to young ones that were speckled. When he changed his mind and said, ‘The ones that have black and white stripes on them will be your wages,’ then all the animals gave birth to young ones that were striped. ⁹ In that way, God has taken away the livestock that belonged to your father and has given them to me.

¹⁰ One time, when the animals were mating, I had a dream. In my dream I looked up and was surprised to see that some of the male goats that were mating with the female goats had black and white stripes on them, some were speckled, and some were spotted. ¹¹ In the dream, an angel came from God said to me, ‘Jacob!’ I replied, ‘I am here!’ ¹² He said to me, ‘Look up and you will see that all the male goats that are mating have black and white stripes on them, or are speckled or spotted. This is happening because I have seen all that Laban has done to you. ¹³ I am the God who appeared to you at Bethel, where you set up a stone, poured olive oil on it and made a solemn promise to me.

So now leave this land immediately and return to the land where you were born.”

¹⁴ Rachel and Leah replied to him, “Our father will not give us anything more when he dies. ¹⁵ He treats us as though we were foreigners! The work that you did for him all these years was a payment that you gave him for us, but we will not inherit any of the wealth you produced for him. He has spent it all! ¹⁶ Certainly all of the wealth that God took away from our father belongs to us and to our children. So do whatever God has told you to do!”

¹⁷ Then Jacob put his children and his wives on camels. ¹⁸ He drove all his livestock just ahead of him as they went. He also took along all the other property and goods that he added to his own possessions while living in Paddan Aram. This is how they began their journey back to his father Isaac, who lived in the land of Canaan.

¹⁹ Now Laban had left to go shear his sheep. In his absence, Rachel stole the small wooden idols that were in her father’s tent. ²⁰ Furthermore, Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him that they were planning to leave. ²¹ So Jacob and his family fled with all their possessions. They crossed the Euphrates River and then started traveling south toward the hill country of the region of Gilead.

²² On the third day after they left, someone told Laban that Jacob and his family were gone. ²³ So he took some of his relatives with him and started to pursue Jacob. They walked for seven days and they caught up with him in hill country of the region of Gilead. ²⁴ Then God appeared to Laban in a dream at night. He said to him, “When you catch up to Jacob, be very careful what you say to him.”

²⁵ The next day, by the time Laban caught

up with Jacob, Jacob and his household had set up their tents in the hills of Gilead. So Laban and his relatives set up their tents there too. ²⁶ Then Laban went to Jacob and said to him, "Why have you done this? You have deceived me by carrying away my daughters as though you had captured them in a war! ²⁷ Why did you run away and deceive me? Why did you not tell me that you were going to leave, so that we could have rejoiced and sung while people played music on tambourines and harps before I said 'goodbye' to you? ²⁸ You did not even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters goodbye before they left! What you have done was foolish! ²⁹ My relatives and I have the power to harm you, but last night the God whom your father worships said to me in a dream, 'Be very careful what you say to Jacob.' ³⁰ Now I know you have left because you want to go back home. But why did you steal my idols?"

³¹ Jacob replied to Laban, "I did not tell you that we were planning to leave, because I was afraid that you would take your daughters away from me by force. ³² But if you find anyone here who has your idols, we will execute that person. While our relatives are watching, search for yourself to see if there is anything that belongs to you that is here with me. If you find anything, you can take it!" When Jacob said that, he did not know that Rachel had already stolen her father's idols.

³³ Then Laban went into Jacob's tent, next into Leah's tent, and then into the tent of the two female slaves and searched for the idols, but he did not find them. After he left their tents, he entered Rachel's tent. ³⁴ But Rachel had previously taken the idols and put them in the saddle of a camel, and she was sitting on the saddle. So when Laban searched all over for them inside Rachel's tent, he did not find them.

³⁵ Rachel said to her father, "Do not be angry with me, sir, but I cannot stand up in your presence to show respect for you, because I am having my menstrual period." So even after searching more, Laban, he did not find his idols.

³⁶ Then Jacob became angry. He said to Laban, "What crime did I commit? For what sin have you pursued me? ³⁷ Now you have searched through all my possessions, and you have found nothing that belongs to you! If you have found anything, put it here in front of my relatives and your relatives, so that they can decide who is right, you or me!

³⁸ I was with you for twenty years. In all that time, your sheep and goats have not miscarried. I have not killed and eaten any rams from your flocks. ³⁹ When one of your animals was attacked and mauled by a wild animal, I did not bring it to you. I replaced the dead animal with a living one of my own animals. Whenever one of your animals was stolen, during the day or during the night, you demanded that I replace it with one of my own animals. ⁴⁰ I suffered from the heat during the day and from the cold at night. I was often not even able to sleep! ⁴¹ I lived in your household for twenty years. I worked for you for fourteen years to marry your two daughters, and for six more years to buy some of your sheep and goats. During that time, you changed and reduced my wages ten times. ⁴² If God, the one whom my grandfather Abraham worshiped and before whom my father Isaac trembled in fear, had not been with me and helped me, you would have sent me away with nothing in my hands! But God saw how much I was suffering and how hard I was working, so last night he told you that what you have done to me was wrong."

⁴³ Laban replied, "These two women are my daughters, and their children are my

grandchildren, and the animals are my animals. Everything you see here is mine!⁴⁴ I cannot do anything in order to keep them, so we should make a peace agreement, you and I. It will serve as a witness between you and me.”

⁴⁵ So Jacob took a large stone and set it on its end. ⁴⁶ Then Jacob said to his relatives, “Gather some stones.” So they gathered some rocks and put them in a heap, and they ate some food there near the heap. ⁴⁷ Laban gave the heap the Aramaic name Jegar Saha Dutha, but Jacob gave the heap the Hebrew name Galeed. ⁴⁸ Laban said to Jacob, “This pile of rocks we have put here today will help us to remember our agreement.” That is why Jacob called it Galeed. ⁴⁹ They also named the place Mizpah, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means “watchtower,” because Laban said, “We will ask Yahweh to watch you and me while we are separated from each other, so that we do not try to harm each other. ⁵⁰ If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take other women to be your wives, even if no one tells me about it, do not forget that God sees what you and I are doing!”

⁵¹ Laban also said to Jacob, “You see this large stone and this pile of rocks that we have set up to be between us. ⁵² Both this pile of rocks and this large stone will remind us, that I will not go past these rocks to harm you and you will not go past these rocks to harm me. ⁵³ May the God whom Abraham worshiped, and the god that Nahor worshiped, and the gods their ancestor Terah worshiped punish either one of us, if one of us harms the other.” Jacob solemnly promised by the God whom his father Isaac feared to do what they said in their peace agreement.

⁵⁴ He offered a sacrifice to God there in the hill country, and he invited his relatives to eat with him. After they had eaten, they

slept there that night. ⁵⁵ The next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters, and he asked God to bless them. Then Laban and his men left and returned home.

Chapter 32

¹ As Jacob and his family continued traveling, some angels came from God and met him. ² When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s army camp!” So he named that place Mahanaim.

³ Jacob told some men to go ahead of him to his older brother Esau, who was living in Seir, that is, the land of Edom. ⁴ He told them, “This is what I want you to say to Esau: ‘I, Jacob, am your servant and you are my master. I have been living with our uncle Laban, and I have stayed there until now. ⁵ I now own many cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats, and male and female slaves. Now I am sending this message to you, sir, hoping that you will be friendly toward me when I arrive.’”

⁶ The messengers went and gave that message to Esau. When they returned to Jacob, they said, “We went to your older brother Esau. He is coming to you, and four hundred men are coming with him.”

⁷ Jacob was very afraid and worried. So he divided the people who were with him into two groups. He also divided the sheep and goats, the cattle, and the camels, into two groups. ⁸ He was thinking, “If Esau and his men come and attack us, perhaps one of the groups will be left and will be able to escape.” ⁹ Then Jacob prayed, “O Yahweh God, whom my grandfather Abraham worshiped and my father Isaac worships, you said to me, ‘Go back to your own land and to your relatives, and I will cause good things to happen to you.’ ¹⁰ I am not worthy for you to have kept your

covenant in so many faithful and trustworthy ways with me, your servant. I had only this walking stick with me when I crossed the Jordan River on my way to Haran, but now I am so wealthy that there are two large groups of my family and possessions. ¹¹ So now I pray that you will rescue me from the power of my brother Esau, because I am afraid that he and his men will come and attack and kill me and the children and their mothers. ¹² But do not forget that you have said, ‘I will certainly enable you to prosper, and I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore, which are so many that no one can count them.’”

¹³ Jacob slept in that place that night. The next morning he selected some animals to give to his brother Esau. ¹⁴ He selected two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred female sheep and twenty male sheep, ¹⁵ thirty female camels and their offspring, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. ¹⁶ He divided them into small herds, and put each herd into the care of one of his servants. He said to his servants, “Go ahead of me, one group at a time, and keep some space between each herd.” ¹⁷ He said to the servant who was going with the first group, “When my brother Esau meets you, he will ask you, ‘To whom do you belong, and where are you going, and to whom do these animals in front of you belong?’ ¹⁸ Tell him, ‘They belong to your servant Jacob. He has sent them to you as a gift, sir. And he is coming behind us.’”

¹⁹ He also said the same thing to the servants who were taking care of the second and third groups, and to the other herdsmen. He said to them, “When you meet Esau, I want you to say to him the same thing that I told the first servant. ²⁰ Also

be sure to say ‘Your servant Jacob is coming behind us.’” Jacob told them to say that because he was thinking, “Perhaps these gifts that I am sending ahead of me will cause him to act peacefully toward me. Later, when I see him, perhaps he will act kindly toward me.” ²¹ So the men taking the gifts went ahead, but Jacob himself stayed in the camp that night.

²² Some time during that night, Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female slaves, and his eleven sons, and he sent them across the ford at the Jabbok River. ²³ After he sent all his people across the Jabbok River, then he also sent over everything he owned. ²⁴ So Jacob was left there alone. But a man came and wrestled with him until dawn. ²⁵ When the man realized that he was not winning against Jacob, he struck Jacob’s hip and caused the thigh bone to pull away from the hip socket. ²⁶ Then the man said, “Let me go, because it will soon be daylight.” Jacob replied, “No, if you will not bless me, I will not let you go!” ²⁷ The man said to him, “What is your name?” He replied, “Jacob.” ²⁸ The man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob. Your name will be Israel, which means ‘he struggles with God,’ because you have struggled with God and with people, and you have won.” ²⁹ Jacob said, “Now, please tell me your name!” The man replied, “Why do you ask me what my name is?” But he blessed Jacob there. ³⁰ So Jacob named the place Peniel, which means “God’s face,” saying “I looked directly at God, but I did not die because of doing that.”

