

# GENESIS

## The creation of the world

<sup>1</sup>IN THE BEGINNING OF CREATION, when God made heaven and earth [*Or* In the beginning God created heaven and earth], <sup>2</sup>the earth was without form and void, with darkness over the face of the abyss, and a mighty wind that swept [*Or* and the spirit of God hovering] over the surface of the waters. <sup>3</sup>God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light; <sup>4</sup>and God saw that the light was good, and he separated light from darkness. <sup>5</sup>He called the light day, and the darkness night. So evening came, and morning came, the first day.

<sup>6</sup>God said, 'Let there be a vault between the waters, to separate water from water.' <sup>7</sup>So God made the vault, and separated the water under the vault from the water above it, and so it was; <sup>8</sup>and God called the vault heaven. Evening came, and morning came, a second day.

<sup>9</sup>God said, 'Let the waters under heaven be gathered into one place, so that dry land may appear'; and so it was. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters he called seas; and God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>Then God said, 'Let the earth produce fresh growth, let there be on the earth plants bearing seed, fruit-trees bearing fruit each with seed according to its kind.' So it was; <sup>12</sup>the earth yielded fresh growth, plants bearing seed according to their kind and trees bearing fruit each with seed according to its kind; and God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup>Evening came, and morning came, a third day.

<sup>14</sup>God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to separate day from night, and let them serve as signs both for festivals and for seasons and years. <sup>15</sup>Let them also shine in the vault of heaven to give light on earth.' So it was; <sup>16</sup>God made the two great lights, the greater to govern the day and the lesser to govern the night; and with them he made the stars. <sup>17</sup>God put these lights in the vault of heaven to give light on earth, <sup>18</sup>to govern day and night, and to separate light from darkness ; and God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup>Evening came, and morning came, a fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>God said, 'Let the waters teem with countless living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of heaven.' <sup>21</sup>God then created the great sea-monsters and all living creatures that move and swarm in the waters, according to their kind, and every kind of bird; and God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>So he blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful and increase, fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds increase on land.' <sup>23</sup>Evening came, and morning came, a fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures, according to their kind: cattle, reptiles, and wild animals, all according to their kind.' So it was ; <sup>25</sup>God made wild animals, cattle, and all reptiles, each according to its kind; and he saw that it was good. <sup>26</sup>Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image and likeness to rule the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all wild animals on earth, and all reptiles that crawl upon

the earth.’ <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him ; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup>God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase, fill the earth and subdue it, rule over the fish in the sea, the birds of heaven, and every living thing that moves upon the earth.’ <sup>29</sup>God also said, ‘I give you all plants that bear seed everywhere on earth, and every tree bearing fruit which yields seed: they shall be yours for food. <sup>30</sup>All green plants I give for food to the wild animals, to all the birds of heaven, and to all reptiles on earth, every living creature.’ So it was; <sup>31</sup>and God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. Evening came, and morning came, a sixth day.

<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their mighty throng. <sup>2</sup>On the sixth day God completed all the work he had been doing, and on the seventh day he ceased from all his work. <sup>3</sup>God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on that day he ceased from all the work he had set himself to do.

<sup>4</sup>This is the story of the making of heaven and earth when they were created.

## **The beginnings of history**

<sup>5</sup>WHEN THE LORD GOD MADE EARTH AND HEAVEN, there was neither shrub nor plant growing wild upon the earth, because the LORD God had sent no rain on the earth; nor was there any man to till the ground. <sup>6</sup>A flood [*Or mist*] used to rise out of the earth and water all the surface of the ground. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD God formed a man [*Heb. adam*] from the dust of the ground [*Heb. adamah*] and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Thus the man became a living creature. <sup>8</sup>Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden away to the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. <sup>9</sup>The LORD God made trees spring from the ground, all trees pleasant to look at and good for food ; and in the middle of the garden he set the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup>There was a river flowing from Eden to water the garden, and when it left the garden it branched into four streams. <sup>11</sup>The name of the first is Pishon; that is the river which encircles all the land of Havilah, where the gold [*Or frankincense*] is. <sup>12</sup>The gold [*Or frankincense*] of that land is good; bdellium [*Or gum resin*] and cornelians are also to be found there. <sup>13</sup>The name of the second river is Gihon; this is the one which encircles all the land of Cush. <sup>14</sup>The name of the third is Tigris; this is the river which runs east of Asshur. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and care for it. <sup>16</sup>He told the man, ‘You may eat from every tree in the garden, <sup>17</sup>but not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for on the day that you eat from it, you will certainly die.’ <sup>18</sup>Then the LORD God said,

‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will provide a partner for him.’ <sup>19</sup>So God formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of heaven. He brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called each

living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup>Thus the man gave names to all cattle, to the birds of heaven, and to every wild animal; but for the man himself no partner had yet been found. <sup>21</sup>And so the LORD God put the man into a trance, and while he slept, he took one of his ribs and closed the flesh over the place. <sup>22</sup>The LORD God then built up the rib, which he had taken out of the man, into a woman. He brought her to the man, <sup>23</sup>and the man said:

'Now this, at last -  
bone from my bones,  
flesh from my flesh! -  
this shall be called woman [*Heb. ishshah*],  
for from man [*Heb. ish*] was this taken.'

<sup>24</sup>That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and the two become one flesh. <sup>25</sup>Now they were both naked, the man and his wife, but they had no feeling of shame towards one another.

**3**<sup>1</sup>THE SERPENT WAS MORE CRAFTY than any wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Is it true that God has forbidden you to eat from any tree in the garden?' <sup>2</sup>The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, <sup>3</sup>except for the tree in the middle of the garden; God has forbidden us either to eat or to touch the fruit of that; if we do, we shall die.' <sup>4</sup>The serpent said, 'Of course you will not die. <sup>5</sup>God knows that as soon as you eat it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods [*Or God*] knowing both good and evil.' <sup>6</sup>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good to eat, and that it was pleasing to the eye and tempting to contemplate, she took some and ate it. She also gave her husband some and he ate it. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they discovered that they were naked ; so they stitched fig-leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

<sup>8</sup>The man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze and hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?' <sup>10</sup>He replied, 'I heard the sound as you were walking in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself.' <sup>11</sup>God answered, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree which I forbade you ?' <sup>12</sup>The man said, 'The woman you gave me for a companion, she gave me fruit from the tree and I ate it.' <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' <sup>14</sup>Then the LORD God said to the serpent:

'Because you have done this you are accursed  
more than all cattle and all wild creatures.  
On your belly you shall crawl, and dust you shall eat  
all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup>I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
between your brood and hers.  
They shall strike at your head,  
and you shall strike at their heel.'

<sup>16</sup>To the woman he said:

'I will increase your labour and your groaning,  
and in labour you shall bear children.

You shall be eager [*Or feel an urge*] for your husband,  
and he shall be your master.'

<sup>17</sup>And to the man he said:

'Because you have listened to your wife  
and have eaten from the tree which I forbade you,  
accursed shall be the ground on your account.  
With labour you shall win your food from it  
all the days of your life.

<sup>18</sup>It will grow thorns and thistles for you,  
none but wild plants for you to eat.

<sup>19</sup>You shall gain your bread by the sweat of your brow  
until you return to the ground;  
for from it you were taken.

Dust you are, to dust you shall return.'

<sup>20</sup>The man called his wife Eve [*That is Life*] because she was the mother of all who live.

<sup>21</sup>The LORD God made tunics of skins for Adam and his wife and clothed them. <sup>22</sup>He said, 'The man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; what if he now reaches out his hand and takes fruit from the tree of life also, eats it and lives for ever?'

<sup>23</sup>So the LORD God drove him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup>He cast him out, and to the east of the garden of Eden he stationed the cherubim and a sword whirling and flashing to guard the way to the tree of life.

**4**<sup>1</sup>The man lay with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, 'With the help of the LORD I have brought a man into being.' <sup>2</sup>Afterwards she had another child, his brother Abel. Abel was a shepherd and Cain a tiller of the soil. <sup>3</sup>The day came when Cain brought some of the produce of the soil as a gift to the LORD; <sup>4</sup>and Abel brought some of the first-born of his flock, the fat portions of them [*Or some of the first-born, that is the sucklings, of his flock*]. The LORD received Abel and his gift with favour; <sup>5</sup>but Cain and his gift he did not receive. Cain was very angry and his face fell.

<sup>6</sup>Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you so angry and cast down?'

<sup>7</sup>If you do well, you are accepted; [*Or you hold your head up*]  
if not, sin is a demon crouching at the door.

It shall be eager for you, and you will be mastered by it [*Or but you must master it*].'

<sup>8</sup>Cain said to his brother Abel, 'Let us go into the open country.' While they were there, Cain attacked his brother Abel and murdered him. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Where is your brother Abel?' Cain answered, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?' <sup>10</sup>The LORD said, 'What have you done? Hark! your brother's blood that has been shed is crying out to me from the ground. <sup>11</sup>Now you are accursed, and banished from [*Or more than (cp 3. 17)*] the ground which has opened its mouth wide to receive your brother's blood, which you have shed. <sup>12</sup>When you till the ground, it will no longer yield you its wealth. You shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on earth.' <sup>13</sup>Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment is heavier than I can bear; <sup>14</sup>thou hast driven me today from the ground, and I must hide myself from thy presence. I shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on earth, and anyone who meets me can kill me.' <sup>15</sup>The LORD answered him, 'No: if

anyone kills Cain, Cain shall be avenged sevenfold.' So the LORD put a mark on Cain, in order that anyone meeting him should not kill him. <sup>16</sup>Then Cain went out from the LORD's presence and settled in the land of Nod [*That is Wandering*] [*Or and he lived as a wanderer in the land*] to the east of Eden.

<sup>17</sup>Then Cain lay with his wife; and she conceived and bore Enoch. Cain was then building a city, which he named Enoch after his son. <sup>18</sup>Enoch begot Irad; Irad begot Mehujael; Mehuiael begot Methushael; Methushael begot Lamech.

<sup>19</sup>Lamech married two wives, one named Adah and the other Zillah. <sup>20</sup>Adah bore Jabal who was the ancestor of herdsmen who live in tents; <sup>21</sup>and his brother's name was Jubal; he was the ancestor of those who play the harp and pipe. <sup>22</sup>Zillah, the other wife, bore Tubal-cain, the master of all coppersmiths and blacksmiths, and Tubal-cain's sister was Naamah. <sup>23</sup>Lamech said to his wives:

'Adah and Zillah, listen to me ;  
wives of Lamech, mark what I say:  
I kill a man for wounding me,  
a young man for a blow.

<sup>24</sup>Cain may be avenged seven times,  
but Lamech seventy-seven.'

<sup>25</sup>Adam lay with his wife again. She bore a son, and named him Seth [*That is Granted*], 'for', she said, 'God has granted me another son in place of Abel, because Cain killed him.' <sup>26</sup>Seth too had a son, whom he named Enosh. At that time men began to invoke the LORD [*This represents the Hebrew consonants YHWH, probably pronounced Yahweh, but traditionally read as Jehovah*] by name.

**5**<sup>1</sup>THIS IS THE RECORD of the descendants of Adam. On the day when God created man he made him in the likeness of God. <sup>2</sup>He created them male and female, and on the day when he created them, he blessed them and called them man.

<sup>3</sup>Adam was one hundred and thirty years old when he begot a son in his likeness and image, and named him Seth. <sup>4</sup>After the birth of Seth he lived eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup>He lived nine hundred and thirty years, and then he died.

<sup>6</sup>Seth was one hundred and five years old when he begot Enosh. <sup>7</sup>After the birth of Enosh he lived eight hundred and seven years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>8</sup>He lived nine hundred and twelve years, and then he died.

<sup>9</sup>[*vv9- 32 : cp 1Chr. 1. 2-4*] Enosh was ninety years old when he begot Kenan. <sup>10</sup>After the birth of Kenan he lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>11</sup>He lived nine hundred and five years, and then he died.

<sup>12</sup>Kenan was seventy years old when he begot Mahalalel. <sup>13</sup>After the birth of Mahalalel he lived eight hundred and forty years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>14</sup>He lived nine hundred and ten years, and then he died.

<sup>15</sup>Mahalalel was sixty-five years old when he begot Jared. <sup>16</sup>After the birth of Jared he lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>17</sup>He lived eight hundred and ninety-five years, and then he died.

<sup>18</sup>Jared was one hundred and sixty-two years old when he begot Enoch. <sup>19</sup>After the birth of Enoch he lived eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup>He lived nine hundred and sixty-two years, and then he died.

<sup>21</sup>Enoch was sixty-five years old when he begot Methuselah. <sup>22</sup>After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God for three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup>He lived three hundred and sixty-five years. <sup>24</sup>Having walked with God, Enoch was seen no more, because God had taken him away.

<sup>25</sup>Methuselah was one hundred and eighty-seven years old when he begot Lamech. <sup>26</sup>After the birth of Lamech he lived for seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>27</sup>He lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and then he died.

<sup>28</sup>Lamech was one hundred and eighty-two years old when he begot a son. <sup>29</sup>He named him Noah, saying, 'This boy will bring us relief from our work, and from the hard labour that has come upon us because of the LORD's curse upon the ground.' <sup>30</sup>After the birth of Noah, he lived for five hundred and ninety-five years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup>Lamech lived seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and then he died. <sup>32</sup>Noah was five hundred years old when he begot Shem, Ham and Japheth.

## **The flood and the tower of Babel**

**6**<sup>1</sup>WHEN MANKIND BEGAN TO INCREASE and to spread all over the earth and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup>the sons of the gods saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; so they took for themselves such women as they chose. <sup>3</sup>But the LORD said, 'My life-giving spirit shall not remain in man for ever; he for his part is mortal flesh: he shall live for a hundred and twenty years.'

<sup>4</sup>In those days [*prob. rdg, Heb adds and also afterwards (cp Num. 13. 33)*], when the sons of the gods had intercourse with the daughters of men and got children by them, the Nephilim [*Or giants*] were on earth. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

<sup>5</sup>When the LORD saw that man had done much evil on earth and that his thoughts and inclinations were always evil, <sup>6</sup>he was sorry that he had made man on earth, and he was grieved at heart. <sup>7</sup>He said, 'This race of men whom I have created, I will wipe them off the face of the earth — man and beast, reptiles and birds. I am sorry that I ever made them.' <sup>8</sup>But Noah had won the LORD's favour.

<sup>9</sup>This is the story of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, the one blameless man of his

time; he walked with God. <sup>10</sup>He had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. <sup>11</sup>Now God saw that the whole world was corrupt [*Or ripe for destruction*] and full of violence. <sup>12</sup>In his sight the world had become corrupted, for all men had lived corrupt lives on earth. <sup>13</sup>God said to Noah, 'The loathsomeness [*Or end*] of all mankind has become plain to me, for through them the earth is full of violence. I intend to destroy them, and the earth with them. <sup>14</sup>Make yourself an ark with ribs of cypress; cover it with reeds and coat it inside and out with pitch. <sup>15</sup>This is to be its plan: the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. <sup>16</sup>You shall make a roof for the ark, giving it a fall of one cubit when complete; and put a door in the side of the ark, and build three decks, upper, middle, and lower. <sup>17</sup>I intend to bring the waters of the flood over the earth to destroy every human being that has the spirit of life; everything on earth shall perish. <sup>18</sup>But with you I will make a covenant, and you shall go into the ark, you and your sons, your wife and your sons' wives with you. <sup>19</sup>And you shall bring living creatures of every kind into the ark to keep them alive with you, two of each kind, a male and a female; <sup>20</sup>two of every kind of bird, beast, and reptile, shall come to you to be kept alive. <sup>21</sup>See that you take and store every kind of food that can be eaten; this shall be food for you and for them'. <sup>22</sup>Exactly as God had commanded him, so Noah did.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and all your household; for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. <sup>2</sup>Take with you seven pairs, male and female, of all beasts that are ritually clean, and one pair, male and female, of all beasts that are not clean; <sup>3</sup>also seven pairs, male and female, of every bird — to ensure that life continues on earth. <sup>4</sup>In seven days' time I will send rain over the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe off the face of the earth every living thing that I have made.' <sup>5</sup>Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him. <sup>6</sup>He was six hundred years old when the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

<sup>7</sup>And so, to escape the waters of the flood, Noah went into the ark with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives. <sup>8-9</sup>And into the ark with Noah went one pair, male and female, of all beasts, clean and unclean, of birds and of everything that crawls on the ground, two by two, as God had commanded. <sup>10</sup>Towards the end of seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth. <sup>11</sup>In the year when Noah was six hundred years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, on that very day, all the springs of the great abyss broke through, the windows of the sky were opened, <sup>12</sup>and rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights. <sup>13</sup>On that very day Noah entered the ark with his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, his own wife, and his three sons' wives. <sup>14</sup>Wild animals of every kind, cattle of every kind, reptiles of every kind that move upon the ground, and birds of every kind — <sup>15</sup>all came to Noah in the ark, two by two of all creatures that had life in them. <sup>16</sup>Those which came were one male and one female of all living things; they came in as God had commanded Noah, and the LORD closed the door on him. <sup>17</sup>The flood continued upon the earth for forty days, and the waters swelled and lifted up the ark so that it rose high above the ground. <sup>18</sup>They swelled and increased over the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the waters. <sup>19</sup>More and more the waters increased over the earth until they covered all the high mountains everywhere under heaven. <sup>20</sup>The waters increased and the mountains were covered to a depth of fifteen cubits.

<sup>21</sup>Every living creature that moves on earth perished, birds, cattle, wild animals, all reptiles, and all mankind. <sup>22</sup>Everything died that had the breath of life in its nostrils, everything on dry land. <sup>23</sup>God wiped out every living thing that existed on earth, man and beast, reptile and bird; they were all wiped out over the whole earth, and only Noah and his company in the ark survived.

<sup>24</sup>When the waters had increased over the earth for a hundred and fifty days, **8**<sup>1</sup>God thought of Noah and all the wild animals and the cattle with him in the ark, and he made a wind pass over the earth, and the waters began to subside. <sup>2</sup>The springs of the abyss were stopped up, and so were the windows of the sky; the downpour from the skies was checked. <sup>3</sup>The water gradually receded from the earth, and by the end of a hundred and fifty days it had disappeared. <sup>4</sup>On the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark grounded on a mountain in Ararat. <sup>5</sup>The water continued to recede until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains could be seen.

<sup>6</sup>After forty days Noah opened the trap-door that he had made in the ark, <sup>7</sup>and released a raven to see whether the water had subsided, but the bird continued flying to and fro until the water on the earth had dried up. <sup>8</sup>Noah waited for seven days [Noah ... days; *prob. rdg, cp v10; Heb omitted*], and then he released a dove from the ark to see whether the water on the earth had subsided further. <sup>9</sup>But the dove found no place where she could settle, and so she came back to him in the ark, because there was water over the whole surface of the earth. Noah stretched out his hand, caught her and took her into the ark. <sup>10</sup>He waited another seven days and again released the dove from the ark. <sup>11</sup>She came back to him towards evening with a newly plucked olive leaf in her beak. Then Noah knew for certain that the water on the earth had subsided still further. <sup>12</sup>He waited yet another seven days and released the dove, but she never came back. <sup>13</sup>And so it came about that, on the first day of the first month of his six hundred and first year, the water had dried up on the earth, and Noah removed the hatch and looked out of the ark. The surface of the ground was dry.

<sup>14</sup>By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the whole earth was dry. <sup>15</sup>And God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup>'Come out of the ark, you and your wife, your sons and their wives. <sup>17</sup>Bring out every living creature that is with you, live things of every kind, bird and beast and every reptile that moves on the ground, and let them swarm over the earth and be fruitful and increase there.' <sup>18</sup>So Noah came out with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives. <sup>19</sup>Every wild animal, all cattle, every bird, and every reptile that moves on the ground, came out of the ark by families. <sup>20</sup>Then Noah built an altar to the LORD. He took ritually clean beasts and birds of every kind, and offered whole-offerings on the altar. <sup>21</sup>When the LORD smelt the soothing odour, he said within himself, 'Never again will I curse the ground because of man, however evil his inclinations may be from his youth upwards. I will never again kill every living creature, as I have just done.

<sup>22</sup>While the earth lasts  
seedtime and harvest, cold and heat,  
summer and winter, day and night,  
shall never cease.'

<sup>9</sup>GOD BLESSED NOAH and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase and fill the earth. <sup>2</sup>The fear and dread of you shall fall upon all wild animals on earth, on all birds of heaven, on everything that moves upon the ground and all fish in the sea; they are given into your hands. <sup>3</sup>Every creature that lives and moves shall be food for you; I give you them all, as once I gave you all green plants. <sup>4</sup>But you must not eat the flesh with the life, which is the blood, still in it. <sup>5</sup>And further, for your life-blood I will demand satisfaction; from every animal I will require it, and from a man also I will require satisfaction for the death of his fellow-man.

<sup>6</sup>He that sheds the blood of a man,  
for that man his blood shall be shed;  
for in the image of God  
has God made man.

<sup>7</sup>But you must be fruitful and increase, swarm throughout the earth and rule [*prob. rdg, cp 1. 28, Heb. increase*] over it.

<sup>8</sup>God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him: <sup>9</sup>'I now make my covenant with you and with your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup>and with every living creature that is with you, all birds and cattle, all the wild animals with you on earth, all that have come out of the ark. <sup>11</sup>I will make my covenant with you: never again shall all living creatures be destroyed by the waters of the flood, never again shall there be a flood to lay waste the earth.'

<sup>12</sup>God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant which I establish between myself and you and every living creature with you, to endless generations:

<sup>13</sup>My bow I set in the cloud,  
sign of the covenant  
between myself and earth.

<sup>14</sup>When I cloud the sky over the earth,  
the bow shall be seen in the cloud.

<sup>15</sup>Then will I remember the covenant which I have made between myself and you and living things of every kind. Never again shall the waters become a flood to destroy all living creatures. <sup>16</sup>The bow shall be in the cloud; when I see it, it will remind me of the everlasting covenant between God and living things on earth of every kind.' <sup>17</sup>God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant which I make between myself and all that lives on earth.'

<sup>18</sup>The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth; Ham was the father of Canaan. <sup>19</sup>These three were the sons of Noah, and their descendants spread over the whole earth.

<sup>20</sup>Noah, a man of the soil, began the planting of vineyards. <sup>21</sup>He drank some of the wine, became drunk and lay naked inside his tent. <sup>22</sup>When Ham, father of Canaan, saw his father naked, he told his two brothers outside. <sup>23</sup>So Shem and Japheth took a cloak, put it on their shoulders and walked backwards, and so covered their father's naked body; their faces were turned the other way, so that they did not see their father naked. <sup>24</sup>When Noah woke from his drunken sleep, he learnt what his youngest son had done to him, <sup>25</sup>and said:

'Cursed be Canaan,  
slave of slaves  
shall he be to his brothers.'

<sup>26</sup>And he continued:

'Bless, O LORD,  
the tents of Shem; [*prob. rdg, Heb. Blessed is the LORD the God of Shem*]  
may Canaan be his slave.

<sup>27</sup>May God extend [*Heb. japht*] Japheth's bounds,  
let him dwell in the tents of Shem,  
may Canaan be their slave.'

<sup>28</sup>After the flood Noah lived for three hundred and fifty years, <sup>29</sup>and he was nine hundred and fifty years old when he died.

**10**<sup>1</sup>These are the descendants of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth, the sons born to them after the flood.

<sup>2</sup>[*vv2-4: cp 1Chr. 1.5-7*]The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan [*Or Greece*], Tubal, Meshech and Tiras. <sup>3</sup>The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah. <sup>4</sup>The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim [*Or Tarshish of the Kittians*] and Rodanim. <sup>5</sup>From these the peoples of the coasts and islands separated into their own countries, each with their own language, family by family, nation by nation.

<sup>6</sup>[*vv6-8: cp 1Chr. 1.8-10*]The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim [*Or Egypt*], Put and Canaan. <sup>7</sup>The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah and Sabtecha. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. <sup>8</sup>Cush was the father of Nimrod, who began to show himself a man of might on earth; <sup>9</sup>and he was a mighty hunter before the LORD, as the saying goes, 'Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.' <sup>10</sup>His kingdom in the beginning consisted of Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar. <sup>11</sup>From that land he migrated to Asshur and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and <sup>12</sup>Resen, a great city between Nineveh and Calah. <sup>13</sup>[*vv13-18: cp.1Chr.1.11-16*]From Mizraim sprang the Lydians, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, <sup>14</sup>Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines were descended.

<sup>15</sup>Canaan was the father of Sidon, who was his eldest son, and Heth [*Or the Hittites*], <sup>16</sup>the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, <sup>17</sup>the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, <sup>18</sup>the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Later the Canaanites spread, <sup>19</sup>and then the Canaanite border ran from Sidon towards Gerar all the way to Gaza; then all the way to Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboyim as far as Lasha. <sup>20</sup>These were the sons of Ham, by families and languages with their countries and nations.

<sup>21</sup>Sons were born also to Shem, elder brother of Japheth, the ancestor of all the sons of Eber. <sup>22</sup>[*vv22-29 cp 1Chr. 1.17-23*]The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud [*Or the Lydians*] and Aram. <sup>23</sup>The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether and Mash. <sup>24</sup>Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah the father of Eber. <sup>25</sup>Eber had two sons: one was named Peleg [*That is Division*], because in his time the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. <sup>26</sup>Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmoth, Jerah, <sup>27</sup>Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>28</sup>Obal, Abimael, Sheba, <sup>29</sup>Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All these

were sons of Joktan. <sup>30</sup>They lived in the eastern hill-country, from Mesha all the way to Sephar. <sup>31</sup>These were the sons of Shem, by families and languages with their countries and nations.

<sup>32</sup>These were the families of the sons of Noah according to their genealogies, nation by nation; and from them came the separate nations on earth after the flood.

**11**<sup>1</sup>ONCE UPON A TIME all the world spoke a single language and used the same [*Or used few*] words. <sup>2</sup>As men journeyed in the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. <sup>3</sup>They said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks and bake them hard'; they used bricks for stone and bitumen for mortar. <sup>4</sup>'Come,' they said, 'let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and make a name for ourselves ; or we shall be dispersed all over the earth.' <sup>5</sup>Then the LORD came down to see the city and tower which mortal men had built, <sup>6</sup>and he said, 'Here they are, one people with a single language, and now they have started to do this; henceforward nothing they have a mind to do will be beyond their reach. <sup>7</sup>Come, let us go down there and confuse their speech, so that they will not understand what they say to one another.' <sup>8</sup>So the LORD dispersed them from there all over the earth, and they left off building the city. <sup>9</sup>That is why it is called Babel [*That is Babylon*], because the LORD there made a babble Of the language of all the world; from that place the LORD scattered men all Over the face of the earth.

<sup>10</sup>[*vv10-26 cp 1Chr. 1.24-27*] This is the table of the descendants of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old when he begot Arphaxad, two years after the flood. <sup>11</sup>After the birth of Arphaxad he lived five hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. <sup>12</sup>Arphaxad was thirty-five years old when he begot Shelah. <sup>13</sup>After the birth of Shelah he lived four hundred and three years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>14</sup>Shelah was thirty years old when he begot Eber. <sup>15</sup>After the birth of Eber he lived four hundred and three years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>16</sup>Eber was thirty-four years old when he begot Peleg. <sup>17</sup>After the birth of Peleg he lived four hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>18</sup>Peleg was thirty years old when he begot Reu. <sup>19</sup>After the birth of Reu he lived two hundred and nine years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>20</sup>Reu was thirty-two years old when he begot Serug. <sup>21</sup>After the birth of Serug he lived two hundred and seven years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>22</sup>Serug was thirty years old when he begot Nahor. <sup>23</sup>After the birth of Nahor he lived two hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>24</sup>Nahor was twenty-nine years old when he begot Terah. <sup>25</sup>After the birth of Terah he lived a hundred and nineteen years, and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>26</sup>Terah was seventy years old when he begot Abram, Nahor and Haran.

<sup>27</sup>This is the table of the descendants of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot. <sup>28</sup>Haran died in the presence of his father in the land of his birth, Ur of the Chaldees. <sup>29</sup>Abram and Nahor married wives; Abram's wife was called Sarai, and Nahor's Milcah. She was Haran's daughter; and he was also the father of Milcah and of Iscah. <sup>30</sup>Sarai was barren; she had no child. <sup>31</sup>Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai Abram's wife, and they set out from Ur of the Chaldees for the land of Canaan. But when they reached Harran, they settled there. <sup>32</sup>Terah was two hundred and five years old when he died in Harran.

## Abraham and Isaac

**12**<sup>1</sup>THE LORD SAID TO ABRAM, 'Leave your own country, your kinsmen, and your father's house, and go to a country that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you and make your name so great that it shall be used in blessings:

<sup>3</sup>Those that bless you I will bless,  
those that curse you, I will execrate.  
All the families on earth  
will pray to be blessed as you are blessed.'

<sup>4</sup>And so Abram set out as the LORD had bidden him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Harran. <sup>5</sup>He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the property they had collected, and all the dependants they had acquired in Harran, and they started on their journey to Canaan. When they arrived, <sup>6</sup>Abram passed through the country to the sanctuary at Shechem, the terebinth-tree of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites lived in this land. <sup>7</sup>There the LORD appeared to Abram and said, 'I give this land to your descendants.' So Abram built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup>Thence he went on to the hill-country east of Bethel and pitched his tent between Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and invoked the LORD by name. <sup>9</sup>Thus Abram journeyed by stages towards the Negeb.