³¹ The sun was rising as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of what had happened to his hip. ³² The muscle on his hip joint had been injured. So to this present time, because of what happened to Jacob, the Israelite people do not eat the muscle that is attached to the socket of the

hips of animals.

Chapter 33

¹ Then Jacob joined the rest of his family. Later that day Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming, and there were four hundred men with him. Jacob was worried because of that, so he separated the children. He put Leah's children with Leah, Rachel's children with Rachel, and the two female slaves' children with their mothers. ² He put the two female slaves and their children in front. He put Leah and her children next. He put Rachel and Joseph at the rear. ³ He himself went ahead of them all, and as he continued to approach his older brother, he prostrated himself with his face on the ground seven times. ⁴

But Esau ran to Jacob. He hugged him, put his arms around his neck, and kissed him on the cheek. And they both cried. ⁵ Then Esau looked up and saw the women and the children. He asked, "Who are these people who are with you?" Jacob replied, "These are the wives and children that God has graciously given to me." ⁶ Then the female slaves and their children came near and bowed in front of Esau. ⁷ Then Leah and her children came and bowed down. Finally Joseph and Rachel came near and bowed down.

⁸ Esau asked, "What is the meaning of all the animals that I saw?" Jacob replied, "I am giving them to you, sir, so that you will feel good toward me." ⁹ But Esau replied, "My younger brother, I have enough animals! Keep for yourself the animals that you have!" ¹⁰ But Jacob said, "No, please, if you feel good toward me, accept these gifts from me. You have greeted me very kindly. Seeing you smile at me assures me that you have forgiven me. It is like seeing the face of God!" ¹¹ Please accept these

gifts that I have brought to you, because God has acted kindly toward me, and I still have plenty of animals!" Jacob kept on urging him to accept the animals, and finally Esau accepted them.

¹² Then Esau said, "Let us continue traveling together, and I will lead you on the road." ¹³ Jacob said, "You know, sir, that the children are weak, and that I must take care of the female sheep and cows that are sucking their mother's milk. If I force them to walk fast for a long distance in just one day, the animals will all die. ¹⁴ You go ahead of me. I will lead the animals slowly, but I will walk as fast as the children and animals can walk. I will catch up with you in Seir." ¹⁵ Esau said, "Then allow me to leave with you some of the men who came with me, to protect you." But Jacob replied, "Why do that? The only thing that I want is for you to feel good toward me." ¹⁶ So on that day Esau left to return to Seir. ¹⁷ But instead of going to Seir, Jacob and his family went to a place called Succoth. There he built a house for himself and his family, and built shelters for his livestock. That is the reason they named the place Succoth, which means "shelters."

¹⁸ This is how Jacob and his family left Pad-dan Aram and traveled safely to the land of Canaan. There they set up their tents in a field near the city of Shechem. ¹⁹ One of the leaders of the people in that area was named Hamor. Hamor had several sons. Jacob paid the sons of Hamor one hundred pieces of silver for the piece of ground on which they set up their tents. ²⁰ He built a stone altar there and named it El Elohe Israel, which means "God, the God of Israel."

Chapter 34

¹ One day Dinah, the daughter of Jacob

and Leah, went to visit some of the women in that area. ² Shechem was one of the sons of Hamor, and he was descended from the people group of the Hivites. When he saw her, he took her and forced her to have sex with him. ³ He was very much attracted to her, and he became attached to her. He loved her and he spoke very tenderly to the girl. ⁴ So Shechem said to his father Hamor, "Please get this girl for me. I want her to become my wife!"

⁵ When Jacob found out that Shechem had seized his daughter Dinah and slept with her, his sons were still in the fields with his livestock, so he said nothing about this until they returned home.

⁶ In the meantime, Shechem's father Hamor went to talk with Jacob. ⁷ Jacob's sons came in from the field, and when they had found out what had happened, they were shocked and very angry, because Shechem had brought much shame to Israel by forcing himself on Jacob's daughter. She was their sister! This was a terrible crime that should never be done.

⁸ But Hamor said to them, "My son Shechem really likes this girl who is your daughter and your sister. Please allow him to marry her. ⁹ Let us make an agreement: You will give your daughters to our young men to be their wives, and we will give our daughters to your young men to be their wives. ¹⁰ You can live among us and live anywhere in our land that you wish. You can buy and sell things. If you find land that you want, then you can buy it."

¹¹ Then Shechem said to Dinah's father and brothers, "If you feel good toward me and do what I am asking for, I will give you whatever you ask for. ¹² Tell me what gifts you want and what bride price you want, and I will give you what you ask for.

I just want you to give the girl to me to be my wife."

¹³ But because Shechem had done a shameful thing to their sister Dinah, the sons of Jacob deceived Shechem and his father Hamor. ¹⁴ They said to them, "No, we cannot do that. We cannot give our sister to be the wife of a man who is not circumcised, because that would be a shameful thing for us to do. ¹⁵ We will do that only if you do one thing: You must become like us by circumcising all the males that are among you. ¹⁶ Then we will give our daughters to your young men to be your wives, and we will take your daughters to be the wives of our young men. We will live among you, and we will become one people group. ¹⁷ But if you do not agree to be circumcised, we will take our sister and leave."

¹⁸ What they said pleased Hamor and his son Shechem. ¹⁹ Shechem wanted very much to take Jacob's daughter as his wife; also, since he was the most respected person in his father's family, he quickly agreed to do what they suggested. ²⁰ Shechem went with Hamor to the meeting place at the city gate, and they spoke to the city leaders. They said, ²¹ "These men are friendly toward us. We should let them live here and travel around. Certainly the land is big enough to support them and us. Our young men can marry their daughters, and their young men can marry our daughters. ²² But these men will agree to live among us and become one people group with us only if all our males are circumcised, as they are. ²³ But if we do that, just think! Their cattle, their possessions, and all their animals will become ours! So we should agree to do what they suggest, and then they will live among us!" ²⁴ All the men who were at the city gate agreed to what Hamor and Shechem suggested. Every male in the city was circumcised.

²⁵ On the third day after that, when the men of the city were still sore because of being circumcised, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, who were Dinah's brothers, took their swords and entered the city without anyone stopping them, and killed all the men. ²⁶ They even killed Hamor and his son Shechem. Then they took Dinah out of Shechem's house and left the city. ²⁷ Then the other sons of Jacob went into the city where all those dead bodies were. They looted the city to get revenge for the shameful thing that had been done to their sister. ²⁸ They took away the people's sheep and goats, their cattle, their donkeys, and everything else that they wanted from inside the city and from out in the countryside. ²⁹ They took away everything that was valuable, even the children and the women. They seized and took away everything that was in the houses.

³⁰ Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought me big trouble! Now the Canaan people group, the Perez people group, and everyone else who lives in this land will hate me! I do not have many men to fight for us, so if they all gather together and come to me and attack us, they will destroy us and all our household!" ³¹ But they replied, "Should we have allowed Shechem to treat our sister like a prostitute?"

Chapter 35

¹ Some time later, God said to Jacob, "Go up to the city of Bethel and live there. Build an altar to worship me, God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your older brother Esau." ² So Jacob said to his household and to all the others who were with him, "Get rid of the idols you brought from the land of Mesopotamia.

Also, bathe yourselves and put on clean clothes. ³ Then we will get ready and go up to Bethel. There I will build an altar to worship God. He is the one who helped me at the time when I was greatly distressed and afraid, and he has been with me wherever I have gone." ⁴ So they gave to Jacob all the idols that they had brought, and all their earrings. Jacob buried them in the ground under the big oak tree that was near the city of Shechem.

⁵ As they prepared to leave there, God caused the people who lived in the cities around them to be very afraid of Jacob's family, so that they did not pursue them. ⁶ Jacob and all those who were with him went to Luz, which is now called Bethel, in Canaan land. ⁷ There he built an altar. He named the place El Bethel, which means "God of Bethel," because it was there that God revealed himself to Jacob when he was fleeing from his older brother Esau.

⁸ Deborah, who had taken care of Isaac's wife Rebekah when Rebekah was a small girl, was now very old. She died and was buried under an oak tree south of Bethel. So they named that place Allon Bakuth, which means "oak of weeping."

⁹ After Jacob and his family returned from Paddan Aram, while they were still at Bethel, God appeared to Jacob again and blessed him. ¹⁰ God said to him again, "Your name will no longer be Jacob. It will be Israel." So Jacob was then called "Israel." ¹¹ Then God said to him, "I am God Almighty. Produce many children. Your descendants will become many nations, and some of your descendants will be kings. ¹² The land that I promised to give to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you. I will also give it to your descendants."

¹³ When God finished talking there with Jacob, he left him. ¹⁴ Jacob set up a large stone at the place where God had

talked with him. He poured some wine and some olive oil on it to dedicate it to God. ¹⁵ Jacob named that place Bethel, which means “house of God,” because God had spoken to him there.

¹⁶ Jacob and his family left Bethel and traveled south toward Ephrath town. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel began to have severe childbirth pains. ¹⁷ When her pain was the most severe, the midwife said to Rachel, “Do not be afraid, because now you have given birth to another son!” ¹⁸ But she was dying, and with her last breath she said, “Name him Ben-Oni,” which means “son of my sorrow,” but his father named him Benjamin, which means “son of my right hand.”

¹⁹ After Rachel died, she was buried alongside the road to Ephrath, which is now called Bethlehem. ²⁰ Jacob set up a large stone over her grave, and it is still there, showing where Rachel’s grave is.

²¹ Jacob, whose new name was Israel, continued traveling with his family, and he set up his tents on the south side of the watchtower at Eder. ²² While they were living in that area, Jacob’s son Reuben slept with Bilhah, one of his father’s concubines. Someone told Jacob about it, and it made him very angry.

Now Jacob had twelve sons. ²³ The sons of Leah were Reuben, who was Jacob’s oldest son, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. ²⁴ The sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁵ The sons of Rachel’s female slave Bilhah were Dan and Naphtali. ²⁶ The sons of Leah’s female slave Zilpah were Gad and Asher. All those sons of Jacob, except Benjamin, were born while he was living in Paddan Aram.

²⁷ Jacob went back home to see his father Isaac at Mamre, which is also named Kiriath Arba, and which is now named

Hebron. Isaac’s father Abraham had also lived there. ²⁸ Isaac lived until he was 180 years old. ²⁹ He was very old when he died and went to join his ancestors who had died previously. His sons Esau and Jacob buried his body.