<sup>10</sup>There came a famine in the land, so severe that Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while. <sup>11</sup>When he was approaching Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, 'I know very well that you are a beautiful woman, <sup>12</sup>and that when the Egyptians see you, they will say, "She is his wife"; then they will kill me but let you live. <sup>13</sup>Tell them that you are my sister, so that all may go well with me because of you and my life may be spared on your account.' <sup>14</sup>When Abram arrived in Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was indeed very beautiful. <sup>15</sup>Pharaoh's courtiers saw her and praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into Pharaoh's household. <sup>16</sup>He treated Abram well because of her, and Abram came to possess sheep and cattle and asses, male and female slaves, she-asses, and camels. <sup>17</sup>But the LORD struck Pharaoh and his household with grave diseases on account of Abram's wife Sarai. <sup>18</sup>Pharaoh summoned Abram and said to him, 'Why have you treated me like this? Why did you not tell me that she is your wife? <sup>19</sup>Why did you say that she was your sister, so that I took her as a wife? Here she is: take her and be gone.' <sup>20</sup>Then Pharaoh gave his men orders, and they sent Abram away with his wife and all that he had.

**13**<sup>1</sup>Abram went up from Egypt into the Negeb, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot went with him. <sup>2</sup>Abram was now very rich in cattle and in silver and gold. <sup>3</sup>From the Negeb he journeyed by stages to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where he had pitched his tent in the beginning, <sup>4</sup>where he had set up an altar on the first occasion and had invoked the LORD by name. <sup>5</sup>Now Lot was travelling with Abram, and he too possessed sheep and cattle and tents. <sup>6</sup>The land could not support them both together; for their livestock were so numerous that they could not settle in the same district, <sup>7</sup>and there were quarrels between Abram's herdsmen and Lot's. The Canaanites and the Perizzites were then living in the land. <sup>8</sup>So Abram said to Lot, 'Let there be no quarrelling between us, between my herdsmen and yours; for we are close kinsmen. <sup>9</sup>The whole country is there in front of you; let us part company. If you go left, I will go right; if you go right, I will go left.' <sup>10</sup>Lot looked up and saw how well-watered the whole Plain of the Jordan was; all the way to Zoar it was like the Garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt. This was before the LORD had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. <sup>11</sup>So Lot chose all the Plain of the Jordan and took the road on the east side. Thus they parted company. <sup>12</sup>Abram settled in the land of Canaan; but Lot settled among the cities of the Plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. <sup>13</sup>Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>After Lot and Abram had parted, the LORD said to Abram, 'Raise your eyes and look into the distance from the place where you are, north and south, east and west. <sup>15</sup>All the land you can see I will give to you and to your descendants for ever. <sup>16</sup>I will make your descendants countless as the dust of the earth; if anyone could count the dust upon the ground, then he could count your descendants. <sup>17</sup>Now go through the length and breadth of the land, for I give it to you.' <sup>18</sup>So Abram moved his tent and settled by the terebinths of Mamre at Hebron; and there he built an altar to the LORD.

**14**<sup>1</sup>IT WAS IN THE TIME OF AMRAPHEL king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goyim. <sup>2</sup>They went to war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboyim, and the king of Bela, that is Zoar. <sup>3</sup>These kings joined forces in the valley of Siddim, which is now the Dead Sea. <sup>4</sup>They had been subject to Kedorlaomer for twelve years, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. <sup>5</sup>Then in the fourteenth year Kedorlaomer and his confederate kings came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, <sup>6</sup>and the Horites in the hill-country from Seir [*prob. rdg, Heb in their hill-country, Seir*] as far as El-paran on the edge of the wilderness. <sup>7</sup>On their way back they came to En-mishpat, which is now Kadesh, and laid waste all the country of the Amalekites and also that of the Amorites who lived in Hazazon-tamar. <sup>8</sup>Then the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboyim, and Bela, which is now Zoar, marched out and drew up their forces against them in the valley of Siddim, <sup>9</sup>against Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goyim, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar, four kings against five. <sup>10</sup>Now the valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits; and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell into them, but the rest escaped to the hill-country. <sup>11</sup>The four kings captured all the flocks

and herds of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their provisions, and went away. <sup>12</sup>They also carried off Lot, Abram's nephew, who was living in Sodom, and with him his flocks and herds. <sup>13</sup>But a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew, who at that time was dwelling by the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite. This Mamre was the brother of Eshcol and Aner, who were allies of Abram. <sup>14</sup>When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken prisoner, he mustered his retainers, men born in his household, three hundred and eighteen of them, and pursued as far as Dan. <sup>15</sup>Abram and his followers surrounded the enemy by night, attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus; <sup>16</sup>he then brought back all the flocks and herds and also his kinsman Lot with his flocks and herds, together with the women and the other captives. <sup>17</sup>On his return from this defeat of Kedorlaomer and his confederate kings, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh, which is now the King's Valley.

<sup>18</sup>Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought food and wine. He was priest of God Most High, <sup>19</sup>and he pronounced this blessing on Abram:

'Blessed be Abram  
by God Most High,  
creator [*Or* owner] of heaven and earth.

<sup>20</sup>And blessed be God Most High,  
who has delivered your enemies into your power.'

Abram gave him a tithe of all the booty.

<sup>21</sup>The king of Sodom said to Abram, 'Give me the people, and you can take the property'; <sup>22</sup>but Abram said to the king of Sodom, 'I lift my hand and swear by the LORD, God Most High, creator of heaven and earth: <sup>23</sup>not a thread or a shoe-string will I accept of anything that is yours. You shall never say, "I made Abram rich." <sup>24</sup>I will accept nothing but what the young men have eaten and the share of the men who went with me. Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre shall have their share.'

**15**<sup>1</sup>AFTER THIS the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision. He said, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am giving you a very great reward? [*Or* I am your shield, your very great reward] <sup>2</sup>Abram replied, 'Lord GOD, what canst thou give me? I have no standing among men, for the heir to my household is Eliezer of Damascus.' <sup>3</sup>Abram continued, 'Thou hast given me no children, and so my heir must be a slave born in my house.' <sup>4</sup>Then came the word of the LORD to him: 'This man shall not be your heir; your heir shall be a child of your own body.' <sup>5</sup>He took Abram outside and said, 'Look up into the sky, and count the stars if you can. So many', he said, 'shall your descendants be.'

<sup>6</sup>Abram put his faith in the LORD, and the LORD counted that faith to him as righteousness; <sup>7</sup>he said to him, 'I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldees to give you this land to occupy.' <sup>8</sup>Abram said, 'O Lord GOD, how can I be sure that I shall occupy it?' <sup>9</sup>The LORD answered, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a she-goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a fledgling.' <sup>10</sup>He brought him all these, halved the animals down the middle and placed each piece opposite its corresponding piece, but he did not halve the birds. <sup>11</sup>When the birds of prey swooped down on the carcasses, Abram scared them away. <sup>12</sup>Then, as the sun was going down, a trance came over Abram and great fear came upon him. <sup>13</sup>The LORD said to Abram,

'Know this for certain, that your descendants will be aliens living in a land that is not theirs; they will be slaves, and will be held in oppression there for four hundred years. <sup>14</sup>But I will punish that nation whose slaves they are, and after that they shall come out with great possessions. <sup>15</sup>You yourself shall join your fathers in peace and be buried in a good old age; <sup>16</sup>and the fourth generation shall return here, for the Amorites will not be ripe for punishment till then.' <sup>17</sup>The sun went down and it was dusk, and there appeared a smoking brazier and a flaming torch passing between the divided pieces. <sup>18</sup>That very day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, and he said, 'To your descendants I give this land from the River of Egypt to the Great River, the river Euphrates, <sup>19</sup>the territory of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup>Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaim, <sup>21</sup>Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites.'

**16**<sup>1</sup>Abram's wife Sarai had borne him no children. Now she had an Egyptian slave-girl whose name was Hagar, <sup>2</sup>and she said to Abram, 'You see that the LORD has not allowed me to bear a child. Take my slave-girl; perhaps I shall find a family through her.' Abram agreed to what his wife said; <sup>3</sup>so Sarai, Abram's wife, brought her slave-girl, Hagar the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife [*Or concubine*]. When this happened Abram had been in Canaan for ten years. <sup>4</sup>He lay with Hagar and she conceived; and when she knew that she was with child, she despised her mistress. <sup>5</sup>Sarai said to Abram, 'I have been wronged and you must answer for it. It was I who gave my slave-girl into your arms, but since she has known that she is with child, she has despised me. May the LORD see justice done between you and me.' <sup>6</sup>Abram replied to Sarai, 'Your slave-girl is in your hands; deal with her as you will.' So Sarai ill-treated her and she ran away.

<sup>7</sup>The angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness on the way to Shur, <sup>8</sup>and he said, 'Hagar, Sarai's slave-girl, where have you come from and where are you going?' She answered, 'I am running away from Sarai my mistress.' <sup>9</sup>The angel of the LORD said to her, 'Go back to your mistress and submit to her ill-treatment.' <sup>10</sup>The angel also said, 'I will make your descendants too many to be counted.' <sup>11</sup>And the angel of the LORD said to her:

'You are with child and will bear a son.

You shall name him Ishmael [*That is God heard*],  
because the LORD has heard of your ill-treatment.

<sup>12</sup>He shall be a man like the wild ass,  
his hand against every man  
and every man's hand against him;

and he shall live at odds with [*Or live to the east of*] all his kinsmen.'

<sup>13</sup>She called the LORD who was speaking to her by the name El-Roi [*That is God of a vision*], for she said, 'Have I indeed seen God and still live [*God and still live: prob. rdg, Heb. hither*] after that vision' <sup>14</sup>That is why men call the well Beer-lahai-roi [*That is the Well of the Living One of Vision*], it lies between Kadesh and Bered. <sup>15</sup>Hagar bore Abram a son, and he named the child she bore him Ishmael. <sup>16</sup>Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael.

**17**<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, 'I am

God Almighty. Live always in my presence and be perfect, <sup>2</sup>so that I may set my covenant between myself and you and multiply your descendants.’ <sup>3</sup>Abram threw himself down on his face, and God spoke with him and said, <sup>4</sup>‘I make this covenant, and I make it with you: you shall be the father of a host of nations. <sup>5</sup>Your name shall no longer be Abram [*That is High Father*], your name shall be Abraham [*That is Father of a Multitude*], for I make you father of a host of nations. <sup>6</sup>I will make you exceedingly fruitful; I will make nations out of you, and kings shall spring from you. <sup>7</sup>I will fulfil my covenant between myself and you and your descendants after you, generation after generation, an everlasting covenant, to be your God, yours and your descendants’ after you. <sup>8</sup>As an everlasting possession I will give you and your descendants after you the land in which you now are aliens, all the land of Canaan, and I will be God to your descendants.’

<sup>9</sup>God said to Abraham, ‘For your part, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you, generation by generation. <sup>10</sup>This is how you shall keep my covenant between myself and you and your descendants after you: circumcise yourselves, every male among you. <sup>11</sup>You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between us. <sup>12</sup>Every male among you in every generation shall be circumcised on the eighth day, both those born in your house and any foreigner, not of your blood but bought with your money. <sup>13</sup>Circumcise both those born in your house and those bought with your money; thus shall my covenant be marked in your flesh as an everlasting covenant. <sup>14</sup>Every uncircumcised male, everyone who has not had the flesh of his foreskin circumcised, shall be cut off from the kin of his father. He has broken my covenant.’

<sup>15</sup>God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife ; you shall call her not Sarai [*That is Mockery*], but Sarah [*That is Princess*]. <sup>16</sup>I will bless her and give you a son by her. I will bless her and she shall be the mother of nations; the kings of many people shall spring from her.’ <sup>17</sup>Abraham threw himself down on his face; he laughed and said to himself, ‘Can a son be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah bear a son when she is ninety ?’ <sup>18</sup>He said to God, ‘If only Ishmael might live under thy special care!’ <sup>19</sup>But God replied, ‘No. Your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall call him Isaac [*That is He laughed*]. With him I will fulfil my covenant, an everlasting covenant with his descendants after him. <sup>20</sup>I have heard your prayer for Ishmael. I have blessed him and will make him fruitful. I will multiply his descendants; he shall be father of twelve princes, and I will raise a great nation from him. <sup>21</sup>But my covenant I will fulfil with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year.’ <sup>22</sup>When he had finished talking with Abraham, God ascended and left him.

<sup>23</sup>Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, everyone who had been born in his household and everyone bought with money, every male in his household, and he circumcised them that very same day in the flesh of their foreskins as God had told him to do. <sup>24</sup>Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he circumcised the flesh of his foreskin. <sup>25</sup>Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. <sup>26</sup>Both Abraham and Ishmael were circumcised on the same day, <sup>27</sup>and all the men of his household, born in the house or bought with money from foreigners, were circumcised with him.

**18**<sup>1</sup>THE LORD APPEARED TO ABRAHAM by the terebinths of Mamre. As Abraham was sitting at the opening of his tent in the heat of the day, <sup>2</sup>he looked up and saw three men standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the opening of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground. <sup>3</sup>'Sirs,' he said, 'if I have deserved your favour, do not pass by my humble self without a visit. <sup>4</sup>Let me send for some water so that you may wash your feet and rest under a tree; <sup>5</sup>and let me fetch a little food so that you may refresh yourselves. Afterwards you may continue the journey which has brought you my way.' They said, 'Do by all means as you say.' <sup>6</sup>So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, 'Take three measures of flour quickly, knead it and make some cakes.' <sup>7</sup>Then Abraham ran to the cattle, chose a fine tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurriedly prepared it. <sup>8</sup>He took curds and milk and the calf he had prepared, set it before them, and waited on them himself under the tree while they ate. <sup>9</sup>They asked him where Sarah his wife was, and he said, 'There, in the tent.' <sup>10</sup>The stranger said, 'About this time next year I will be sure to come back to you, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.' Now Sarah was listening at the opening of the tent, and he was close beside it. <sup>11</sup>Both Abraham and Sarah had grown very old, and Sarah was past the age of child-bearing. <sup>12</sup>So Sarah laughed to herself and said, 'I am past bearing children now that I am out of my time, and my husband is old.' <sup>13</sup>The LORD said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh and say, "Shall I indeed bear a child when I am old?"' <sup>14</sup>Is anything impossible for the LORD? In due season I will come back to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.' <sup>15</sup>Sarah lied because she was frightened, and denied that she had laughed; but he said, 'Yes, you did laugh.'

<sup>16</sup>The men set out and looked down towards Sodom, and Abraham went with them to start them on their way. <sup>17</sup>The LORD thought to himself, 'Shall I conceal from Abraham what I intend to do? <sup>18</sup>He will become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will pray to be blessed as he is blessed. <sup>19</sup>I have taken care of him on purpose that he may charge his sons and family after him to conform to the way of the LORD and to do what is right and just; thus I shall fulfil all that I have promised for him.' <sup>20</sup>So the LORD said, 'There is a great outcry over Sodom and Gomorrah; their sin is very grave. <sup>21</sup>I must go down and see whether their deeds warrant the outcry which has reached me. I am resolved to know the truth.' <sup>22</sup>When the men turned and went towards Sodom, Abraham remained standing before the LORD. <sup>23</sup>Abraham drew near him and said, 'Wilt thou really sweep away good and bad together? <sup>24</sup>Suppose there are fifty good men in the city; wilt thou really sweep it away, and not pardon the place because of the fifty good men? <sup>25</sup>Far be it from thee to do this — to kill good and bad together; for then the good would suffer with the bad. Far be it from thee. Shall not the judge of all the earth do what is just?' <sup>26</sup>The LORD said, 'If I find in the city of Sodom fifty good men, I will pardon the whole place for their sake.' <sup>27</sup>Abraham replied, 'May I presume to speak to the Lord, dust and ashes that I am: <sup>28</sup>suppose there are five short of the fifty good men? Wilt thou destroy the whole city for a mere five men?' He said, 'If I find forty-five there I will not destroy it.' Abraham spoke again, <sup>29</sup>'Suppose forty can be found there?'; and he said, 'For the sake of the forty I will not do it.' <sup>30</sup>Then Abraham said, 'Please do not be angry, O Lord, if I speak again: suppose thirty can be found there?' He answered, 'If I find thirty there I will not do it.' <sup>31</sup>Abraham continued, 'May I

presume to speak to the Lord: suppose twenty can be found there?’ He replied, ‘For the sake of the twenty I will not destroy it.’ <sup>32</sup>Abraham said, ‘I pray thee not to be angry, O Lord, if I speak just once more: suppose ten can be found there?’ He said, ‘For the sake of the ten I will not destroy it.’ <sup>33</sup>When the LORD had finished talking with Abraham, he left him, and Abraham returned home.

**19**<sup>1</sup>The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them he rose to meet them and bowed low with his face to the ground. <sup>2</sup>He said, ‘I pray you, sirs, turn aside to my humble home, spend the night there and wash your feet; you can rise early and continue your journey.’ ‘No,’ they answered, ‘we will spend the night in the street.’ <sup>3</sup>But Lot was so insistent that they did turn aside and enter his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking unleavened cakes, and they ate them. <sup>4</sup>Before they lay down to sleep, the men of Sodom, both young and old, surrounded the house — everyone without exception. <sup>5</sup>They called to Lot and asked him where the men were who had entered his house that night. ‘Bring them out’, they shouted, ‘so that we can have intercourse with them.’

<sup>6</sup>Lot went out into the doorway to them, closed the door behind him <sup>7</sup>and said, ‘No, my friends, do not be so wicked. <sup>8</sup>Look, I have two daughters, both virgins ; let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them ; but do not touch these men, because they have come under the shelter of my roof.’ <sup>9</sup>They said, ‘Out of our way! This man has come and settled here as an alien, and does he now take it upon himself to judge us? We will treat you worse than them.’ They crowded in on the man Lot and pressed close to smash in the door. <sup>10</sup>But the two men inside reached out, pulled Lot in, and closed the door. <sup>11</sup>Then they struck the men in the doorway with blindness, both small and great, so that they could not find the door.

<sup>12</sup>The two men said to Lot, ‘Have you anyone else here, sons-in-law, sons, or daughters, or any who belong to you in the city? Get them out of this place, <sup>13</sup>because we are going to destroy it. The outcry against it has been so great that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.’ <sup>14</sup>So Lot went out and spoke to his intended sons-in-law [*Or his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters*]. He said, ‘Be quick and leave this place; the LORD is going to destroy the city.’ But they did not take him seriously.

<sup>15</sup>As soon as it was dawn, the angels urged Lot to go, saying, ‘Be quick, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.’ <sup>16</sup>When he lingered, they took him by the hand, with his wife and his daughters, and, because the LORD had spared him, led him on until he was outside the city. <sup>17</sup>When they had brought them out, they said, ‘Flee for your lives; do not look back and do not stop anywhere in the Plain. Flee to the hills or you will be swept away.’ <sup>18</sup>Lot replied, ‘No, sirs. <sup>19</sup>You have shown your servant favour and you have added to your unflinching care for me by saving my life, but I cannot escape to the hills; I shall be overtaken by the disaster, and die. <sup>20</sup>Look, here is a town, only a small place, near enough for me to reach quickly. Let me escape to it — it is very small — and save my life.’ <sup>21</sup>He said to him, ‘I grant your request: I will not overthrow this town you speak of. <sup>22</sup>But flee there quickly, because I can do nothing until you are there.’ That is why the place was called Zoar [*That is Small*]. <sup>23</sup>The sun had risen over the land as Lot entered

Zoar; <sup>24</sup>and then the LORD rained down fire and brimstone from the skies on Sodom and Gomorrah. <sup>25</sup>He overthrew those cities and destroyed all the Plain, with everyone living there and everything growing in the ground. <sup>26</sup>But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she turned into a pillar of salt.

<sup>27</sup>Next morning Abraham rose early and went to the place where he had stood in the presence of the LORD. <sup>28</sup>He looked down towards Sodom and Gomorrah and all the wide extent of the Plain, and there he saw thick smoke rising high from the earth like the smoke of a lime-kiln. <sup>29</sup>Thus, when God destroyed the cities of the Plain, he thought of Abraham and rescued Lot from the disaster, the overthrow of the cities where he had been living.

<sup>30</sup>Lot went up from Zoar and settled in the hill-country with his two daughters, because he was afraid to stay in Zoar; he lived with his two daughters in a cave. <sup>31</sup>The elder daughter said to the younger, 'Our father is old and there is not a man in the country to come to us in the usual way. <sup>32</sup>Come now, let us make our father drink wine and then lie with him and in this way keep the family alive through our father.' <sup>33</sup>So that night they gave him wine to drink, and the elder daughter came and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down and when she got up. <sup>34</sup>Next day the elder said to the younger, 'Last night I lay with my father. Let us give him wine to drink again tonight; then you go in and lie with him. So we shall keep the family alive through our father.' <sup>35</sup>So they gave their father wine to drink again that night, and the younger daughter went and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down and when she got up. <sup>36</sup>In this way both Lot's daughters came to be with child by their father. <sup>37</sup>The elder daughter bore a son and called him Moab; he was the ancestor of the present Moabites. <sup>38</sup>The younger also bore a son, whom she called Ben-ammi; he was the ancestor of the present Ammonites.

**20**<sup>1</sup>ABRAHAM JOURNEYED BY STAGES from there into the Negeb, and settled between Kadesh and Shur, living as an alien in Gerar. <sup>2</sup>He said that Sarah his wife was his sister, and Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took her. <sup>3</sup>But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said, 'You shall die because of this woman whom you have taken. She is a married woman.' <sup>4</sup>Now Abimelech had not gone near her; and he said, 'Lord, wilt thou destroy an innocent people? <sup>5</sup>Did he not tell me himself that she was his sister, and she herself said that he was her brother. It was with a clear conscience and in all innocence that I did this.' <sup>6</sup>God said to him in the dream, 'Yes: I know that you acted with a clear conscience. Moreover, it was I who held you back from committing a sin against me: that is why I did not let you touch her. <sup>7</sup>Send back the man's wife now; he is a prophet, and he will intercede on your behalf, and you shall live. But if you do not send her back, I tell you that you are doomed to die, you and all that is yours.' <sup>8</sup>So Abimelech rose early in the morning, summoned all his servants and told them the whole story; the men were terrified. <sup>9</sup>Abimelech then summoned Abraham and said to him, 'Why have you treated us like this? What harm have I done to you that you should bring this great sin on me and my kingdom? You have done a thing that ought not to be done.' <sup>10</sup>And he asked Abraham, 'What was your purpose in doing this?' <sup>11</sup>Abraham answered, 'I said to myself, There can be no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me for the sake of my wife. <sup>12</sup>She is in fact my sister, she is my father's daughter though not by the same

mother; and she became my wife. <sup>13</sup>When God set me wandering from my father's house, I said to her, "There is a duty towards me which you must loyally fulfil: wherever we go, you must say that I am your brother." ' <sup>14</sup>Then Abimelech took sheep and cattle, and male and female slaves, gave them to Abraham, and returned his wife Sarah to him. <sup>15</sup>Abimelech said, 'My country lies before you; settle wherever you please.' <sup>16</sup>To Sarah he said, 'I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver, so that your own people may turn a blind eye on it all, and you will be completely vindicated.' <sup>17</sup>Then Abraham interceded with God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his slave-girls, and they bore children; <sup>18</sup>for the LORD had made every woman in Abimelech's household barren on account of Abraham's wife Sarah.

**21**<sup>1</sup>The LORD showed favour to Sarah as he had promised, and made good what he had said about her. <sup>2</sup>She conceived and bore a son to Abraham for his old age, at the time which God had appointed. <sup>3</sup>The son whom Sarah bore to him, Abraham named Isaac [*That is He laughed*]. <sup>4</sup>When Isaac was eight days old Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded. <sup>5</sup>Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born. <sup>6</sup>Sarah said, 'God has given me good reason to laugh, and everybody who hears will laugh with me.' <sup>7</sup>She said, 'Whoever would have told Abraham that Sarah would suckle children? Yet I have borne him a son for his old age.' <sup>8</sup>The boy grew and was weaned, and on the day of his weaning Abraham gave a feast. <sup>9</sup>Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham laughing at him, <sup>10</sup>and she said to Abraham, 'Drive out this slave-girl and her son; I will not have this slave-girl's son sharing the inheritance with my son Isaac.' <sup>11</sup>Abraham was vexed at this on his son Ishmael's account, <sup>12</sup>but God said to him, 'Do not be vexed on account of the boy and the slave-girl. Do what Sarah says, because you shall have descendants through Isaac. <sup>13</sup>I will make a great nation of the slave-girl's son too, because he is your own child.'

<sup>14</sup>Abraham rose early in the morning, took some food and a waterskin full of water and gave it to Hagar; he set the child on her shoulder and sent her away, and she went and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. <sup>15</sup>When the water in the skin was finished, she thrust the child under a bush, <sup>16</sup>and went and sat down some way off, about two bowshots away, for she said, 'How can I watch the child die?' So she sat some way off, weeping bitterly. <sup>17</sup>God heard the child crying, and the [*Or an*] angel of God called from heaven to Hagar, 'What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid: God has heard the child crying where you laid him. <sup>18</sup>Get to your feet, lift the child up and hold him in your arms, because I will make of him a great nation.' <sup>19</sup>Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well full of water; she went to it, filled her waterskin and gave the child a drink. <sup>20-21</sup>God was with the child, and he grew up and lived in the wilderness of Paran. He became an archer, and his mother found him a wife from Egypt.

<sup>22</sup>Now about that time Abimelech, with Phicol the commander of his army, addressed Abraham in these terms: 'God is with you in all that you do. <sup>23</sup>Now swear an oath to me in the name of God, that you will not break faith with me, my offspring, or my descendants. As I have kept faith with you, so shall you keep faith with me and with the country where you have come to live as an alien.' <sup>24</sup>Abraham said, 'I swear.' <sup>25</sup>It happened that Abraham had a complaint against Abimelech about a well which

Abimelech's men had seized. <sup>26</sup>Abimelech said, 'I do not know who did this. You never told me, and I have heard nothing about it till now.' <sup>27</sup>So Abraham took sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech; and the two of them made a pact. <sup>28</sup>Abraham set seven ewe-lambs apart, and when <sup>29</sup>Abimelech asked him why he had set these lambs apart, <sup>30</sup>he said, 'Accept these from me in token that I dug this well.' <sup>31</sup>Therefore that place was called Beersheba [*That is Well of Seven and Well of an Oath*], because there the two of them swore an oath. <sup>32</sup>When they had made the pact at Beersheba, Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army returned at once to the country of the Philistines, and <sup>33</sup>Abraham planted a strip of ground [*Or planted a tamarisk*] at Beersheba. There he invoked the LORD, the everlasting God, by name, <sup>34</sup>and he lived as an alien in the country of the Philistines for many a year.

**22**<sup>1</sup>THE TIME CAME when God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham', he called, and Abraham replied, 'Here I am.' <sup>2</sup>God said, 'Take your son Isaac, your only son, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a sacrifice on one of the hills which I will show you.' <sup>3</sup>So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his ass, and he took with him two of his men and his son Isaac; and he split the firewood for the sacrifice, and set out for the place of which God had spoken. <sup>4</sup>On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. <sup>5</sup>He said to his men, 'Stay here with the ass while I and the boy go over there, and when we have worshipped we will come back to you.' <sup>6</sup>So Abraham took the wood for the sacrifice and laid it on his son Isaac's shoulder, he himself carried the fire and the knife, and the two of them went on together. <sup>7</sup>Isaac said to Abraham, 'Father', and he answered, 'What is it, my son?' Isaac said, 'Here are the fire and the wood, but where is the young beast for the sacrifice?' <sup>8</sup>Abraham answered, 'God will provide himself with a young beast for a sacrifice, my son.' And the two of them went on together <sup>9</sup>and came to the place of which God had spoken. There Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. <sup>10</sup>Then he stretched out his hand and took the knife to kill his son; <sup>11</sup>but the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, 'Abraham, Abraham.' He answered, 'Here I am.' <sup>12</sup>The angel of the LORD said, 'Do not raise your hand against the boy; do not touch him. Now I know that you are a God-fearing man. You have not withheld from me your son, your only son.' <sup>13</sup>Abraham looked up, and there he saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he went and took the ram and offered it as a sacrifice instead of his son. <sup>14</sup>Abraham named that place Jehovah-jireh [*That is the LORD will provide*]; and to this day the saying is: 'In the mountain of the LORD it was provided.' <sup>15</sup>Then the angel of the LORD called from heaven a second time to Abraham, <sup>16</sup>'This is the word of the LORD: By my own self I swear: inasmuch as you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup>I will bless you abundantly and greatly multiply your descendants until they are as numerous as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the sea-shore. Your descendants shall possess the cities of their enemies. <sup>18</sup>All nations on earth shall pray to be blessed as your descendants are blessed, and this because you have obeyed me.'

<sup>19</sup>Abraham went back to his men, and together they returned to Beersheba; and there Abraham remained.

<sup>20</sup>After this Abraham was told, 'Milcah has borne sons to your brother Nahor: <sup>21</sup>Uz his first-born, then his brother Buz, and Kemuel father of Aram, and <sup>22</sup>Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph and Bethuel; <sup>23</sup>and a daughter, Rebecca, has been born to Bethuel.' These eight Milcah bore to Abraham's brother Nahor. <sup>24</sup>His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore him sons: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash and Maacah.