Chapter 36

¹ These are those who descended from Esau, whose other name was Edom, and what happened concerning them. ² Esau married three women from Canaan land: Adah, the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Oholibamah, who was the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hittite; ³ and Basemath, who was the daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth. ⁴ Esau’s wife Adah gave birth to Eliphaz. Basemath gave birth to Reuel. ⁵ Oholibamah gave birth to Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. All these sons of Esau were born while he was living in Canaan land.

⁶⁻⁷ Jacob and Esau had very many possessions. For this reason, they needed more land for their livestock. The land where they were living was not big enough for all their livestock. So Esau, whose other name was Edom, had taken his wives and sons and daughters and all the other members of his household, his sheep and goats and his other animals, and all the other things he had obtained in Canaan land, and they had moved to an area that was away from Jacob. ⁸ They went to live in the hill country of Seir.

⁹ These are those who descended from Esau, the ancestor of the Edom people group who live in the Seir area. ¹⁰ Esau’s wife Adah gave birth to Eliphaz, and Esau’s wife Basemath gave birth to Reuel. ¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. ¹² Esau’s son Eliphaz also had a concubine. Her name

was Timna. She gave birth to Amalek. Those six men were grandsons of Esau's wife Adah.

¹³ Reuel's sons were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. They were grandsons of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹⁴ Esau's wife Oholibamah, who was the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon, gave birth to three sons: Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

¹⁵ These are the chiefs among the descendants of Esau. The descendants of Eliphaz, his firstborn son, these were the chiefs: Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, ¹⁶ Korah, Gatam, and Amalek people groups. These were chiefs that descended from Eliphaz who lived in Edom; they were grandsons of Adah.

¹⁷ The sons of Esau's son Reuel were ancestors of the Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah people groups. They were descended from Esau's wife Basemath. They also lived in Edom.

¹⁸ The sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah, whose mother was Anah, were ancestors of the Jeush, Jalam, and Korah people groups.

¹⁹ That is the list of the sons of Esau, and the people groups who were their descendants.

²⁰ This is a list of the descendants of Seir, who belonged to the Hor people group, who were the first people group who lived in the region of Edom: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹ Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. Those seven men each became ancestors of a people group. Each of the people groups had the same name as the name of their ancestor.

²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Heman. Lotan's sister was Timna.

²³ The sons of Shobal were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

²⁴ The sons of Zibeon were Aiah and Anah. This Anah was the one who discovered the hot springs in the desert while he was taking care of his father Zibeon's donkeys.

²⁵ Anah had two children—a son named Dishon and a daughter named Oholibamah.

²⁶ Dishon's sons were Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran.

²⁷ Ezer's sons were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.

²⁸ Dishan's sons were Uz and Aran.

²⁹⁻³⁰ The people groups who were descendants of Hor lived in Seir land. The names of the people groups are Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan.

³¹ These are the names of the kings who ruled in Edom before any kings ruled over the Israelites. ³² Beor's son Bela became the first king in Edom. The city where he lived was named Dinhabah.

³³ When Bela died, Zerah's son Jobab became the king. He was from the city of Bozrah.

³⁴ When Jobab died, Husham became the king. He was from the region where the Teman people group lived.

³⁵ When Husham died, Bedad's son Hadan became the king. Husham's army fought the army of the Midian people group in the region of Moab and defeated them. The city where Husham lived was Avith.

³⁶ When Hadad died, Samlah became the king. He was from Masrekah.

³⁷ When Samlah died, Shaul became the king. He was from Rehoboth, that was beside the Euphrates river.

³⁸ When Shaul died, Akbor's son Baal-Hanan became king.

³⁹ When Akbor's son Baal-Hanan died, Hadad became king. The city where he

lived was named Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel. She was the daughter of Matred, who was the daughter of Me Zahab.

⁴⁰⁻⁴³ Here is a list of all the people groups that were descendants of Esau: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, Magdiel, and Iram. They all lived in the land of Edom. The land where each people group lived got the same name as the name of the people group.

Chapter 37

¹ Jacob continued to live in Canaan land, where his father had lived previously. ² This is what happened to Jacob's family.

When his son Joseph was seventeen years old, he was taking care of the flocks of sheep and goats with some of his older brothers. They were sons of his father's concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah. Joseph told his father about bad things that his brothers were doing.

³ Jacob loved Joseph more than he loved any of his other children, because Joseph had been born when Jacob was an old man. Jacob had someone make for Joseph a beautiful piece of clothing with long sleeves. ⁴ When Joseph's older brothers realized that their father loved him more than he loved any of them, they hated him. They never spoke kindly to him.

⁵ One night Joseph had a dream. He told his brothers about the dream, who hated him even more as a result. This is in detail what happened: ⁶ He said to them, "Listen to the dream I had! ⁷ In the dream, we were tying up bundles of wheat in the field. Suddenly my bundle stood up straight, and your bundles gathered around my bundle and bowed down

to it!" ⁸ His brothers said to him, "Do you think that some day you will rule over us? Are you going to be our king?" They hated him even more than before because of what he had told them about his dream.

⁹ Later he had another dream, and again he told his older brothers about it. He said, "Listen to this! I had another dream. In this dream, the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me!" ¹⁰ He also told his father about it. His father corrected him, saying "What are you suggesting by that dream? Do you think it means that your mother and I and your older brothers will some day bow down to the ground in front of you?" ¹¹ Joseph's older brothers resented him, but his father kept thinking about what the dream might mean.

¹² One day Joseph's older brothers went to take care of their father's sheep and goats that were in fields near Shechem. ¹³ Some time later, Jacob said to Joseph, "Your brothers are taking care of the sheep and goats near Shechem. I am going to send you there to see them." Joseph replied, "I will go." ¹⁴ Jacob said, "Go and see if they are doing okay, and if the flocks are doing okay. Then come back and give me a report." So Jacob sent Joseph from the valley where they were living, the valley where Hebron is located, to go to find his brothers.

Then Joseph arrived near the city of Shechem. ¹⁵ While he was wandering around in the fields looking for his brothers, a man saw him and asked him, "Whom are you looking for?" ¹⁶ Joseph replied, "I am looking for my older brothers. Can you tell me where they are taking care of their sheep and goats?" ¹⁷ The man replied, "They are not here anymore. I heard one of them saying, 'Let us take the sheep and goats and go to Dothan town.'" So Joseph left there and went north, and

found his older brothers near Dothan. ¹⁸ But they saw him when he was still far away, and they decided to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to each other things like, "Here comes that dreamer!" ²⁰ "Come on, let us kill him and throw his body into one of the pits! Then we will tell people that a wild animal attacked and killed him and ate him. And then we will find out whether his dreams come true!"

²¹ Reuben heard what they were saying, so he tried to persuade them not to kill Joseph. He said, "No, we should not kill him. ²² Do not take his life! We can throw him into this pit in the desert, but we should not harm him." He said that and then left them, planning to rescue Joseph later and take him back to his father.

²³ When Joseph arrived where his older brothers were, they seized him and ripped off his long-sleeved clothing. ²⁴ Then they took him and threw him into the pit. Now the pit was dry; there was no water in it.

²⁵ After they sat down to eat some food, they looked up and saw a caravan, descendants of Ishmael, coming from the Gilead area. Their camels were loaded with bags of spices and sweet-smelling resins. They were going down to Egypt to sell those things there. ²⁶ Judah said to his older and younger brothers, "If we kill our younger brother and hide his body, what will we gain? ²⁷ So instead of harming him, let us sell him to these men who are descendants of Ishmael. Do not forget, he is our own younger brother!" So they all agreed to do that.

²⁸ When those traders from the Midian area came near, Joseph's brothers pulled him up out of the pit. Then they sold him to the men from Midian for twenty pieces of silver. The traders then took Joseph to Egypt.

²⁹ When Reuben returned to the pit, he saw that his younger brother was not there. He was so grieved that he tore his clothes. ³⁰ He went back to his younger brothers and said, "The boy is not in the pit! What can I do now?"

³¹ They did not dare to tell their father what they had done. So they decided to invent a story about what had happened. They got Joseph's piece of long-sleeved clothing. Then they killed a goat and dipped the clothing into the goat's blood. ³² They took that piece of clothing back to their father and said, "We found this! Look at it. Is it your son's clothing?" ³³ He recognized it, and he said, "Yes, it is my son's! Some ferocious animal must have attacked and killed him! I am sure that the animal has torn Joseph to pieces!"

³⁴ Jacob was so grieved that he tore his clothes. He put on sackcloth. He mourned.

³⁵ All of his children came to try to comfort him, but he did not pay attention to what they said. He said, "No, I will still be mourning when I die and go to be with my son." So Joseph's father continued to cry because of what had happened to his son.

³⁶ In the meantime, the men from Midian took Joseph to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, who was one of the king's officials. He was the captain of the soldiers who protected the king.

Chapter 38

¹ At that time, Judah left his older and younger brothers and went down from the hill country and stayed with a man who lived in Adullam. His name was Hiram. ² There he met a woman who was the daughter of a man from Canaan land named Shua. He married her and slept with her. ³ She became pregnant and later gave birth to a son. His father

named him Er. ⁴ Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son, whom she named Onan. ⁵ Many years later, when Judah and his family went to live in Kezib, Judah's wife gave birth to another son, and she named him Shelah.

⁶ When Judah's oldest son Er grew up, Judah got a wife for him, a woman named Tamar. ⁷ But Er did something that Yahweh considered to be very wicked, so Yahweh caused him to die. ⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, "Your older brother died without having any sons. So marry his widow and sleep with her. That is what our customs require that you should do." ⁹ But Onan knew if he did that, any children who would be born would not be considered to be his. So every time he slept with his brother's widow, he spilled his semen on the ground, so that she would not get pregnant and produce children for his older brother. ¹⁰ Yahweh considered that what he did was wicked, so he caused him to die also.

¹¹ Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Return to your father's house, but do not marry anyone else. When my youngest son Shelah grows up, he can marry you." But Judah really did not want Shelah to marry her, because he was afraid that then Shelah would die too, just as his older brothers had died. So Tamar obeyed Judah and went back to live in her father's house again.