**23**<sup>1</sup>Sarah lived for a hundred and twenty-seven years, <sup>2</sup>and died in Kiriatharba, which is Hebron, in Canaan. Abraham went in to mourn over Sarah and to weep for her. <sup>3</sup>At last he rose and left the presence of the dead. <sup>4</sup>He said to the Hittites, 'I am an alien and a settler among you. Give me land enough for a burial-place, so that I can give my dead proper burial.' <sup>5</sup>The Hittites answered Abraham, <sup>6</sup>'Do, pray, listen to what we have to say, sir. You are a mighty prince among us. Bury your dead in the best grave we have. There is not one of us who will deny you his grave or hinder you from burying your dead.' <sup>7</sup>Abraham stood up and then bowed low to the Hittites, the people of that country. <sup>8</sup>He said to them, 'If you are willing to let me give my dead proper burial, then listen to me and speak for me to Ephron son of Zohar, <sup>9</sup>asking him to give me the cave that belongs to him at Machpelah, at the far end of his land. Let him give it to me for the full price, so that I may take possession of it as a burial-place within your territory.' <sup>10</sup>Ephron the Hittite was sitting with the others, and he gave Abraham this answer in the hearing of everyone as they came into the city gate: <sup>11</sup>'No, sir; hear what I have to say. I will make you a gift of the land and I will also give you the cave which is on it. In the presence of all my kinsmen I give it to you ; so bury your dead.' <sup>12</sup>Abraham bowed low before the people of the country and said to Ephron in their hearing, <sup>13</sup>'If you really mean it — but do listen to me! I give you the price of the land: take it and I will bury my dead there.' <sup>14</sup>And Ephron answered, <sup>15</sup>'Do listen to me, sir: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver. But what is that between you and me? There you may bury your dead.' <sup>16</sup>Abraham came to an agreement with him and weighed out the amount that Ephron had named in the hearing of the Hittites, four hundred shekels of the standard recognized by merchants. <sup>17</sup>Thus the plot of land belonging to Ephron at Machpelah to the east of Mamre, the plot, the cave that is on it, every tree on the plot, within the whole area, <sup>18</sup>became the legal possession of Abraham, in the presence of all the Hittites as they came into the city gate. <sup>19</sup>After this Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave on the plot of land at Machpelah to the east of Mamre, which is Hebron, in Canaan. <sup>20</sup>Thus the plot and the cave on it became Abraham's possession as a burial-place, by purchase from the Hittites.

**24**<sup>1</sup>BY THIS TIME Abraham had become a very old man, and the LORD had blessed him in all that he did. <sup>2</sup>Abraham said to his servant, who had been long in his service and was in charge of all his possessions, 'Put your hand under my thigh: <sup>3</sup>I want you to swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the women of the Canaanites in whose land I dwell; <sup>4</sup>you must go to my own country and to my own kindred to find a wife for my son Isaac.' <sup>5</sup>The servant said to him, 'What if the woman is unwilling to come with me to this country? Must I in that event take your son back to the land from which you came?' <sup>6</sup>Abraham said to him, 'On no account are you to take my son back there. <sup>7</sup>The LORD the God of heaven who took me from my father's house and the land of my birth, the LORD who swore to me that he

would give this land to my descendants — he will send his angel before you, and from there you shall take a wife for my son. <sup>8</sup>If the woman is unwilling to come with you, then you will be released from your oath to me; but you must not take my son back there.’ <sup>9</sup>So the servant put his hand under his master Abraham’s thigh and swore an oath in those terms.

<sup>10</sup>The servant took ten camels from his master’s herds, and also all kinds of gifts from his master; he set out for Aram-naharaim [*That is Aram of Two Rivers*] and arrived at the city where Nahor lived. <sup>11</sup>Towards evening, the time when the women come out to draw water, he made the camels kneel down by the well outside the city. <sup>12</sup>He said, ‘O LORD God of my master Abraham, give me good fortune this day; keep faith with my master Abraham. <sup>13</sup>Here I stand by the spring, and the women of the city are coming out to draw water. <sup>14</sup>Let it be like this: I shall say to a girl, “Please lower your jar so that I may drink”; and if she answers, “Drink, and I will water your camels also”, that will be the girl whom thou dost intend for thy servant Isaac. In this way I shall know that thou hast kept faith with my master.’

<sup>15</sup>Before he had finished praying silently, he saw Rebecca coming out with her water-jug on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor. <sup>16</sup>The girl was very beautiful, a virgin, who had had no intercourse with a man. She went down to the spring, filled her jar and came up again. <sup>17</sup>Abraham’s servant hurried to meet her and said, ‘Give me a sip of water from your jar.’ <sup>18</sup>‘Drink, sir’, she answered, and at once lowered her jar on to her hand to let him drink. <sup>19</sup>When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, ‘Now I will draw water for your camels until they have had enough.’ <sup>20</sup>So she quickly emptied her jar into the water-trough, hurried again to the well to draw water and watered all the camels. <sup>21</sup>The man was watching quietly to see whether or not the LORD had made his journey successful. <sup>22</sup>When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold nose-ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels, also of gold, <sup>23</sup>and said, ‘Tell me, please, whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father’s house for us to spend the night?’ <sup>24</sup>She answered, ‘I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor and Milcah; <sup>25</sup>and we have plenty of straw and fodder and also room for you to spend the night.’ <sup>26</sup>So the man bowed down and prostrated himself to the LORD. <sup>27</sup>He said, ‘Blessed be the LORD the God of my master Abraham, who has not failed to keep faith and truth with my master; for I have been guided by the LORD to the house of my master’s kinsman.’

<sup>28</sup>The girl ran to her mother’s house and told them what had happened. <sup>29-30</sup>Now Rebecca had a brother named Laban; and, when he saw the nose-ring, and also the bracelets on his sister’s wrists, and heard his sister Rebecca tell what the man had said to her, he ran out to the man at the spring. When he came to him and found him still standing there by the camels, <sup>31</sup>he said, ‘Come in, sir, whom the LORD has blessed. Why stay outside? I have prepared the house, and there is room for the camels.’ <sup>32</sup>So he brought the man into the house, unloaded the camels and provided straw and fodder for them, and water for him and all his men to wash their feet. <sup>33</sup>Food was set before him, but he said, ‘I will not eat until I have delivered my message.’ Laban said, ‘Let us hear it.’ <sup>34</sup>He answered, ‘I am the servant of Abraham. <sup>35</sup>The LORD has greatly blessed

my master, and he has become a man of power. The LORD has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold,  
male and female slaves, camels and asses.' <sup>36</sup>My master's wife Sarah in her old age bore him a son, to whom he has given all that he has. <sup>37</sup>So my master made me swear an oath, saying, "You shall not take a wife for my son from the women of the Canaanites in whose land I dwell ; <sup>38</sup>but you shall go to my father's house and to my family to find a wife for him." <sup>39</sup>So I said to my master, "What if the woman will not come with me?" <sup>40</sup>He answered, "The LORD, in whose presence I have lived, will send his angel with you and will make your journey successful. You shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house; <sup>41</sup>then you shall be released from the charge I have laid upon you. But if, when you come to my family, they will not give her to you, you shall still be released from the charge." <sup>42</sup>So I came to the spring today,' and I said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, if thou wilt make my journey successful, let it be like this. <sup>43</sup>Here I stand by the spring. When a young woman comes out to draw water, I shall say to her, 'Give me a little water to drink from your jar.' <sup>44</sup>If she answers, 'Yes, do drink, and I will draw water for your camels as well', she is the woman whom the LORD intends for my master's son." <sup>45</sup>Before I had finished praying silently, I saw Rebecca coming out with her water-jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew some water, and I said to her, "Please give me a drink." <sup>46</sup>She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, "Drink; and I will water your camels as well." So I drank, and she also gave my camels water. <sup>47</sup>I asked her whose daughter she was, and she said, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor and Milcah." Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her wrists, <sup>48</sup>and I bowed low and prostrated myself before the LORD. I blessed the LORD the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right road to take my master's niece for his son. <sup>49</sup>Now tell me if you will keep faith and truth with my master. If not, say so, and I will turn elsewhere.'

<sup>50</sup>Laban and Bethuel answered, 'This is from the LORD; we can say nothing for or against. <sup>51</sup>Here is Rebecca herself; take her and go. She shall be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has decreed.' <sup>52</sup>When Abraham's servant heard what they said, he prostrated himself on the ground before the LORD. <sup>53</sup>Then he brought out gold and silver ornaments, and robes, and gave them to Rebecca, and he gave costly gifts to her brother and her mother. <sup>54</sup>He and his men then ate and drank and spent the night there. When they rose in the morning, he said, 'Give me leave to go back to my master.' <sup>55</sup>Her brother and her mother said, 'Let the girl stay with us for a few days, say ten days and then she shall go.' <sup>56</sup>But he said to them, 'Do not detain me, for the LORD has granted me success: Give me leave to return to my master.' <sup>57</sup>They said, 'Let us call the girl and see what she says.' <sup>58</sup>They called Rebecca and asked her if she would go with the man, and she said, 'Yes, I will go.' <sup>59</sup>So they let their sister Rebecca and her nurse go with Abraham's servant and his men. <sup>60</sup>They blessed Rebecca and said to her:

'You are our sister, may you be the mother of myriads ;  
may your sons possess the cities of their enemies.'

<sup>61</sup>Then Rebecca and her companions mounted their camels at once and followed the man. So the servant took Rebecca and went his way.

<sup>62</sup>Isaac meanwhile had moved on as far as Beer-lahai-roi and was living in the Negeb.

<sup>63</sup>One evening when he had gone out into the open country hoping to meet them [hoping ... them: *or to relieve himself*], he looked up and saw camels approaching. <sup>64</sup>When Rebecca raised her eyes and saw Isaac, she slipped hastily from her camel, <sup>65</sup>saying to the servant, 'Who is that man walking across the open towards us?' The servant answered, 'It is my master.' So she took her veil and covered herself. <sup>66</sup>The servant related to Isaac all that had happened. <sup>67</sup>Isaac conducted her into the tent [*prob. rdg, Heb. adds Sarah his mother*] and took her as his wife. So she became his wife, and he loved her and was consoled for the death of his mother.

**25**<sup>1</sup>[vv1-4: cp 1Chr. 1.32, <sup>33</sup>]ABRAHAM MARRIED ANOTHER WIFE, whose name was Keturah. <sup>2</sup>She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. <sup>3</sup>Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim and Leummim, <sup>4</sup>and the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Enoch, Abida and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah.

<sup>5</sup>Abraham had given all that he had to Isaac, <sup>6</sup>and he had already in his lifetime given presents to the sons of his concubines, and had sent them away eastwards, to a land of the east, out of his son Isaac's way. <sup>7</sup>Abraham had lived for a hundred and seventy-five years <sup>8</sup>when he breathed his last. He died at a good old age, after a very long life, and was gathered to his father's kin. <sup>9</sup>His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave at Machpelah, on the land of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, <sup>10</sup>the plot which Abraham had bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah. <sup>11</sup>After the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac, who settled close by Beer-lahai-roi.

<sup>12</sup>This is the table of the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave-girl, bore to him. <sup>13</sup>[vv13-16 . cp 1Chr. 1.29-31]These are the names of the sons of Ishmael named in order of their birth: Nebaioth, Ishmael's eldest son, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, <sup>14</sup>Mishma, Dumah, Massa, <sup>15</sup>Hadad, Teman, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. <sup>16</sup>These are the sons of Ishmael, after whom their hamlets and encampments were named, twelve princes according to their tribal groups. <sup>17</sup>Ishmael had lived for a hundred and thirty-seven years when he breathed his last. So he died and was gathered to his father's kin. <sup>18</sup>Ishmael's sons inhabited the land from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt on the way to Asshur, having settled to the east of his brothers.

<sup>19</sup>THIS IS THE TABLE of the descendants of Abraham's son Isaac. Isaac's father was Abraham. <sup>20</sup>When Isaac was forty years old he married Rebecca the daughter of Bethuel the Aramaean from Paddan-aram and the sister of Laban the Aramaean. <sup>21</sup> Isaac appealed to the LORD on behalf of his wife because she was barren ; the LORD yielded to his entreaty, and Rebecca conceived. <sup>22</sup>The children pressed hard on each other in her womb, and she said, 'If this is how it is with me, what does it mean?' So she went to seek guidance of the LORD. <sup>23</sup>The LORD said to her:

'Two nations in your womb,  
two peoples, going their own ways from birth!  
One shall be stronger than the other;  
the older shall be servant to the younger.'

<sup>24</sup>When her time had come, there were indeed twins in her womb. <sup>25</sup>The first came out red, hairy all over like a hair-cloak, and they named him Esau [*That is Covering*]. <sup>26</sup>Immediately afterwards his brother was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel, and they called him Jacob [*That is He caught by the heel*]. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born. <sup>27</sup>The boys grew up; and Esau became skilful in hunting, a man of the open plains, but Jacob led a settled life and stayed among the tents. <sup>28</sup>Isaac favoured Esau because he kept him supplied with venison, but Rebecca favoured Jacob. <sup>29</sup>One day Jacob prepared a broth and when Esau came in from the country, exhausted, <sup>30</sup>he said to Jacob, 'I am exhausted; let me swallow some of that red broth': this is why he was called Edom [*That is Red*]. <sup>31</sup>Jacob said, 'Not till you sell me your rights as the first-born.' <sup>32</sup>Esau replied, 'I am at death's door; what use is my birthright to me?' <sup>33</sup>Jacob said, 'Not till you swear!'; so he swore an oath and sold his birthright to Jacob. <sup>34</sup>Then Jacob gave Esau bread and the lentil broth, and he ate and drank and went away without more ado. Thus Esau showed how little he valued his birthright.

**26**<sup>1</sup>There came a famine in the land—not the earlier famine in Abraham's time — and Isaac went to Abimelech the Philistine king at Gerar. <sup>2</sup>The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, 'Do not go down to Egypt, but stay in this country as I bid you. <sup>3</sup>Stay in this country and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands. Thus shall I fulfil the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. <sup>4</sup>I will make your descendants as many as the stars in the sky; I will give them all these lands, and all the nations of the earth will pray to be blessed as they are blessed — <sup>5</sup>all because Abraham obeyed me and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.' <sup>6</sup>So Isaac lived in Gerar.

<sup>7</sup>When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he told them that she was his sister; he was afraid to say that Rebecca was his wife, in case they killed him because of her; for she was very beautiful. <sup>8</sup>When they had been there for some considerable time, Abimelech the Philistine king looked down from his window and saw Isaac and his wife Rebecca laughing together. <sup>9</sup>He summoned Isaac and said, 'So she is your wife, is she? What made you say she was your sister?' Isaac answered, 'I thought I should be killed because of her.' <sup>10</sup>Abimelech said, 'Why have you treated us like this? One of the people might easily have gone to bed with your wife, and then you would have made us liable to retribution.' <sup>11</sup>So Abimelech warned all the people, threatening that whoever touched this man or his wife would be put to death.

<sup>12</sup>Isaac sowed seed in that land, and that year he reaped a hundredfold, and the LORD blessed him. <sup>13</sup>He became more and more powerful, until he was very powerful indeed. <sup>14</sup>He had flocks and herds and many slaves, so that the Philistines were envious of him. <sup>15</sup>They had stopped up all the wells dug by the slaves in the days of Isaac's father Abraham, and filled them with earth. <sup>18</sup> Isaac dug them again, all those wells dug in his father Abraham's time, and stopped up by the Philistines after his death, and he called them by the names which his father had given them.