¹² Several years later, Judah's wife, who was the daughter of Shua, died. When the time of mourning for her was finished, Judah decided to go up to Timnah, to the place where his men were shearing his sheep. His friend Hiram, from Adullam, went with him. ¹³ Someone said to Tamar, "Your father-in-law is going to Timnah to help the men who are shearing his sheep." ¹⁴ She realized that now Shelah was grown up, but Judah had not given

her to him to be his wife. So she took off her widow's clothes and covered her head with a veil, so that people would not recognize her. Then she sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. ¹⁵ When Judah came along and saw her, he thought that she was a prostitute, because she had covered her head and sat where prostitutes often sat. ¹⁶ Judah did not realize that she was his daughter-in-law. So he said to her, "Let me sleep with you." She replied, "What will you give me in exchange?" ¹⁷ He replied, "I will send you a young goat from my flock of goats." She asked, "Will you give me something now for me to keep until you send the goat?" ¹⁸ He replied, "What do you want me to give to you?" She replied, "Give me the ring that has your name on it that is tied by a cord around your neck, and give me the walking stick that you are holding in your hand." So he gave them to her. Then he slept with her, and she became pregnant. ¹⁹ After she left, she took off the veil and put her widow's clothes on again.

²⁰ Judah gave a young goat to his friend from Adullam, for him to take back to the woman, as he had promised. But his friend could not find the woman. ²¹ So his friend asked the men who lived there, "Where is the prostitute who was sitting by the road at Enaim?" They replied, "There has never been a prostitute here!" ²² So he went back to Judah and said, "I did not find her. Furthermore, the men who live in that town said, 'There has never been a prostitute here.'" ²³ Judah said, "She can keep the things that I gave to her. If we continued to search for her, people would ridicule us. I tried to send this young goat to her, but you could not find her to give it to her."

²⁴ About three months later, someone told Judah, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has

become a prostitute, and now she is pregnant!" Judah said, "Drag her outside of the city and burn her to death!"

²⁵ But as they were taking her outside of the city, she gave the ring and walking stick to someone, and told him to take them to Judah, and say to him, "The man who owns these things is the one who caused me to become pregnant." She also said to tell him, "Look at this ring, and the cord that is attached to it, and this walking stick. Whose are they?" ²⁶ When the man did that, Judah recognized the ring and the stick. He said, "She is more right than I am. I did not tell my son Shelah to marry her, as I promised that I would." And Judah did not sleep with her again.

²⁷ When it was time for her to give birth, she was surprised that there were twin boys in her womb. ²⁸ As she was giving birth, one of them put out his hand. So the midwife fastened a scarlet thread around his wrist, saying, "This one came out first." ²⁹ But he pulled his hand back inside the womb, and his brother came out first. So she said, "So this is how you break your way out first!" So she named him Perez, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means "breaking out." ³⁰ Then his younger brother, the one who had the scarlet thread around his wrist, came out. And he was named Zerah, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means "redness of dawn."

Chapter 39

¹ Meanwhile, the descendants of Ishmael took Joseph down to Egypt. There Potiphar bought Joseph from them. Potiphar was an Egyptian who was one of the king's officials and the captain of the king's palace guards. ² Because Yahweh helped Joseph, he was able to do his

work very well. He worked in the house of his Egyptian master. ³ His master saw that Yahweh was helping Joseph and enabling him to be successful in everything that he did. ⁴ Joseph's master was pleased with him, so he appointed him to be his personal servant. Then he appointed him to be the one who would take care of everything in his household and all of his possessions. ⁵ From the time Potiphar appointed Joseph to take care of everything in his household and all that he owned, Yahweh blessed the people who lived in Potiphar's house because of Joseph. He also caused Potiphar's crops to grow well. ⁶ Potiphar allowed Joseph to take care of everything that he owned. Potiphar needed to decide only about the food he ate. He did not worry about anything else in his house.

Now Joseph was well built and handsome. ⁷ Because of that, after a while, his master's wife started to look fondly at Joseph. So one day she said to him, "Sleep with me!" ⁸ But he refused, saying to his master's wife, "Listen! My master is not concerned about anything in this house. He has appointed me to take care of everything that he owns. ⁹ No one in this household has more authority than I do. The only thing that he has not allowed me to have is you, because you are his wife! So how could I do this wicked thing that you are asking me to do? I would be sinning against God if I did that!" ¹⁰ She kept on asking Joseph day after day to sleep with her, but he refused. He would not even go near her.

¹¹ One day Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the other household servants were in the house. ¹² Potiphar's wife grabbed his clothing and said, "Sleep with me!" Joseph ran out of the house, but his clothing was still in her hand! ¹³ When she saw that he had run

outside leaving his clothing in her hand,¹⁴ she called the household servants. She said to them, "Look! This Hebrew man that my husband brought to us is insulting us! He came into where I was and tried to force me to sleep with him, but I screamed loudly.¹⁵ As soon as he heard me scream, he left his clothing with me and ran outside!"¹⁶ She kept the clothing beside her until her husband, Joseph's master, came home.¹⁷ Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew slave whom you brought here came into where I was and tried to force me to sleep with him!"¹⁸ As soon as I screamed loudly, he ran outside, leaving his clothing beside me!"¹⁹ When Joseph's master heard this story that his wife told him, and when she said, "This is how your slave treated me," he was very angry.²⁰ Joseph's master took Joseph and put him in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there.

²¹ But Yahweh was kind to Joseph and helped him because of his covenant with his ancestors; he caused the prison warden to be pleased with him.²² So the prison warden put Joseph in charge of all those who were in the prison, and in charge of all the work that was done there.²³ The warden was not concerned with anything that Joseph was taking care of, because Yahweh helped Joseph to do all his work well.

Chapter 40

¹ Some time later, two of the king of Egypt's officials did things that displeased him. One was his chief drink server and the other was his chief baker.² The king became angry with both of them.³ So he had them put in prison, in the house of the captain of the palace guards. That was the

place where Joseph was being kept.⁴ The two men were in prison for a long time. During that time, the captain of the palace guards appointed Joseph to bring them the things they needed.

⁵ One night the king's chief drink server and chief baker each had a dream. Each dream had a different meaning.

⁶ The next morning, when Joseph came to them, he saw that both of them were looking sad.⁷ So he asked them, "Why do you look so sad today?"⁸ One of them answered, "We both had dreams last night, but there is no one who can tell us the meaning of the dreams." Joseph said to them, "It is God who can tell the meaning of dreams. So tell me what you dreamed, and God will tell me the meaning."⁹ So the king's chief drink server told his dream to Joseph. He said, "In my dream I saw a grapevine in front of me.¹⁰ On the vine there were three branches. The branches budded, then they blossomed, and then they produced clusters of grapes.¹¹ I was holding the king's cup, so I took the ripe grapes and squeezed the juice into the cup. Then I gave the cup to the king to drink the juice."¹² God immediately told Joseph what the dream meant. So Joseph said to him, "This is the meaning of your dream: The three branches of the vine represent three days.¹³ Within three days the king will release you from prison. He will let you do the work that you did before. You will take cups of wine to the king as you did before, when you were his drink server.¹⁴ But when you are out of prison and everything goes well for you, please do not forget me.¹⁵ People took me away by force from the land where my fellow Hebrews live. I did nothing wrong there, and also while I have been here in Egypt, I have done nothing for which I deserved to be put in prison. So be kind to me and tell the king about me, so that he

will release me from this prison!”

¹⁶ When the chief baker heard that the meaning of the dream of the king’s drink server was very good for the chief drink server, he also said to Joseph, “I also had a dream. In the dream I was surprised to see three baskets of bread stacked on my head. ¹⁷ In the top basket there were many kinds of baked goods for the king, but birds were eating them from the top basket that was on my head!” ¹⁸ God again told Joseph what the dream meant, so he said, “The three baskets also represent three days. ¹⁹ Within three days the king will command that your head be cut off. Then your body will be hung on a tree, and vultures will come and eat your flesh.”

²⁰ The third day after that was the king’s birthday. On that day the king invited all his officials to celebrate his birthday. During the celebration, while they were all gathered there, the king summoned his chief drink server and chief baker from the prison. ²¹ He said that his chief drink server could have his previous job again, so once again he started to take cups of wine to the king. ²² But he commanded that the chief baker should be killed by being hanged, just as Joseph had said would happen when he told the two men the meaning of their dreams.

²³ But the chief drink server did not think about Joseph. Instead, he forgot to do what Joseph asked him to do.

Chapter 41

¹ Two complete years later, the king of Egypt had a dream. In the dream, he was standing alongside the Nile River. ² Suddenly seven healthy fat cows appeared. They started eating the grass that was on the riverbank. ³ Soon seven other cows,

unhealthy-looking and thin, came up behind them from the Nile River. They stood alongside the fat cows that were on the riverbank. ⁴ Then the unhealthy thin cows ate the seven healthy fat cows. And then the king woke up.

⁵ The king went to sleep again, and he had another dream. This time he saw seven heads of grain that were full of kernels of grain and ripe, and all growing on one stalk. ⁶ After that, the king saw that seven other heads of grain sprouted on that stalk. They were thin and had been dried up by the hot east wind. ⁷ Then the thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven ripe full heads. Then the king woke up. He realized that he had been dreaming.

⁸ But the next morning he was worried about the meaning of the dream. So he summoned all the magicians and wise men who lived in Egypt. He told them what he had dreamed, but none of them could tell him the meaning of the two dreams.

⁹ Then the chief drink server said to the king, “Now I remember something that I should have told you! I made a mistake by forgetting to tell it to you. ¹⁰ One time you were angry with two of us. So you put me and the chief baker in the prison in the house of the captain of the palace guards. ¹¹ While we were there, one night each of us had a dream, and the dreams had different meanings. ¹² There was a young Hebrew man there with us. He was a servant of the captain of the palace guards. We told him what we had dreamed, and he told us what our dreams meant. He told each of us the meaning of our dreams. ¹³ What happened after that was exactly the same as the meanings that he told us: You said I could have my previous job again, but the other man was killed by being hanged.”

¹⁴ When the king heard that, he told some servants to bring Joseph to him, and they quickly brought Joseph out of the prison. Joseph shaved and put on better clothes, and then he went and stood in front of the king. ¹⁵ The king said to Joseph, "I had two dreams, and no one can tell me what they mean. But someone told me that when you hear someone tell about a dream he has had, you can tell that person what the dream means." ¹⁶ But Joseph replied to the king, "No, I cannot do that. It is God who knows the meaning of dreams, but he will enable me to tell you their meaning, and they will mean something good."

¹⁷ The king said to Joseph, "In my first dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile River. ¹⁸ Suddenly seven healthy fat cows came up out of the river, and they started eating the grass that was on the riverbank. ¹⁹ Soon seven other cows, ugly and thin ones, came up behind them from the river. I never saw such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt! ²⁰ The thin ugly cows ate the seven fat cows that came up first. ²¹ But afterwards, no one would have known that the thin cows ate them, because they were just as ugly as they were before. Then I woke up.

²² Then I had another dream. I saw seven heads of grain. They were full of kernels of grain and ripe, and they were all growing on one stalk. ²³ Then to my surprise I saw seven other heads of grain that sprouted. They were thin and had been dried up by the hot east wind. ²⁴ The thin heads of grain swallowed the seven good heads. I told these dreams to the magicians, but none of them could explain to me what they meant."

²⁵ Then Joseph said to the king, "Both your dreams have the same meaning. God is revealing to you in your dreams what he is about to do. ²⁶ The seven healthy cows represent seven years. The seven good

heads of grain also represent seven years. The two dreams both have the same meaning. ²⁷ The seven thin ugly cows that came up behind them and the seven worthless heads of grain that were dried up by the hot east wind each represent seven years of famine. ²⁸ It will happen just as I have told you, because God has revealed to you what he is about to do. ²⁹ There will be seven years in which there will be plenty of food throughout the land of Egypt. ³⁰ Then there will be seven years of famine. Then people will forget all the years when there was plenty of food, because the famine that will come afterward will ruin the country. ³¹ The people will forget how plentiful food was previously, because the famine will be very terrible. ³² The reason God gave to you two dreams is that he has firmly decided that this will happen, and he will cause it to happen very soon.

³³ Now I suggest that you should choose a man who is wise and can make good decisions. I suggest that you appoint him to direct the affairs of the whole country. ³⁴ You should also appoint supervisors over the country, in order that they can arrange to collect one-fifth of all the grain that is harvested during the seven years when food is plentiful. ³⁵ They should collect this amount of grain during those seven years that are coming, when there will be plenty of food. Each of the cities should supervise and protect the food that is stored up. ³⁶ This grain should be kept so that it can be eaten during the seven years when there will be a famine here in Egypt, so that the people in this country will not die from hunger."

³⁷ The king and his officials thought that this would be a good plan. ³⁸ So the king said to them, "Can we find any other man like Joseph, a man to whom God has given his spirit?"

³⁹ Then the king said to Joseph, "Because God has revealed all this to you, it seems to me that there is no one who is as wise as you and who can decide wisely about things. ⁴⁰ So I will put you in charge of everything in my palace. All the people here in Egypt must obey what you command. Only because I am king will I have more authority than you."

⁴¹ Then the king said to Joseph, "I am now putting you in charge of the whole country of Egypt." ⁴² The king took from his finger the ring that had his seal on it, and he put it on Joseph's finger. He put robes made of fine linen on him, and he put a gold chain around his neck. ⁴³ Then he arranged for Joseph to ride around in the chariot that showed that he was the second most important man in the country. When Joseph rode in the chariot, men shouted to the people who were on the road in front of him, "Bow down!" So the Joseph went out to supervise this work all over Egypt.

⁴⁴ The king said to Joseph, "I am the king, but no one in the whole land of Egypt will do anything if you do not permit them to do it." ⁴⁵ The king gave Joseph a new name, Zaphenath-Paneah. He also gave him Asenath to be his wife. She was the daughter of Potiphara, who was a priest in a temple in the city of On. In this way Joseph became known through all the land of Egypt.

⁴⁶ Joseph was thirty years old when he started to work for the king of Egypt. To do his work, he left the king's palace and traveled throughout Egypt. ⁴⁷ During the next seven years, the land produced abundant crops, so there was plenty of food. ⁴⁸ As Joseph supervised them, his helpers collected one-fifth of all the grain that was produced during those years, and stored it in the cities. In each city, he had his helpers store up the grain that was grown

in the fields that surrounded that city. ⁴⁹ Joseph had them store up a huge amount of grain. It looked as plentiful as the sand on the seashore. There was so much grain that after a while they stopped keeping records of how much grain was stored, because there was more grain than they could measure.

⁵⁰ Before the seven years of famine started, Joseph's wife Asenath gave birth to two sons. ⁵¹ Joseph named the first one Manasseh, which sounds like the Hebrew word that means "forget," because he said, "God has caused me to forget all my troubles and all my father's family." ⁵² He named his second son Ephraim, which means "to have children," because he said, "God has given me children here in this land where I have suffered."

⁵³ Finally the seven years in which there was plenty of food ended. ⁵⁴ Then the seven years of famine started, just as Joseph had predicted. There was also a famine in all the other nearby lands, but although the crops did not grow, there was food everywhere in Egypt, because of the grain they had stored up in the cities. ⁵⁵ When all the people of Egypt had eaten all of their own food and were still hungry, they begged the king for food. So the king told all the people of Egypt, "Go to Joseph and do what he tells you to do."

⁵⁶ When the famine was very bad over the whole country, Joseph ordered his helpers to open the storehouses. Then they sold the grain in the storehouses to the people of Egypt, because the famine was very severe all over Egypt. ⁵⁷ People from many nearby countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was very severe everywhere.

Chapter 42

¹ When someone told Jacob that there was grain in Egypt that people could buy, he said to his sons, "Why do you just sit there looking at each other? We need some grain!" ² He said to them, "Someone told me that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, in order that we can stay alive!"

³ So Joseph's ten older brothers went down to Egypt to buy some grain. ⁴ But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's younger brother, to go with the others, because he was afraid that something terrible might happen to him like what happened to Joseph. ⁵ So Jacob's sons went down from Canaan to Egypt to buy grain, and others went too, because there was a famine in Canaan also.

⁶ At that time Joseph was the governor of Egypt. He was the one who sold grain to people who came from all over Egypt and from many other countries to buy grain. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they prostrated themselves before him with their faces to the ground. ⁷ As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them. But he pretended that he did not know them. He spoke harshly to them, saying, "Where do you come from?" One of them replied, "We have come from Canaan land, to buy some grain."

⁸ Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. ⁹ Then Joseph remembered what he had dreamed about them many years previously. But he decided not to tell them yet that he was their younger brother. He said to them, "You are spies! You have come to find out whether we will be able to defend ourselves if you attack us!" ¹⁰ One of them replied, "No, sir! We have come to buy grain. ¹¹ We are all sons of one man. We are honest men, not spies." ¹² He said to

them, "I do not believe you! You have come just to see whether we would be able to defend ourselves if we were attacked!"

¹³ But one of them replied, "No, that is not true! Originally there were twelve of us who were brothers, the sons of one man. Our youngest brother is with our father. One of them is no longer alive. "

¹⁴ Joseph replied, "You are lying! I think it is just as I told you. You are spies! ¹⁵ But this is how I will find out whether what you are saying is true. I think that as surely as the king lives, you are spies. So you will not leave this place until your youngest brother comes here! ¹⁶ Send one of your group to go and get your younger brother and bring him here. I will put the rest of you in prison, in order that I may test what you have said to find out whether what you are telling me is true. If the one who goes does not bring your younger brother here, then, just as surely as the king lives, it will be clear that you are lying and that you are spies." ¹⁷ Then Joseph put them all in prison for three days.

¹⁸ On the third day after that, Joseph went to the prison and said to them, "I am a man who fears that God will punish me if I do not do what I promise. So do what I tell you, and I will spare your lives. ¹⁹ If you are honest men, let one of you brothers stay here in prison, and the rest of you can take some grain back to your families who are very hungry because of the famine. ²⁰ But if you come back here again, you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that you can prove that what you told me is true, and as a result I will not have you executed." So they agreed to do that.

²¹ They said to each other, "It is surely because of what we did to our younger brother that we are being punished! We saw that he was very distressed when he pleaded with us not to harm him. But we

did not pay any attention to him, and that is why we are having this trouble!”

²² Reuben said to them, “I told you not to harm the boy, but you did not pay attention to what I said! Now we are being paid back for killing him!”

²³ While they were talking with Joseph, they were speaking to an interpreter, but when they said these things among themselves, they were speaking in their own language. They did not know that Joseph could understand their language and that he understood what they were saying. ²⁴ Because of what they said, Joseph realized that they admitted that what they had done to him many years previously was wrong. But he knew that he could not keep from crying, and he did not want them to see him crying, so he left them and went outside the room and began to cry. But then he returned to them and talked to them again. Then he took Simeon, and while they were watching, he told his servants to tie him up. He left Simeon in the prison and told the others that they could go.

²⁵ Joseph told his servants to fill the men’s sacks with grain, but he also told them to put the money that each one had paid for the grain in the top of his sack. He also told them to give them food to eat along the way. And his brothers received the food from Joseph’s servants. ²⁶ His older brothers loaded the sacks of grain on their donkeys and left.

²⁷ At the place where they stopped to sleep that night, one of them opened his sack to get some grain for his donkey. He was amazed to see his money in the top of the sack. ²⁸ He exclaimed to his brothers, “Someone has returned my money! Here it is in my sack!” They started shaking with fear, and said to each other, “What is this that God has done to us?”

²⁹ When they returned to their father in Canaan land, they told him all that had happened to them. One of them said, ³⁰ “The man who governs the whole land of Egypt talked very harshly to us. He acted toward us as though we were spying on his country. ³¹ But we told him, ‘We are honest men! We are not spies. ³² Originally there were twelve of us who were brothers, the sons of one father. One has died, and our youngest brother is with our father in Canaan.’ ³³ The man who is the governor of the land did not believe us, so he said to us, ‘This is how I will know if you are truly honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me. Then the rest of you can take some grain for your families that are starving from hunger and go. ³⁴ But when you return, bring your youngest brother to me, in order that I will know that you are not spies, but instead, that you are honest men. Then I will release your brother for you. And then you can buy whatever you want in this country.’”

³⁵ As they were emptying their sacks, they were surprised that in each man’s sack was his pouch of money! When they and their father saw all the pouches of money, they were frightened. ³⁶ Their father Jacob said to them, “You have caused two of my children to be taken from me! Joseph is dead, and Simeon is gone! And now you want to take Benjamin from me! It is I who am suffering because of all these things that are happening!”

³⁷ Reuben said to his father, “I will bring Benjamin back to you. Let me take care of him. If I do not bring Benjamin back to you, you may kill both of my sons.” ³⁸ But Jacob said, “No, I will not let my son go down there with you. His older brother is dead, and he is the only one of my wife Rachel’s sons who is left! If something harms him while you are traveling, you would cause me, a gray-haired old man, to

die because of sorrow.”

Chapter 43

¹ The famine in Canaan got worse. ² Finally, when Jacob and his family had eaten all the grain they had brought from Egypt, Jacob said to them, “Go back to Egypt and buy some more grain for us!”

³ But Judah said to him, “The man who sold us the grain warned us sternly, ‘I will not let you see me again if you come and your younger brother is not with you.’ ⁴ So if you will send our younger brother with us, we will go down to Egypt and buy some grain for you. ⁵ But if you will not send him, we will not go down there, because that man said to us, ‘I will not let you see me again if your younger brother is not with you.’” ⁶ Jacob asked, “Why did you cause me to have this trouble by telling the man that you had a younger brother?” ⁷ One of them replied, “The man asked about us and about our family. He said, ‘Is your father still living? Do you have another brother?’ We had to answer his questions. We could not know that he would say, ‘The next time that you come down here, bring your brother with you!’”