<sup>16</sup>Then Abimelech said to him, 'Go away from here; you are too strong for us.' <sup>17</sup>So Isaac left that place and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and stayed there. <sup>19</sup> [*v18*]

*transposed to follow v15*] Then Isaac's slaves dug in the valley and found a spring of running water, <sup>20</sup>but the shepherds of Gerar quarrelled with Isaac's shepherds, claiming the water as theirs. He called the well Esek [*That is Difficulty*], because they made difficulties for him. His men then dug another well, <sup>21</sup>but the others quarrelled with him over that also, so he called it Sitnah [*That is Enmity*]. <sup>22</sup>He moved on from there and dug another well, but there was no quarrel over that one, so he called it Rehoboth [*That is Plenty of room*], saying, 'Now the LORD has given us plenty of room and we shall be fruitful in the land.'

<sup>23</sup>Isaac went up country from there to Beersheba. <sup>24</sup>That same night the LORD appeared to him there and said, 'I am the God of your father Abraham. Fear nothing, for I am with you. I will bless you and give you many descendants for the sake of Abraham my servant.' <sup>25</sup>So Isaac built an altar there and invoked the LORD by name. Then he pitched his tent there, and there also his slaves dug a well. <sup>26</sup>Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his friend and Phicol the commander of his army. <sup>27</sup>Isaac said to them, 'Why have you come here? You hate me and you sent me away.' <sup>28</sup>They answered, 'We have seen plainly that the LORD is with you, so we thought, "Let the two of us put each other to the oath and make a treaty that will bind us." <sup>29</sup>We have not attacked you, we have done you nothing but good, and we let you go away peaceably. Swear that you will do us no harm, now that the LORD has blessed you.' <sup>30</sup>So Isaac gave a feast and they ate and drank. <sup>31</sup>They rose early in the morning and exchanged oaths. Then Isaac bade them farewell, and they parted from him in peace. <sup>32</sup>The same day Isaac's slaves came and told him about a well that they had dug: 'We have found water', they said. <sup>33</sup>He named the well Shibah [*That is Oath*]. This is why the city is called Beersheba [*That is Well of an Oath*] to this day.

<sup>34</sup>When Esau was forty years old he married Judith daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite; <sup>35</sup>this was a bitter grief to Isaac and Rebecca.

## **Jacob and Esau**

**27**<sup>1</sup>WHEN ISAAC GREW OLD and his eyes became so dim that he could not see, he called his elder son Esau and said to him, 'My son', and he answered, 'Here I am.' <sup>2</sup>Isaac said, 'Listen now: I am old and I do not know when I may die. <sup>3</sup>Take your hunting gear, your quiver and your bow, and go out into the country and get me some venison. <sup>4</sup>Then make me a savoury dish of the kind I like, and bring it to me to eat so that I may give you my blessing before I die.' <sup>5</sup>Now Rebecca was listening as Isaac talked to his son Esau. When Esau went off into the country to find some venison and bring it home, <sup>6</sup>she said to her son Jacob, 'I heard your father talking to your brother Esau, and he said, <sup>7</sup>"Bring me some venison and make it into a savoury dish so that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before I die." <sup>8</sup>Listen to me, my son, and do what I tell you. <sup>9</sup>Go to the flock and pick me out two fine young kids, and I will make them into a savoury dish for your father, of the kind he likes. <sup>10</sup>Then take them in to your father, and he will eat them so that he may bless you before he dies.' <sup>11</sup>Jacob said to his mother Rebecca, 'But my brother Esau is a hairy man, and my skin is smooth.

<sup>12</sup>Suppose my father feels me, he will know I am tricking him and I shall bring a curse upon myself instead of a blessing.' <sup>13</sup>His mother answered him, 'Let the curse fall on me, my son, but do as I say ; go and bring me the kids.' <sup>14</sup>So Jacob fetched them and brought them to his mother, who made them into a savoury dish of the kind that his father liked. <sup>15</sup>Then Rebecca took her elder son's clothes, Esau's best clothes which she kept by her in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob. <sup>16</sup>She put the goatskins on his hands and on the smooth nape of his neck; <sup>17</sup>and she handed her son Jacob the savoury dish and the bread she had made. <sup>18</sup>He came to his father and said, 'Father.' He answered, 'Yes, my son; who are you?' <sup>19</sup>Jacob answered his father, 'I am Esau, your elder son. I have done as you told me. Come, sit up and eat some of my venison, so that you may give me your blessing.' <sup>20</sup>Isaac said to his son, 'What is this that you found so quickly?', and Jacob answered, 'It is what the LORD your God put in my way.' <sup>21</sup>Isaac then said to Jacob, 'Come close and let me feel you, my son, to see whether you are really my son Esau.' <sup>22</sup>When Jacob came close to his father, Isaac felt him and said, 'The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.' <sup>23</sup>He did not recognize him because his hands were hairy like Esau's, and that is why he blessed him. <sup>24</sup>He said, 'Are you really my son Esau?', and he answered, 'Yes.' <sup>25</sup>Then Isaac said, 'Bring me some of your venison to eat, my son, so that I may give you my blessing.' Then Jacob brought it to him, and he ate it; he brought wine also, and he drank it. <sup>26</sup>Then his father Isaac said to him, 'Come near, my son, and kiss me.' <sup>27</sup>So he came near and kissed him, and when Isaac smelt the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said:

'Ah! The smell of my son is like the smell of open country blessed by the LORD.

<sup>28</sup>God give you dew from heaven  
and the richness of the earth,  
corn and new wine in plenty!

<sup>29</sup>Peoples shall serve you,  
nations bow down to you.  
Be lord over your brothers;  
may your mother's sons bow down to you.  
A curse upon those who curse you ;  
a blessing on those who bless you!

<sup>30</sup>Isaac finished blessing Jacob; and Jacob had scarcely left his father Isaac's presence, when his brother Esau came in from his hunting. <sup>31</sup>He too made a savoury dish and brought it to his father. He said, 'Come, father, and eat some of my venison, so that you may give me your blessing.' <sup>32</sup>His father Isaac said, 'Who are you?' He said, 'I am Esau, your elder son.' <sup>33</sup>Then Isaac became greatly agitated [*Or incensed*] and said, 'Then who was it that hunted and brought me venison? I ate it all before you came in and I blessed him, and the blessing will stand.' <sup>34</sup>When Esau heard what his father said, he gave a loud and bitter cry and said, 'Bless me too, father.' <sup>35</sup>But Isaac said, 'Your brother came treacherously and took away your blessing.' <sup>36</sup>Esau said, 'He is rightly called Jacob [*That is He supplanted*]' This is the second time he has supplanted me. He took away my right as the first-born and now he has taken away my blessing. Have you kept back any blessing for me?' <sup>37</sup> Isaac answered, 'I have made him lord over you, and I have given him all his brothers as slaves. I have bestowed upon him corn and new

wine for his sustenance. What is there left that I can do for you, my son?' <sup>38</sup>Esau asked his father, 'Had you then only one blessing, father? Bless me too, my father.' And Esau cried bitterly. <sup>39</sup>Then his father Isaac answered:

'Your dwelling shall be far from the richness of the earth,  
far from the dew of heaven above.

<sup>40</sup>By your sword shall you live,  
and you shall serve your brother;  
but the time will come when you grow restive  
and break off his yoke from your neck.'

<sup>41</sup>Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing which his father had given him, and he said to himself, 'The time of mourning for my father will soon be here; then I will kill my brother Jacob.' <sup>42</sup>When Rebecca was told what her elder son Esau was saying, she called her younger son Jacob, and she said to him, 'Esau your brother is threatening to kill you. <sup>43</sup>Now, my son, listen to me. Slip away at once to my brother Laban in Harran. <sup>44</sup>Stay with him for a while until your brother's anger cools. <sup>45</sup>When it has subsided and he forgets what you have done to him, I will send and fetch you back. Why should I lose you both in one day?'

<sup>46</sup>Rebecca said to Isaac, 'I am weary to death of Hittite women! If Jacob marries a Hittite woman like those who live here, my life will not be worth living.' **28**<sup>1</sup>Isaac called Jacob, blessed him and gave him instructions. He said, 'You must not marry one of these women of Canaan. <sup>2</sup>Go at once to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, in Paddan-aram, and there find a wife, one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. <sup>3</sup>God Almighty bless you, make you fruitful and increase your descendants until they become a host of nations. <sup>4</sup>May he bestow on you and your offspring the blessing of Abraham, and may you thus possess the country where you are now living, the land which God gave to Abraham!' <sup>5</sup>So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramaean, and brother to Rebecca the mother of Jacob and Esau. <sup>6</sup>Esau discovered that Isaac had given Jacob his blessing and had sent him away to Paddan-aram to find a wife there; <sup>7</sup>and that when he blessed him he had forbidden him to marry a woman of Canaan, and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and gone to Paddan-aram. <sup>8</sup>Then Esau, seeing that his father disliked the women of Canaan, <sup>9</sup>went to Ishmael, and, in addition to his other wives, he married Mahalath sister. of Nebaioth and daughter of Abraham's son Ishmael.

<sup>10</sup>Jacob set out from Beersheba and went on his way towards Harran. <sup>11</sup>He came to a certain place and stopped there for the night, because the sun had set; and, taking one of the stones there, he made it a pillow for his head and lay down to sleep. <sup>12</sup>He dreamt that he saw a ladder, which rested on the ground with its top reaching to heaven, and angels of God were going up and down upon it. <sup>13</sup>The LORD was standing beside him [*Or on it or by it*] and said, 'I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. This land on which you are lying I will give to you and your descendants. <sup>14</sup>They shall be countless as the dust upon the earth, and you shall spread far and wide, to north and south, to east and west. All the families of the earth shall pray to be blessed as you and your descendants are blessed. <sup>15</sup>I will be with you, and I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I

have done all that I have promised.' <sup>16</sup>Jacob woke from his sleep and said, 'Truly the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.' <sup>17</sup>Then he was afraid and said, 'How fearsome is this place! This is no other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven.' <sup>18</sup>Jacob rose early in the morning, took the stone on which he had laid his head, set it up as a sacred pillar and poured oil on the top of it. <sup>19</sup>He named that place Beth-El [*That is House of God*]; but the earlier name of the city was Luz.

<sup>20</sup>Thereupon Jacob made this vow: 'If God will be with me, if he will protect me on my journey and give me food to eat and clothes to wear, <sup>21</sup>and I come back safely to my father's house, then the LORD shall be my God, <sup>22</sup>and this stone which I have set up as a sacred pillar shall be a house of God. And of all that thou givest me, I will without fail allot a tenth part to thee.'

**29**<sup>1</sup>JACOB CONTINUED HIS JOURNEY and came to the land of the eastern tribes. <sup>2</sup>There he saw a well in the open country and three flocks of sheep lying beside it, because the flocks were watered from that well. Over its mouth was a huge stone, <sup>3</sup>and all the herdsmen used to gather there and roll it off the mouth of the well and water the flocks; then they would put it back in its place over the well. <sup>4</sup>Jacob said to them, 'Where are you from, my friends?' 'We are from Harran', they replied. <sup>5</sup>He asked them if they knew Laban the grandson of Nahor. They answered, 'Yes, we do.' <sup>6</sup>'Is he well?' Jacob asked; and they answered, 'Yes, he is well, and here is his daughter Rachel coming with the flock.' <sup>7</sup>Jacob said, 'The sun is still high, and the time for folding the sheep has not yet come. Water the flocks and then go and graze them.' <sup>8</sup>But they replied, 'We cannot, until all the herdsmen have gathered together and the stone is rolled away from the mouth of the well; then we can water our flocks.' <sup>9</sup>While he was talking to them, Rachel came up with her father's flock, for she was a shepherdess. <sup>10</sup>When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, with Laban's flock, he stepped forward, rolled the stone off the mouth of the well and watered Laban's sheep. <sup>11</sup>He kissed Rachel, and was moved to tears. <sup>12</sup>He told her that he was her father's kinsman and Rebecca's son; so she ran and told her father. <sup>13</sup>When Laban heard the news of his sister's son Jacob, he ran to meet him, embraced him, kissed him warmly and welcomed him to his home. <sup>14</sup>Jacob told Laban everything, and Laban said, 'Yes, you are my own flesh and blood.' So Jacob stayed with him for a whole month.

<sup>15</sup>Laban said to Jacob, 'Why should you work for me for nothing simply because you are my kinsman? Tell me what your wages ought to be.' <sup>16</sup>Now Laban had two daughters: the elder was called Leah, and the younger Rachel. <sup>17</sup>Leah was dull-eyed, but Rachel was graceful and beautiful. <sup>18</sup>Jacob had fallen in love with Rachel and he said, 'I will work seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.' <sup>19</sup>Laban replied, 'It is better that I should give her to you than to anyone else; stay with me.' <sup>20</sup>So Jacob worked seven years for Rachel, and they seemed like a few days because he loved her. <sup>21</sup>Then Jacob said to Laban, 'I have served my time. Give me my wife so that we may sleep together.' <sup>22</sup>So Laban gathered all the men of the place together and gave a feast. <sup>23</sup>In the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob slept with her. <sup>24</sup>At the same time Laban gave his slave-girl Zilpah to his daughter Leah. <sup>25</sup>But when morning came, Jacob saw that it was Leah and said to Laban, 'What have you done to

me? Did I not work for Rachel? Why have you deceived me?' <sup>26</sup>Laban answered, 'In our country it is not right to give the younger sister in marriage before the elder. <sup>27</sup>Go through with the seven days' feast for the elder, and the younger shall be given you in return for a further seven years' work.' <sup>28</sup>Jacob agreed, and completed the seven days for Leah.

<sup>29</sup>Then Laban gave Jacob his daughter Rachel as wife; and he gave his slave-girl Bilhah to serve his daughter Rachel. <sup>30</sup>Jacob slept with Rachel also; he loved her rather than Leah, and he worked for Laban for a further seven years. <sup>31</sup>When the LORD saw that Leah was not loved, he granted her a child ; but Rachel was childless. <sup>32</sup>Leah conceived and bore a son; and she called him Reuben [*That is See, a son*], for she said, 'The LORD has seen my humiliation; now my husband will love me.' <sup>33</sup>Again she conceived and bore a son and said, 'The LORD, hearing that I am not loved, has given me this child also'; and she called him Simeon [*That is Hearing*]. <sup>34</sup>She conceived again and bore a son ; and she said, 'Now that I have borne him three sons my husband and I will surely be united.' So she called him Levi [*That is Union*]. <sup>35</sup>Once more she conceived and bore a son; and she said, 'Now I will praise the LORD' ; therefore she named him Judah [*That is Praise*]. Then for a while she bore no more children.