⁸ Then Judah said to his father Jacob, “Send the boy with me, and we will go immediately, in order that we and you and our children may get grain and not die from hunger. ⁹ I myself will guarantee that he will return. You can require me to do what I am promising. If I do not bring him back to you safely, you can say forever that I am to blame. ¹⁰ If we had not wasted so much time, by now we could have gone there and returned two times!”

¹¹ Then their father Jacob said to them, “If there is no other way, do this: Put in your sacks some of the best things that are

grown in this land, and take them down to the man as a gift. Take some balm and honey and spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts, and almonds. ¹² Take twice as much money as you took the previous time, because you must return the silver that someone put in the tops of your sacks. Perhaps it was a mistake that it was put in your sacks. ¹³ Take your youngest brother and go back to that man. ¹⁴ I will pray that God Almighty will cause that man to act mercifully toward you, so that he will let your other brother, as well as Benjamin, come back here with you. But as for me, if my sons are taken from me, then I will not have my sons!”

¹⁵ So the men took the gifts that Jacob said that they should take, and twice the amount of money that the grain would cost. They also took Benjamin. They went down quickly to Egypt, and they stood in front of Joseph. ¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the man who was in charge of things in his house, “Take these men to my house. Slaughter an animal and prepare a meal, because I want them to eat with me at noon.” He told his servant in what order they were to be seated.

¹⁷ The man did as Joseph said; he took them to Joseph’s house. ¹⁸ But they were afraid because he was taking them to Joseph’s house. They were thinking, “He is taking us here because of the silver that was put in our sacks the first time that we came here. While we are eating, he will have his servants attack us and seize us and cause us to become his slaves, and also take our donkeys.”

¹⁹ They went with the man who was in charge of things in Joseph’s house. When they arrived at the entrance of the house, ²⁰ one of them said to him, “Please, sir, listen to me. We came down here previously and bought some grain. ²¹ But at the

place where we stopped for the night as we were returning home, we opened our sacks. We were astonished to see that in the top of each of our sacks was the exact amount of silver that we had paid for the grain! So we have brought it back with us.²² We have also brought more silver with us to buy more grain. We do not know who put the silver in our sacks.”

²³ The man replied, “Relax! Do not worry about it! I received the silver that you brought. Your God, the God your father worships, must have put it in your sacks.” And then he brought Simeon to them from the prison.

²⁴ Then he took them into Joseph’s house. He gave them water to wash their feet and gave them food for their donkeys.²⁵ He told them that they were going to eat with Joseph at noon. So the men prepared their gifts to give to Joseph when he arrived.

²⁶ When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts that they had brought into the house. Then they bowed down to the ground in front of him.²⁷ He asked them if they were well, and then he asked, “How is the health of your old father, the one that you told me about? Is he still living?”²⁸ One of them replied, “Yes, your servant, our father, is still alive, and he is well.” Then again they bowed down in front of him.

²⁹ Then he saw his younger brother Benjamin, his own mother’s other son. He asked them, “Is this your youngest brother, the one whom you told me about?” After they said “Yes,” he said to Benjamin, “Young man, I pray that God will act kindly toward you.”³⁰ Joseph quickly left the room. He realized that he was about to cry because he was full of emotion about his younger brother. He went into his private room and cried there.

³¹ Then, after he washed the tears from his face, he came out, and controlling his emo-

tions, he said to the servants, “Serve the food!”

³² Now the people of Egypt thought that it was disgraceful for them to eat with Hebrews, so the servants served food to Joseph by himself, and served the other people of Egypt who ate with him by themselves, and they served Joseph’s older brothers and younger brother by themselves.³³ His brothers were astonished to see that their seats were arranged according to their ages, from the youngest to the oldest!³⁴ When their portions of food were served to them from Joseph’s table, Benjamin’s portion was five times as much as anyone else’s portion! So they ate food and drank wine with Joseph until they became very cheerful.

Chapter 44

¹ When his brothers were ready to return home, Joseph said to the man who was in charge of things in his house, “Fill the sacks of those men with as much grain as they can carry on their donkeys. And put in the top of each man’s sack the silver that he paid for the grain.”² Then put my silver cup in the top of the youngest brother’s sack, along with the silver that he paid for the grain.” So the servant did what Joseph told him to do.

³ The next morning at dawn the men were allowed to leave for home with their donkeys.⁴ When they had not gone far from the city, Joseph said to the servant in charge of things in his house, “Pursue those men immediately. When you catch up to them, say to them, ‘We did good things for you! Why have you paid us back by doing something bad to us?’⁵ You have stolen the cup that my master drinks from! It is the cup that he uses to find out things that nobody knows! What you did

was very wicked!”

⁶ When the servant caught up with them, he told them what Joseph had told him to say. ⁷ But one of them replied to him, “Sir, why do you say such things? We are your servants, and we would never do anything like that! ⁸ We even brought back to you from Canaan the silver that we found inside the tops of our sacks! So we certainly would not steal silver or gold from your master’s house! ⁹ If you discover that any of us has that cup, you can execute him, and the rest of us will become your slaves.”

¹⁰ The man replied, “I will do what you say. But the one who has the cup will not be executed. Instead, he will become my slave, and the rest of you may return home.”

¹¹ Each of the men quickly lowered his sack down from the donkey to the ground and opened it. ¹² Then the servant started to search for the cup in each sack. He started with the oldest brother’s sack and ended with the youngest one’s sack. He found the cup in Benjamin’s sack and showed it to them. ¹³ The brothers tore their clothes because they were so dismayed. They loaded the sacks on the donkeys again and returned to the city.

¹⁴ When Judah and his older and younger brothers entered Joseph’s house, Joseph was still there. The servant told Joseph what had happened. Then the brothers threw themselves down on the ground in front of Joseph. ¹⁵ He said to them, “Why did you do this? Do you not know that a man like me can find out things that nobody knows?”

¹⁶ Judah replied, “Sir, what can we say? How can we prove that we are innocent? God has paid us back for the sins we committed many years ago. So now we will become your slaves—both we and the one in whose sack the cup was found.” ¹⁷ But

Joseph replied, “No, I could never do anything like that. Only the man in whose sack the cup was found will become my slave. The rest of you can return to your father peacefully.”

¹⁸ Then Judah came near to Joseph and said, “Sir, please let me say something to you. You are equal to the king himself, so you could command that I be executed; but do not be angry with me for speaking to you. ¹⁹ You asked us, ‘Is your father still living, and do you have another brother?’ ²⁰ We answered, ‘Our father is alive, but he is an old man. He has a young son who was born after our father became an old man. That son had an older brother, who is now dead. So the youngest son is the only one of his mother’s sons who is still alive, and his father loves him very much.’ ²¹ Then you said to us, ‘The next time you come here, bring your younger brother down to me, so that I can see him.’ ²² We said to you, ‘No, we cannot do that, because the boy cannot leave his father. If he leaves his father, his father will die because of sorrow.’ ²³ But you told us, ‘If your youngest brother does not come down with you, I will not let you see me again!’ ²⁴ When we returned to our father, we told him what you said. ²⁵ Months later our father said, ‘Go back to Egypt and buy some more grain!’ ²⁶ But we said, ‘We cannot go back by ourselves. We will go only if our youngest brother is with us. We will not be able to see the man who sells grain if our youngest brother is not with us.’ ²⁷ Our father replied, ‘You know that my wife Rachel gave birth to two sons for me. ²⁸ One of them disappeared, and I said, ‘A wild animal has surely torn him to pieces.’ And I have not seen him since then. ²⁹ If you take this other one from me, too, and something harms him, you would cause me, an old gray-haired man, to die because of my sorrow.’

³⁰ So please listen. My father will remain alive only if his youngest son remains alive. ³¹ If he sees that the boy is not with us when we return to him, he will die. We will cause our gray-haired father to die because of his sorrow. ³² I guaranteed that the boy would return safely. I told him, ‘You can require me to do what I am promising. If I do not bring him back to you, you can say forever that I am to blame for not bringing him back to you.’

³³ So, please let me remain here as your slave instead of my youngest brother, and let the boy return home with his other older brothers. ³⁴ I cannot return to my father if the boy is not with me! I do not want to see how miserable my father would become!”

Chapter 45

¹ Joseph was not able to control his feelings any longer. He did not want to cry in front of his servants, so he said to them loudly, “All of you go outside!” After they went outside, there were no Egyptians there with Joseph when he told his brothers who he was. ² He cried so loudly that even the people outside heard it, and even the people in the king’s palace heard it. ³ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is our father still alive?” But his brothers were not able to reply, because they were frightened because of what he said. ⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come close to me!” When they came closer to him, he said, “I am your brother Joseph! I am the one you sold to traders who brought me here to Egypt! ⁵ But now, do not be distressed, and do not be angry with yourselves for having sold me as a slave. It was God who sent me here ahead of you in order to keep you from dying in the famine. ⁶ There has been a

famine in this country for two years, and it will continue for five more years. During this time, no one will plow the ground, and there will be no crops to harvest. ⁷ God sent me here ahead of you to keep you from starving, and to make sure that your descendants would survive. ⁸ Therefore, it was not you who sent me here; it was God who sent me here! He has caused me to become like a father to the king. I am in charge of everything in his palace and the governor of everyone in Egypt! ⁹ Now return to my father quickly and say to him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: “God has caused me to become the governor over the whole land of Egypt. Come down to me immediately! ¹⁰ You can live in the region of Goshen. You and your children and your grandchildren, your sheep and goats and cattle, and everything that you own, will be near me. ¹¹ Since there will be five more years of famine, I will make sure that you have food. If you do not come here, you and your family and all of your servants will starve. ”’

¹² If you—and Benjamin, too—look closely at me, all of you will see that it is really I, Joseph, who am speaking to you. ¹³ Go and tell my father about how much honor I have here in Egypt. And tell him about everything else that you have seen. Bring my father down here quickly!”

¹⁴ Then he threw his arms around his younger brother Benjamin’s neck and cried. And Benjamin hugged him and cried. ¹⁵ Then he kissed his older brothers on their cheeks, and he cried. After that, his brothers started to talk with him.

¹⁶ Someone went to the palace and told the news that Joseph’s brothers had come. The king and all his officials were pleased. ¹⁷ The king said to Joseph, “Tell your brothers this: ‘Put loads of grain on your animals and return to Canaan land. ¹⁸ Then bring your father and your families back

here. I will give you the best land in Egypt, and you will have the best food in the land to eat.’¹⁹ Also tell this to your brothers: ‘Take some carts from Egypt to carry your children and your wives, and get them and your father and come back here quickly.’²⁰ Do not worry about bringing your possessions, because the best things in Egypt will be yours. Because of that, you will not need to bring things from Canaan.”

²¹ Jacob’s sons did what the king commanded. Joseph gave them carts and food to eat along the way, as the king had ordered. ²² To each of them he gave new clothes, but he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five sets of new clothes to Benjamin! ²³ This is what he sent to his father: Ten male donkeys, loaded with some of the best things that came from Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and other food for his father’s trip to Egypt. ²⁴ Then he sent his brothers on their way, saying to them “Do not quarrel along the way!”

²⁵ So the brothers left Egypt and came to their father Jacob in Canaan land. ²⁶ One of them told him, “Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is the governor over all of Egypt!” Jacob was extremely astonished; he could not believe that it was true. ²⁷ But they told him everything that Joseph had said to them, and Jacob saw the carts that Joseph had sent to carry him and his family and possessions to Egypt. Then Jacob’s shock ended. ²⁸ He said, “What you have said is enough to convince me! My son Joseph is still alive, and I will go and see him before I die!”

Chapter 46

¹ So Jacob left, taking with him all his family and possessions. When they arrived

at Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to God, the one whom his father Isaac worshiped. ² That night, God called to Jacob in a vision, saying, “Jacob! Jacob!” He replied, “I am here!” ³ God said, “I am God, the one your father worshiped. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, because I will give you many descendants, and they will become a great nation there. ⁴ I will go down to Egypt with you, and later I will bring your descendants back to Canaan again. And Joseph will be with you when you die.”

⁵ So Jacob left Beersheba, and his sons took their father, their wives, and their children, in the carts that the king had sent for them to travel in. ⁶ In this way, Jacob and all his family went to Egypt. They took with them the livestock and all the other possessions that they had acquired in Canaan. ⁷ Jacob went to Egypt with all his sons, his daughters, grandsons, and granddaughters—his whole family.

⁸ This is a list of the names of the members of Jacob’s family who went with him to Egypt:

Reuben, Jacob’s oldest son;

⁹ Reuben’s sons Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi;

¹⁰ Simeon and his sons Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul, who was the son of woman who came from the Canaanite people group;

¹¹ Levi and his sons Gershon, Kohath, and Merari;

¹² Judah and his sons, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (his other sons, Er, and Onan, had died in Canaan land);

the two sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul;

¹³ Issachar and his sons Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron;

¹⁴ Zebulon and his sons Sered, Elon, and Jahleel

¹⁵ These were the sons of Jacob and Leah, who were born in Paddan Aram, in addition to Dinah his daughter. There were thirty-three sons and daughters altogether.

¹⁶ Gad and his sons Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli;

¹⁷ Asher and his sons Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah; and their sister Serah;

Beriah's sons: Heber and Malkiel;

¹⁸ (Those were the children and grandchildren of Jacob and Zilpah, the slave woman whom Laban had given to his daughter Leah. These were sixteen people altogether.)

¹⁹ Joseph and Benjamin, the sons of Jacob's wife Rachel;

²⁰ (Ephraim and Manasseh were Joseph's two sons. They did not go down to Egypt because they had been born in Egypt. They were sons of Asenath, the daughter of On, who was the priest in the temple in the city of On.)

²¹ Benjamin and his sons Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard;

²² (These were the sons and grandsons of Rachel and Jacob. They were fourteen people altogether.)

²³ Dan and his son Hushim;

²⁴ Naphtali and his sons Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.

²⁵ (These were the sons and grandsons of Jacob and Bilhah, the slave girl whom Laban had given to his daughter Rachel. They were seven people altogether.)

²⁶ Altogether there were sixty-six descendants of Jacob who went to Egypt with him. That number does not include his sons' wives. ²⁷ Including Jacob and Joseph and Joseph's two sons who were born in

Egypt, there were seventy members of Jacob's family when they were all there in Egypt.

²⁸ Jacob sent Judah to go ahead of the rest of them to talk with Joseph and to ask for directions on how to travel to Goshen. Then Judah returned to the rest of his family and they all traveled to the region of Goshen. When they arrived there, ²⁹ Joseph got his chariot ready and went to Goshen to meet his father. When Joseph arrived, he threw his arms around his father's neck and cried for a long time. ³⁰ Jacob said to Joseph, "I have seen you, and now I know that you are still alive! So I am ready to die."

³¹ Then Joseph said to his brothers and to the rest of his father's family, "I will go to the king and say to him, 'My brothers and my father and the rest of his family, who were living in Canaan land, have all come to me. ³² The men are all shepherds. They take care of their livestock, and they have brought with them their sheep, goats, and cattle, and everything else that they own.' ³³ When the king summons you and asks, 'What work do you do?' ³⁴ answer by saying, 'From the time when we were young, we have taken care of livestock, just as our ancestors did.' If you tell him that, he will let you live in the region of Goshen." Joseph told them to say that because the people of Egypt despised shepherds.

Chapter 47

¹⁻² Joseph chose five of his brothers to go with him to talk to the king. He introduced them to the king, and then he said, "My father and my brothers have come from Canaan land. They have brought all their sheep, goats, cattle, and everything else that they own, and they are living now in region of Goshen." ³ The king asked the

brothers, "What work do you do?" They replied to the king, "We are shepherds, just as our ancestors were."⁴ They also said to him, "We have come here to live for a while in this land, because the famine is very severe in Canaan, and our animals have no pasture there. So now, please let us live in the region of Goshen."

⁵ The king said to Joseph, "So your father and brothers have come to you." ⁶ They can live wherever you want in all of Egypt. Give your father and your brothers the best part of the land. They can live in Goshen. And if you know that any of them have any special ability to work with livestock, have them be in charge of my own livestock, too."

⁷ Then Joseph brought his father Jacob into the palace and introduced him to the king. Jacob asked God to bless the king. ⁸ Then the king asked Jacob, "How old are you?" ⁹ Jacob replied, "I have been traveling around for 130 years. I have not lived as long as my ancestors, but my life has been full of troubles." ¹⁰ Then Jacob again asked God to bless the king and left him.

¹¹ That is how Joseph enabled his father and brothers to start living in Egypt. As the king had commanded, he gave them property in the best part of the land, in Goshen, which is now called Rameses. ¹² Joseph also provided food for all his father's family. The amounts that he gave them were according to how many children each of them had.

¹³ There was no food growing in the whole country because the famine was very severe. The people of Egypt and Canaan became weak because they did not have enough food to eat. ¹⁴ Joseph received all the money that the people in Egypt and Canaan paid for the grain he sold them, and he brought it to the king's palace. ¹⁵ When the people of Egypt and Canaan had spent all their money for grain, they all

kept coming to Joseph and saying, "Please give us some food! If you do not give us grain, we will die! We have used all our money to buy food, and we have no money left!" ¹⁶ Joseph replied, "Since your money is all gone, bring me your livestock. If you do that, I will sell you food in exchange for your livestock." ¹⁷ So they brought their livestock to Joseph. He gave them food in exchange for their horses, their sheep and goats, their cattle, and their donkeys.

¹⁸ When that year was ended, the next year they came to him and said, "We cannot hide this from you: We have no more money, and now all our cattle belong to you. We have only our bodies and our land to give to you. We have nothing else left." ¹⁹ If you do not give us some food, we will die! If you do not give us seeds, our fields will become useless. Buy us and our land in exchange for food. Then we will be the king's slaves, and he will own the land. Give us seeds so that we can plant and grow food, in order that we will not die, and in order that our land will not become like a desert."

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the farms in Egypt for the king. The people of Egypt each sold their land to him because the famine was very severe and they had no other way to buy food. So all the farms became the king's farms. ²¹ As a result, Joseph caused all the people from one border of the country to the other to become the king's slaves. ²² But he did not buy the priests' land, because they received their food from the king regularly. That is the reason they did not sell their land to him.

²³ Joseph said to the people, "Listen to me! Today I have bought you and your land for the king. So here are seeds for you so that you can plant them in the ground. ²⁴ But when you harvest the crop, you must give one-fifth of the crop to the king. The

rest of the crop you can keep to be seed to plant in the fields and to be food for you and your children and for everyone else in your household to eat.”²⁵ They replied, “You have saved our lives! We want you to be pleased with us. And we will be the king’s slaves.”

²⁶ So Joseph made a law about all the land in Egypt, stating that one-fifth of the crops that are harvested belongs to the king. That law still exists. Only the land that belonged to the priests did not become the king’s land.

²⁷ Jacob and his family started to live in Egypt, in the region of Goshen. They acquired property there. Many children were born to them there. As a result, their population increased greatly.

²⁸ Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years. Altogether he lived 147 years.²⁹ When it was almost time for him to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, “If I have pleased you, put your hand between my thighs to solemnly promise that you will be faithful to me as your father and do what I am now trusting you to do: When I die, do not bury me here in Egypt.³⁰ Instead, when I die and join my ancestors who have died previously, take my body out of Egypt, and bury it in Canaan where they are buried.” Joseph replied, “I will do what you have said.”³¹ Jacob said, “Swear to me that you will do it!” So Joseph swore to do it. Then Jacob bowed down as he worshiped God, near the head of his bed.

Chapter 48

¹ Some time after this, someone told Joseph, “Your father is ill.” When Joseph heard that, he took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to see his father.² When someone told Jacob, “Look, your son Joseph has come to see you!” Jacob,

also called Israel, made an effort and sat up on the bed, even though it was difficult for him to do that.³ He said to Joseph, “When I was at Luz in the land of Canaan, God Almighty appeared to me. He blessed me⁴ and said to me, ‘I am going to enable you to become the father of many children. You will have many descendants, and they will become many people groups. And I will give this land to your descendants to possess forever.’

⁵ And now I will consider that your two sons, who were born to you here in Egypt before I came here, belong to me. Ephraim and Manasseh will be my sons, and they will inherit my possessions, just like my sons Reuben and Simeon and the others will.⁶ If you later become the father of any more children, they will not be considered to be my children, but instead as my grandchildren. They will receive as part of what they inherit some of the same land that is in the territory that their brothers will inherit.⁷ Many years ago, as I was returning from Paddan Aram, your mother Rachel sadly died in the land of Canaan, while we were still traveling, not far from the town of Ephrath. So I buried her body there alongside the road to Ephrath” (which is now called Bethlehem).