**30**<sup>1</sup>When Rachel found that she bore Jacob no children, she became jealous of her sister and said to Jacob, 'Give me sons, or I shall die.' <sup>2</sup>Jacob said angrily to Rachel, 'Can I take the place of God, who has denied you children?' <sup>3</sup>She said, 'Here is my slave-girl Bilhah. Lie with her, so that she may bear sons to be laid upon my knees, and through her I too may build up a family.' <sup>4</sup>So she gave him her slave-girl Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob lay with her. <sup>5</sup>Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. <sup>6</sup>Then Rachel said, 'God has given judgement for me; he has indeed heard me and given me a son', so she named him Dan [*That is He has given judgement*]. <sup>7</sup>Rachel's slave-girl Bilhah again conceived and bore Jacob another son. <sup>8</sup>Rachel said, 'I have played a fine trick on my sister, and it has succeeded'; so she named him Naphtali [*That is Trickery*]. <sup>9</sup>When Leah found that she was bearing no more children, she took her slave-girl Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife, <sup>10</sup>and Zilpah bore Jacob a son. <sup>11</sup>Leah said, 'Good fortune has come', and she named him Gad [*That is Good Fortune*]. <sup>12</sup>Zilpah, Leah's slave-girl, bore Jacob another son, <sup>13</sup>and Leah said, 'Happiness has come, for young women will call me happy.' So she named him Asher [*That is Happy*].

<sup>14</sup>In the time of wheat-harvest Reuben went out and found some mandrakes in the open country and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel asked Leah for some of her son's mandrakes, <sup>15</sup>but Leah said, 'Is it so small a thing to have taken away my husband, that you should take my son's mandrakes as well?' But Rachel said, 'Very well, let him sleep with you tonight in exchange for your son's mandrakes.' <sup>16</sup>So when Jacob came in from the country in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, 'You are to sleep with me tonight; I have hired you with my son's mandrakes.' That night he slept with her, <sup>17</sup>and God heard Leah's prayer, and she conceived and bore a fifth son. <sup>18</sup>Leah said, 'God has rewarded me, because I gave my slave-girl to my husband.' So she named him Issachar [*That is Reward*]. <sup>19</sup>Leah again conceived and bore a sixth son. <sup>20</sup>She said, 'God has endowed me with a noble dowry. Now my husband will treat me in

princely style, because I have borne him six sons.' So she named him Zebulun [*That is Prince*]. <sup>21</sup>Later she bore a daughter and named her 'Dinah. <sup>22</sup>Then God thought of Rachel; he heard her prayer and gave her a child; <sup>23</sup>so she conceived and bore a son and said, 'God has taken away my humiliation.' <sup>24</sup>She named him Joseph [*The name may mean either He takes away or May he add*], saying, 'May the LORD add another son!'

<sup>25</sup>When Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, 'Let me go, for I wish to return to my Own home and country. <sup>26</sup>Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and I will go; for you know what service I have done for you.' <sup>27</sup>Laban said to him, 'Let me have my say, if you please. I have become prosperous and the LORD has blessed me for your sake. <sup>28</sup>So now tell me what I owe you in wages, and I will give it you.' <sup>29</sup>Jacob answered, 'You must know how I have served you, and how your herds have prospered under my care. <sup>30</sup>You had only a few when I came, but now they have increased beyond measure, and the LORD brought blessings to you wherever I went. But is it not time for me to provide for my family?' <sup>31</sup>Laban said, 'Then what shall I give you?', but Jacob answered, 'Give me nothing; I will mind your flocks [*prob. rdg, Heb adds I will watch*] as before, if you will do what I suggest. <sup>32</sup>Today I will go over your flocks and pick out from them every black lamb, and all the brindled and the spotted goats, and they shall be my wages. <sup>33</sup>This is a fair offer, and it will be to my own disadvantage later on, when we come to settling my wages: every goat amongst mine that is not spotted or brindled and every lamb that is not black will have been stolen.' <sup>34</sup>Laban said, 'Agreed ; let it be as you have said.' <sup>35</sup>But that day he removed the he-goats that were striped and brindled and all the spotted and brindled she-goats, all that had any white on them, and every ram that was black, and he handed them over to his own sons. <sup>36</sup>Then he put a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob was left tending those of Laban's flocks that remained. <sup>37</sup>Thereupon Jacob took fresh rods of white poplar, almond, and plane tree, and peeled off strips of bark, exposing the white of the rods. <sup>38</sup>Then he fixed the peeled rods upright in the troughs at the watering-places where the flocks came to drink; they faced the she-goats that were on heat when they came to drink. <sup>39</sup>They felt a longing for the rods and they gave birth to young that were striped and spotted and brindled. <sup>40</sup>As for the rams, Jacob divided them, and let the ewes run only with such of the rams in Laban's flock as were striped and black; and thus he bred separate flocks for himself, which he did not add to Laban's sheep. <sup>41</sup>As for the goats, whenever the more vigorous were on heat, he put the rods in front of them at the troughs so that they would long for the rods; <sup>42</sup>he did not put them there for the weaker goats. Thus the weaker came to be Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. <sup>43</sup>So Jacob increased in wealth more and more until he possessed great flocks, male and female slaves, camels, and asses.

**31**<sup>1</sup>JACOB LEARNT that Laban's sons were saying, 'Jacob has taken everything that was our father's, and all his wealth has come from our father's property.' <sup>2</sup>He also noticed that Laban was not so well disposed to him as he had once been. <sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said to Jacob, 'Go back to the land of your fathers and to your kindred. I will be with you.' <sup>4</sup>So Jacob sent to fetch Rachel and Leah to his flocks out in the country <sup>5</sup>and said to them, 'I see that your father is not as well disposed to me as once he was; yet the God of my father has been with me. <sup>6</sup>You know how I have served your father to the best of

my power, <sup>7</sup>but he has cheated me and changed my wages ten times over. Yet God did not let him do me any harm. <sup>8</sup>If Laban said, "The spotted ones shall be your wages", then all the flock bore spotted young; and if he said, "The striped ones shall be your wages", then all the flock bore striped young. <sup>9</sup>God has taken away your father's property and has given it to me. <sup>10</sup>In the season when the flocks were on heat, I had a dream: I looked up and saw that the he-goats mounting the flock were striped and spotted and dappled. <sup>11</sup>The angel of God said to me in my dream, "Jacob", and I replied, "Here I am", <sup>12</sup>and he said, "Look up and see: all the he-goats mounting the flock are striped and spotted and dappled. I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. <sup>13</sup>I am the God who appeared to you at Bethel where you anointed a sacred pillar and where you made your vow. Now leave this country at once and return to the land of your birth." ' <sup>14</sup>Rachel and Leah answered him, 'We no longer have any part or lot in our father's house. <sup>15</sup>Does he not look on us as foreigners, now that he has sold us and spent on himself the whole of the money paid for us? <sup>16</sup>But all the wealth which God has saved from our father's clutches is ours and our children's. Now do everything that God has said.' <sup>17</sup>Jacob at once set his sons and his wives on camels, <sup>18</sup>and drove off all the herds and livestock which he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to his father Isaac in Canaan.

<sup>19</sup>When Laban the Aramaean had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole her father's household gods, <sup>20</sup>and Jacob deceived Laban, keeping his departure secret. <sup>21</sup>So Jacob ran away with all that he had, crossed the River and made for the hill-country of Gilead. <sup>22</sup>Three days later, when Laban heard that Jacob had run away, <sup>23</sup>he took his kinsmen with him, pursued Jacob for seven days and caught up with him in the hill-country of Gilead. <sup>24</sup>But God came to Laban in a dream by night and said to him, 'Be careful to say nothing to Jacob, either good or bad.'

<sup>25</sup>When Laban overtook him, Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill-country of Gilead, and Laban pitched his in the company of his kinsmen in the same hill-country. <sup>26</sup>Laban said to Jacob, 'What have you done? You have deceived me and carried off my daughters as though they were captives taken in war. <sup>27</sup>Why did you slip away secretly without telling me? I would have set you on your way with songs and the music of tambourines and harps. <sup>28</sup>You did not even let me kiss my daughters and their children. In this you were at fault. <sup>29</sup>It is in my power to do you an injury, but yesterday the God of your father spoke to me; he told me to be careful to say nothing to you, either good or bad. <sup>30</sup>I know that you went away because you were homesick and pining for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?'

<sup>31</sup>Jacob answered, 'I was afraid; I thought you would take your daughters from me by force. <sup>32</sup>Whoever is found in possession of your gods shall die for it. Let our kinsmen here be witnesses: point out anything I have that is yours, and take it back.' Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the gods. <sup>33</sup>So Laban went into Jacob's tent and Leah's tent and that of the two slave-girls, but he found nothing. When he came out of Leah's tent he went into Rachel's. <sup>34</sup>Now she had taken the household gods and put them in the camel-bag and was sitting on them. Laban went through everything in the tent and found nothing. <sup>35</sup>Rachel said to her father, 'Do not take it amiss, sir, that I cannot rise in

your presence: the common lot of woman is upon me.' So for all his search Laban did not find his household gods.

<sup>36</sup>Jacob was angry, and he expostulated with Laban, exclaiming, 'What have I done wrong? What is my offence, that you have come after me in hot pursuit and gone through all my possessions? <sup>37</sup>Have you found anything belonging to your household? If so, set it here in front of my kinsmen and yours, and let them judge between the two of us. <sup>38</sup>In all the twenty years I have been with you, your ewes and she-goats have never miscarried; I have not eaten the rams of your flocks; <sup>39</sup>I have never brought to you the body of any animal mangled by wild beasts, but I bore the loss myself; you claimed compensation from me for anything stolen by day or by night. <sup>40</sup>This was the way of it: by day the heat consumed me and the frost by night, and sleep deserted me. <sup>41</sup>For twenty years I have been in your household. I worked for you fourteen years to win your two daughters and six years for your flocks, and you changed my wages ten times over. <sup>42</sup>If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been with me, you would have sent me away empty-handed. But God saw my labour and my hardships, and last night he rebuked you.'

<sup>43</sup>Laban answered Jacob, 'The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks; all that you see is mine. But as for my daughters, what can I do today about them and the children they have borne? <sup>44</sup>Come now, we will make an agreement, you and I, and let it stand as a witness between us.' <sup>45</sup>So Jacob chose a great stone and set it upright as a sacred pillar. <sup>46</sup>Then he told his kinsmen to gather stones, and they took them and built a cairn, and there beside the cairn they ate together. <sup>47</sup>Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha [*Aramaic for Cairn of Witness*], and Jacob called it Gal-ed [*Hebrew for Cairn of Witness*]. <sup>48</sup>Laban said, 'This cairn is witness today between you and me.' For this reason it was named Gal-ed; <sup>49</sup>it was also named Mizpah [*That is Watch-tower*], for Laban said, 'May the LORD watch between you and me, when we are parted from each other's sight. <sup>50</sup>If you ill-treat my daughters or take other wives beside them when no one is there to see, then God be witness between us.' <sup>51</sup>Laban said further to Jacob, 'Here is this cairn, and here the pillar which I have set up between us. <sup>52</sup>This cairn is witness and the pillar is witness: I for my part will not pass beyond this cairn to your side, and you for your part shall not pass beyond this cairn and this pillar to my side to do an injury, <sup>53</sup>otherwise the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor will judge between us.' And Jacob swore this oath in the name of the Fear of Isaac his father. <sup>54</sup>He slaughtered an animal for sacrifice, there in the hill-country, and summoned his kinsmen to the feast. So they ate together and spent the night there.

<sup>55</sup>Laban rose early in the morning, kissed his daughters and their children, blessed them and went home again. **32**<sup>1</sup>Then Jacob continued his journey and was met by angels of God. <sup>2</sup>When he saw them, Jacob said, 'This is the company of God', and he called that place Mahanaim [*That is Two Companies*].

<sup>3</sup>Jacob sent messengers on ahead to his brother Esau to the district of Seir in the Edomite country, <sup>4</sup>and this is what he told them to say to Esau, 'My lord, your servant Jacob says, I have been living with Laban and have stayed there till now. <sup>5</sup>I have oxen, asses, and sheep, and male and female slaves, and I have sent to tell you this, my lord,

so that I may win your favour.' <sup>6</sup>The messengers returned to Jacob and said, 'We met your brother Esau already on the way to meet you with four hundred men.' <sup>7</sup>Jacob, much afraid and distressed, divided the people with him, as well as the sheep, cattle, and camels, into two companies, <sup>8</sup>thinking that, if Esau should come upon one company and destroy it, the other company would survive. <sup>9</sup>Jacob said, 'O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, O LORD at whose bidding I came back to my own country and to my kindred, and who didst promise me prosperity, <sup>10</sup>I am not worthy of all the true and steadfast love which thou hast shown to me thy servant. When I crossed the Jordan, I had nothing but the staff in my hand; now I have two companies. <sup>11</sup>Save me, I pray, from my brother Esau, for I am afraid that he may come and destroy me, sparing neither mother nor child. <sup>12</sup>But thou didst say, I will prosper you and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which is beyond all counting.'

<sup>13</sup>Jacob spent that night there; and as a present for his brother Esau he chose from the herds he had with him <sup>14</sup>two hundred she-goats, twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, <sup>15</sup>thirty milch-camels with their young, forty cows and ten young bulls, twenty she-asses and ten he-asses. <sup>16</sup>He put each herd separately into the care of a servant and said to each, 'Go on ahead of me, and leave gaps between the herds.' <sup>17</sup>Then he gave these instructions to the first: 'When my brother Esau meets you and asks you to whom you belong and where you are going and who owns these beasts you are driving, <sup>18</sup>you are to say, "They belong to your servant Jacob; he sends them as a present to my lord Esau, and he is behind us." ' <sup>19</sup>He gave the same instructions to the second, to the third, and all the drovers, telling them to say the same thing to Esau when they met him. <sup>20</sup>And they were to add, 'Your servant Jacob is behind us' ; for he thought, 'I will appease him with the present that I have sent on ahead, and afterwards, when I come into his presence, he will perhaps receive me kindly.' <sup>21</sup>So Jacob's present went on ahead of him, but he himself spent that night at Mahaneh.

<sup>22</sup>During the night Jacob rose, took his two wives, his two slave-girls, and his eleven sons, and crossed the ford of Jabbok. <sup>23</sup>He took them and sent them across the gorge with all that he had. <sup>24</sup>So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him there till [Or at] daybreak. <sup>25</sup>When the man saw that he could not throw Jacob, he struck him in the hollow of his thigh, so that Jacob's hip was dislocated as they wrestled. <sup>26</sup>The man said, 'Let me go, for day is breaking', but Jacob replied, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me.' <sup>27</sup> He said to Jacob, 'What is your name?', and he answered, 'Jacob.' <sup>28</sup>The man said, 'Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel [*That is God strove*], because you strove with God and with men, and prevailed.' <sup>29</sup>Jacob said, 'Tell me, I pray, your name.' He replied, 'Why do you ask my name?', but he gave him his blessing there. <sup>30</sup>Jacob called the place Peniel [*That is Face of God (elsewhere Penuel)*], 'because', he said, 'I have seen God face to face and my life is spared.' <sup>31</sup>The sun rose as Jacob passed through Penuel, limping because of his hip. <sup>32</sup>This is why the Israelites to this day do not eat the sinew of the nerve that runs in the hollow of the thigh; for the man had struck Jacob on that nerve in the hollow of the thigh.