⁸ When Jacob saw Joseph’s sons, he asked, “Who are these boys?”⁹ Joseph replied to his father, “They are the sons that God has given to me here in Egypt.” Jacob said, “Bring them close to me so that I can bless them.”¹⁰ Jacob was almost blind because he was very old. He could not see well. So Joseph brought his sons close to his father, and Jacob kissed them and hugged them.¹¹ Jacob said to Joseph, “I did not expect to see your face again, but look at this! God has allowed me to see you, and he has allowed me to see your children, too!”

¹² Joseph took the boys from Jacob’s knees.

Then he bowed down with his face to the ground. ¹³ Then Joseph took both of the boys, putting Ephraim on his right side toward Jacob's left hand, and putting Manasseh on his left side toward Jacob's right hand, and brought them close to Jacob. ¹⁴ But Jacob did not do what Joseph wanted him to do. Instead, he reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, even though he was the younger son. He crossed his arms and put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the older son. ¹⁵ Then he blessed Joseph and his sons, saying, "My grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac conducted their lives as God desired, and to this very day God has led me and taken care of me as a shepherd leads and cares for his sheep. ¹⁶ The angel whom he sent has kept me from being harmed in any way.

I pray that God will bless these boys.

I pray that people will think about me and my ancestors, Abraham and Isaac, because of what God does for them.

I pray that they will have many descendants who will live all over the earth."

¹⁷ When Joseph saw that his father had placed his right hand on Ephraim's head and not on Manasseh's head, he was distressed. So he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ Joseph said to him, "My father, that is not right! The one on whom you put your left hand is my older son. Put your right hand on his head." ¹⁹ But his father refused, saying, "I know that, my son; I know what I am doing. Manasseh's descendants will also become a people group, and they will become important. But his younger brother's descendants will become greater than his will. His descendants will become many nations." ²⁰ So he blessed them both on that day, saying, "The people in Israel will use

your names when they bless people. They will say, 'We pray that God will help you as he helped Ephraim and Manasseh.'" In that way, Jacob said that Ephraim would become more important than Manasseh.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Joseph, "I am about to die. But I know that God will help you. Some day he will take your descendants back to the land of their ancestors. ²² It is to you, who stands above your brothers that I will give the fertile hill in the area of Shechem. I captured that land from the Amor people group, fighting them with my sword and my bow and arrows."

Chapter 49

¹ Jacob summoned all his sons and said to them, ² "Gather around close to me in order that I can tell you what will happen in the future. My sons, come and listen to me. I am your father, Jacob.

³ Reuben, you are my oldest son. You were born when I was young and energetic. When I became a grown man, you were my first child. You are prouder and stronger than all the rest of my sons. ⁴ But you were as unstable as ocean waves. So now you will not be my most important son, because you climbed up onto my bed and slept with my concubine. That caused me, your father, to have great shame.

⁵ Simeon and Levi, you two brothers have both acted like criminals. You use your swords to act violently. ⁶ I do not want to be with you when you make evil plans. I am too honorable to join you in your meetings, because you killed people when you became very angry, and you hamstringed oxen just to have fun.

⁷ God says, 'I will curse them for being very angry, for acting very cruelly when they were very furious. I will scatter their

descendants throughout Israel land.'

⁸ Judah, your older and younger brothers will praise you. They will bow down before you, because you will thoroughly defeat your enemies.

⁹ Judah is like a young lion that has returned to its den satisfied after eating the animals that it has killed. He is like a lion that lies down and stretches out after eating; no one would dare to disturb it.

¹⁰ There will always be a ruler from the descendants of Judah. Each one will hold a scepter to show that he has authority as a king. He will do that until nations bring tribute to him and show that they will obey him.

¹¹ The grapevines of his descendants will produce grapes very abundantly. As a result, they will not object to tying their young donkeys to the grapevines in order that they can eat the leaves of the grapevines. Wine will be very plentiful, with the result that they will wash their clothes in wine; they will wash their cloaks in wine that is as red as blood. ¹² Their eyes will be red because of drinking too much wine, but their teeth will be very white because of drinking much milk from the cows.

¹³ Zebulun, your descendants will live by the seashore where there will be a safe harbor for ships. Their land will extend north as far as the city of Sidon.

¹⁴ Issachar, your descendants will be like strong donkeys that are lying down between two groups of sheep. so tired that they cannot get up! ¹⁵ They will see that their resting place is good and that the land pleases them very much. But they will bend their backs to carry heavy loads and be forced to work for others.

¹⁶ Dan, although your tribe will be small, your leaders will rule their people just as the leaders of other tribes of Israel will

rule their people. ¹⁷ Your descendants will be like snakes at the side of a road, like poisonous snakes lying beside a path. They will strike the heels of horses that pass by, causing the riders to fall backwards as the horses rear up on their hind legs."

¹⁸ Then Jacob prayed, "Yahweh, I am waiting for you to rescue me from my enemies."

¹⁹ Then Jacob continued telling his sons what would happen in the future. He said, "Gad, your tribe will be attacked by a group of bandits, but your tribe will pursue and attack them.

²⁰ Asher, your descendants will eat good tasting food; they will produce food that is delicious enough for kings to eat.

²¹ Naphtali, your descendants will be like deer that run free, deer that have beautiful fawns.

²² Joseph, you will have many descendants. Their children will be as many as the fruit on a vine near a spring of water, whose branches extend over a wall.

²³ Their enemies will attack them fiercely, and shoot at them with bows and arrows and pursue them. ²⁴ But they will hold their bows steady and their arms will remain strong, because of the power of my mighty God, because of Yahweh, who guides and provides for me, as a shepherd guides and provides for his sheep. The people of Israel will ask Yahweh to protect them, as people take refuge on top of a high rock.

²⁵ God, the one whom I worship, will help your descendants. God Almighty will bless them by sending them rain from the sky and by giving them water from deep below the ground. He will give them many children and will nourish them.

²⁶ The blessings that I want God to give you are great ones. They are greater than the blessings that come from the eternal

mountains, than the ones that come from the everlasting hills. Joseph, I pray that these blessings will be given to you, because you are the leader of your brothers.

²⁷ Benjamin, your descendants will be like vicious wolves. In the morning they will kill their enemies like a wolf devours its prey, and in the evening they will divide among their warriors the spoils that they seized from their enemies.”

²⁸ Those twelve sons are the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. That is what their father said to them as he blessed them, telling to each one words that were right for him.

²⁹ Then Jacob said to his sons, “I will soon die and join my ancestors who have already died. Bury my body where some of my ancestors are buried, in the cave that is in the field that was bought from Ephron, who belonged to the Heth people group. ³⁰ The field of Machpelah, was east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought it from Ephron to use as a burial place. ³¹ That is where they buried him and his wife Sarah. That is where they buried my father Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And that is where I buried my wife Leah. ³² That field and the cave in it were bought from the Heth people group; so that is where I want you to bury me.”

³³ When Jacob finished giving those instructions to his sons, he lay down on his bed again. Then he stopped breathing and died.

Chapter 50

¹ Joseph fell on his father’s face and he cried over him and kissed him. ² Joseph commanded his servants who prepared the dead for burial to embalm his father’s body. ³ It took forty days to embalm Ja-

cob’s body, because that is the amount of time that was always required for them to embalm a body. The people of Egypt cried for seventy days because of Jacob’s death. ⁴ When the time of mourning was finished, Joseph said to the king’s officials, “If you are pleased with me, please take this message to the king: ⁵ ‘When my father was about to die, he told me to solemnly promise that I would bury his body in Canaan land, in the tomb that he himself had prepared. So please let me go up to Canaan and bury my father’s body. Then I will return.’”

⁶ After they gave the king the message, he replied, “Tell Joseph, ‘Go up and bury your father’s body, as you swore that you would do.’” ⁷ So Joseph went up to Canaan to bury his father’s body. All of the king’s officials, all the king’s advisors, and all the elders in Egypt went with him. ⁸ His family’s small children and their sheep and goats and their cattle stayed in the region of Goshen. But all the rest of Joseph’s family and his brothers and his father’s family went with him. ⁹ Men riding in chariots and on horses also went along. It was a huge group.

¹⁰ They went to the east side of the Jordan River and arrived at Atad. There was a place there where people threshed the grain to separate the wheat from the chaff. There they mourned loudly for Jacob for a long time. Joseph performed mourning ceremonies for his father for seven days. ¹¹ When the Canaan people group who lived there saw them mourning like that, they said, “This is a sad mourning place for the people of Egypt!” So they named the place Abel Mizraim, which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean “mourning of the Egyptians.”

¹² Then Jacob’s sons did for him what their father had commanded. ¹³ They crossed the Jordan River and carried Jacob’s body

into Canaan land. They buried it in the cave in the field at Machpelah, east of Mamre town. That was the field that Abraham had bought from Ephron, who was one of the Heth people group, to use as a burial place.

¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph and his brothers and all the others who had gone up to Canaan with him for the funeral returned to Egypt.

¹⁵ After Jacob died, Joseph's brothers became worried. They realized what might happen. They said, "What will happen if Joseph is carrying hatred for us and wants to take revenge on us, because of all the evil things we did to him many years ago?" ¹⁶ So they sent someone to tell this to Joseph for them: "Before our father died, he told us this: ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph, Please forgive your older brothers for the evil thing that they did to you, for their terrible sin against you, because what they did to you was very wrong.' So now we, who are servants of your father's God, ask you, please forgive us for what we did to you." Joseph cried when he received their message. ¹⁸ Then his older brothers themselves came and threw themselves on the ground in front of Joseph, and one of them said, "Please listen. We will be your servants." ¹⁹ But Joseph replied to them, "Do not be afraid! God is the one

who punishes people; am I God? ²⁰ As for you, yes, you wanted to do something very evil to me. But God caused something good to come from it! He wanted to save many people from dying of hunger, and that is what happened! Today they are alive! ²¹ So I say again, do not be afraid! I will make sure that you and your children have enough to eat." In this way he reassured them as he spoke to them.

²² Joseph lived with his father's family in Egypt until he was 110 years old. ²³ He lived long enough to see Ephraim's children and grandchildren. The children of Joseph's grandson Machir, who was Manasseh's son, were born before Joseph died, and they were recognized as being his descendants. ²⁴ One day Joseph said to his older brothers, "I am about to die. But God will certainly help you. Some day he will lead your descendants up out of this land and take them to Canaan, the land that he solemnly promised to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." ²⁵ Then Joseph said, "When God enables you to do that, you must take my body up from here to Canaan." He made his older brothers solemnly promise to do that.

²⁶ So Joseph died in Egypt when he was 110 years old. His body was embalmed and put in a coffin there.