**33**<sup>1</sup>Jacob raised his eyes and saw Esau coming towards him with four hundred men; so he divided the children between Leah and Rachel and the two slave-girls. <sup>2</sup>He put the

slave-girls with their children in front, Leah with her children next, and Rachel with Joseph last. <sup>3</sup>He then went on ahead of them, bowing low to the ground seven times as he approached his brother. <sup>4</sup>Esau ran to meet him and embraced him; he threw his arms round him and kissed him, and they wept. <sup>5</sup>When Esau looked up and saw the women and children, he said, 'Who are these with you?' Jacob replied, 'The children whom God has graciously given to your servant.' <sup>6</sup>The slave-girls came near, each with her children, and they bowed low. <sup>7</sup>Then Leah with her children came near and bowed low, and afterwards Joseph and Rachel came near and bowed low also. <sup>8</sup>Esau said, 'What was all that company of yours that I met?' And he answered, 'It was meant to win favour with you, my lord.' <sup>9</sup>Esau answered, 'I have more than enough. Keep what is yours, my brother.' <sup>10</sup>But Jacob said, 'On no account: if I have won your favour, then, I pray, accept this gift from me; for, you see, I come into your presence as into that of a god, and you receive me favourably. <sup>11</sup>Accept this gift which I bring you; for God has been gracious to me, and I have all I want.' So he urged him, and he accepted it.

<sup>12</sup>Then Esau said, 'Let us set out, and I will go at your pace.' <sup>13</sup>But Jacob answered him, 'You must know, my lord, that the children are small; the flocks and herds are suckling their young and I am concerned for them, and if the men overdrive them for a single day, all my beasts will die. <sup>14</sup>I beg you, my lord, to go on ahead, and I will go by easy stages at the pace of the children and of the livestock that I am driving, until I come to my lord in Seir.' <sup>15</sup>Esau said, 'Let me detail some of my own men to escort you', but he replied, 'Why should my lord be so kind to me?' <sup>16</sup>That day Esau turned back towards Seir, <sup>17</sup>but Jacob set out for Succoth; and there he built himself a house and made shelters for his cattle. Therefore he named that place Succoth [*That is Shelters*].

<sup>18</sup>On his journey from Paddan-aram, Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem in Canaan and pitched his tent to the east of it. <sup>19</sup>The strip of country where he had pitched his tent he bought from the sons of Hamor father of Shechem for a hundred sheep [*Or pieces of money (cp Josh. 24.32; Job 42.11)*]. <sup>20</sup>There he set up an altar and called it El-Elohey-Israel [*That is God the God of Israel*].

**34**<sup>1</sup>DINAH, THE DAUGHTER WHOM LEAH HAD BORNE to Jacob, went out to visit the women of the country, <sup>2</sup>and Shechem, son of Hamor the Hivite the local prince, saw her; he took her, lay with her and dishonoured her. <sup>3</sup>But he remained true to Jacob's daughter Dinah; he loved the girl and comforted her. <sup>4</sup>So Shechem said to his father Hamor, 'Get me this girl for a wife.' <sup>5</sup>When Jacob heard that Shechem had violated his daughter Dinah, his sons were with the herds in the open country, so he said nothing until they came home. <sup>6</sup>Meanwhile Shechem's father Hamor came out to Jacob to discuss it with him. <sup>7</sup>When Jacob's sons came in from the country and heard, they were grieved and angry, because in lying with Jacob's daughter he had done what the Israelites held to be an outrage, an intolerable thing. <sup>8</sup>Hamor appealed to them in these terms: 'My son Shechem is in love with this girl; I beg you to let him have her as his wife. <sup>9</sup>Let us ally ourselves in marriage; you shall give us your daughters, and you shall take ours in exchange. <sup>10</sup>You must settle among us. The country is open to you; make your home in it, move about freely and acquire land of your own.' <sup>11</sup>And Shechem said to the girl's father and brothers, 'I am eager to win your favour and, I will give

whatever you ask. <sup>12</sup>Fix the bride-price and the gift as high as you like, and I will give whatever you ask; but you must give me the girl in marriage.'

<sup>13</sup>Jacob's sons gave a dishonest reply to Shechem and his father Hamor, laying a trap for them because Shechem had violated their sister Dinah: <sup>14</sup>'We cannot do this,' they said; 'we cannot give our sister to a man who is uncircumcised; for we look on that as a disgrace. <sup>15</sup>There is one condition on which We will consent: if you will follow our example and have every male among you circumcised, <sup>16</sup>we will give you our daughters and take yours for ourselves. Then we can live among you, and we shall all become one people. <sup>17</sup>But if you refuse to listen to us and be circumcised, we will take the girl and go away.' <sup>18</sup>Their proposal pleased Hamor and his son Shechem; <sup>19</sup>and the young man, who was held in respect above anyone in his father's house, did not hesitate to do what they had said, because his heart was taken by Jacob's daughter.

<sup>20</sup>So Hamor and Shechem went back to the city gate and addressed their fellow-citizens: <sup>21</sup>'These men are friendly to us; let them live in our country and move freely in it. The land has room enough for them. Let us marry their daughters and give them ours. <sup>22</sup>But these men will agree to live with us and become one people on this one condition only: every male among us must be circumcised as they have been. <sup>23</sup>Will not their herds, their livestock, and all their chattels then be ours? We need only consent to their condition, and then they are free to live with us.' <sup>24</sup>All the able-bodied men agreed with Hamor and Shechem, and every single one of them was circumcised, every able-bodied male. <sup>25</sup>Then two days later, while they were still in great pain, Jacob's two sons Simeon and Levi, full brothers to Dinah, armed themselves with swords, boldly entered the city and killed every male. <sup>26</sup>They cut down Hamor and his son Shechem and took Dinah from Shechem's house and went off with her. <sup>27</sup>Then Jacob's other sons came in over the dead bodies and plundered the city, to avenge their sister's dishonour. <sup>28</sup>They seized flocks, cattle, asses, and everything, both inside the city and outside in the open country; <sup>29</sup>they also carried off all their possessions, their dependants, and their women, and plundered everything in the houses.

<sup>30</sup>Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, 'You have brought trouble on me, you have made my name stink among the people of the country, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few ; if they muster against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, I and my household with me.' <sup>31</sup>They answered, 'Is our sister to be treated as a common whore?'

**35**<sup>1</sup>GOD SAID TO JACOB, 'Go up to Bethel and settle there, build an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you were running away from your brother Esau.' <sup>2</sup>So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, 'Rid yourselves of the foreign gods which you have among you, purify yourselves, and see your clothes are mended [*Or change your clothes*]. <sup>3</sup>We are going to Bethel, so that I can set up an altar there to the God who answered me in the day of my distress, and who has been with me all the way that I have come.' <sup>4</sup>So they handed over to Jacob all the foreign gods in their possession and the rings from their ears, and he buried them under the terebinth-tree near Shechem. <sup>5</sup>Then they set out, and the cities round about were panic-stricken, and the inhabitants dared not pursue the sons of Jacob. <sup>6</sup>Jacob and all the people with him

came to Luz, that is Bethel, in Canaan. <sup>7</sup>There he built an altar, and he called the place El-bethel, because it was there that God had revealed himself to him when he was running away from his brother. <sup>8</sup>Rebecca's nurse Deborah died and was buried under the oak below Bethel, and he named it Allon-bakuth [*That is Oak of Weeping*].

<sup>9</sup>God appeared again to Jacob when he came back from Paddan-aram and blessed him.

<sup>10</sup>God said to him:

'Jacob is your name,  
but your name shall no longer be Jacob:  
Israel shall be your name.'

So he named him Israel. <sup>11</sup>And God said to him:

'I am God Almighty.  
Be fruitful and increase as a nation;  
a host of nations shall come from you,  
and kings shall spring from your body.

<sup>12</sup>The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac I give to you;  
and to your descendants after you I give this land.'

<sup>13</sup>God then left him, <sup>14</sup>and Jacob erected a sacred pillar in the place where God had spoken with him, a pillar of stone, and he offered a drink-offering over it and poured oil on it. <sup>15</sup>Jacob called the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

<sup>16</sup>They set out from Bethel, and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrathah, Rachel was in labour and her pains were severe. <sup>17</sup>While her pains were upon her, the midwife said, 'Do not be afraid, this is another son for you.' <sup>18</sup>Then with her last breath, as she was dying, she named him Ben-oni [*That is Son of my ill luck*], but his father called him Benjamin [*That is Son of good luck or Son of the right hand*]. <sup>19</sup>So Rachel died and was buried by the side of the road to Ephrathah, that is Bethlehem. <sup>20</sup>Jacob set up a sacred pillar over her grave; it is known to this day as the Pillar of Rachel's Grave. <sup>21</sup>Then Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent on the other side of Migdal-eder. <sup>22</sup>While Israel was living in that district, Reuben went and lay with his father's concubine Bilhah, and Israel came to hear of it.

The sons of Jacob were twelve. <sup>23</sup>The sons of Leah: Jacob's first-born Reuben, then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. <sup>24</sup>The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. <sup>25</sup>The sons of Rachel's slave-girl Bilhah: Dan and Naphtali. <sup>26</sup>The sons of Leah's slave-girl Zilpah: Gad and Asher. These were Jacob's sons, born to him in Paddan-aram. <sup>27</sup>Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre by Kiriath-arba, that is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt. <sup>28</sup>Isaac had lived for a hundred and eighty years <sup>29</sup>when he breathed his last. He died and was gathered to his father's kin at a very great age, and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

**36**<sup>1</sup>THIS IS THE TABLE of the descendants of Esau: that is Edom. <sup>2</sup>Esau took Canaanite women in marriage, Adah daughter of Elon the Hittite and Oholibamah daughter of Anah son of Zibeon the Horite [*prob. rdg, (cp vv20, 21) Heb. Hivite*], <sup>3</sup>and Basemath, Ishmaels daughter, sister of Nebaioth.

<sup>4</sup>[*vv4, 5, 9-13: cp 1Chr. 1.35-37*] Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau; Basemath bore Reuel, and

<sup>5</sup>Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam and Korah. These were Esau's sons, born to him in Canaan. <sup>6</sup>Esau took his wives, his sons and daughters and everyone in his household, his herds, his cattle, and all the chattels that he had acquired in Canaan, and went to the district of Seir out of the way of his brother Jacob, <sup>7</sup>because they had so much stock that they could not live together; the land where they were staying could not support them because of their herds. <sup>8</sup>So Esau lived in the hill-country of Seir. Esau is Edom.

<sup>9</sup>This is the table of the descendants of Esau father of the Edomites in the hill-country of Seir.

<sup>10</sup>These are the names of the sons of Esau: Eliphaz was the son of Esau's wife Adah. Reuel was the son of Esau's wife Basemath. <sup>11</sup>The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam and Kenaz. <sup>12</sup>Timna was concubine to Esau's son Eliphaz, and she bore Amalek to him. These are the descendants of Esau's wife Adah. <sup>13</sup>These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah. These were the descendants of Esau's wife Basemath. <sup>14</sup>These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah daughter of Anah son of Zibeon. She bore him Jeush, Jalarn and Korah.

<sup>15</sup>These are the chiefs descended from Esau. The sons of Esau's eldest son Eliphaz: chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz, <sup>16</sup>chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek. These are the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in Edom. These are the descendants of Adah.

<sup>17</sup>These are the sons of Esau's son Reuel: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah. These are the chiefs descended from Reuel in Edom. These are the descendants of Esau's wife Basemath.

<sup>18</sup>These are the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah. These are the chiefs born to Oholibamah daughter of Anah wife of Esau.

<sup>19</sup>These are the sons of Esau, that is Edom, and these are their chiefs.

<sup>20</sup>[vv20-28: cp 1Chr. I.38-42] These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the original inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, <sup>21</sup>Dishon, Ezer and Dishan. These are the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir in Edom. <sup>22</sup>The sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam, and Lotan had a sister named Timna.

<sup>23</sup>These are the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho and Onam.

<sup>24</sup>These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. This is the Anah who found some mules in the wilderness while he was tending the asses of his father Zibeon. <sup>25</sup>These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah daughter of Anah.

<sup>26</sup>These are the children of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran and Cheran. <sup>27</sup>These are the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zavan and Akan. <sup>28</sup>These are the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

<sup>29</sup>These are the chiefs descended from the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief

Zibeon, chief Anah, <sup>30</sup>chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan.

These are the chiefs that were descended from the Horites according to their clans in the district of Seir.

<sup>31</sup>[*vv31-43: cp 1Chr. 1.43-54*] These are the kings who ruled over Edom before there were kings in Israel: <sup>32</sup>Bela son of Beor became king in Edom, and his city was named Dinhabah; <sup>33</sup>when he died, he was succeeded by Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah. <sup>34</sup>When Jobab died, he was succeeded by Husham of Teman. <sup>35</sup>When Husham died, he was succeeded by Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in Moabite country. His city was named Avith. <sup>36</sup>When Hadad died, he was succeeded by Samlah of Masrekah. <sup>37</sup>When Samlah died, he was succeeded by Saul of Rehoboth on the River. <sup>38</sup>When Saul died, he was succeeded by Baal-hanan son of Akbor. <sup>39</sup>When Baal-hanan died, he was succeeded by Hadar [*Or Hadad cp 1Chr. 1.50*]. His city was named Pau; his wife's name was Mehetabel daughter of Matred a woman of Me-zahab [*Or daughter of Mezahab*].

<sup>40</sup>These are the names of the chiefs descended from Esau, according to their families, their places, by name: chief Timna, chief Alvah, chief Jetheth, <sup>41</sup>chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon, <sup>42</sup>chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar, <sup>43</sup>chief Magdiel, and chief Iram: all chiefs of Edom according to their settlements in the land which they possessed. (Esau is the father of the Edomites.)

## Joseph in Egypt

**37**<sup>1</sup>SO JACOB LIVED IN CANAAN, the country in which his father had settled. <sup>2</sup>And this is the story of the descendants of Jacob.

When Joseph was a boy of seventeen, he used to accompany his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives, when they were in charge of the flock; and he brought their father a bad report of them. <sup>3</sup>Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was a child of his old age, and he made him a long, sleeved robe. <sup>4</sup>When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not say a kind word to him.

<sup>5</sup>Joseph had a dream; and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him still more. <sup>6</sup>He said to them, 'Listen to this dream I have had. <sup>7</sup>We were in the field binding sheaves, and my sheaf rose on end and stood upright, and your sheaves gathered round and bowed low before my sheaf.' <sup>8</sup>His brothers answered him, 'Do you think you will one day be a king and lord it over us?' and they hated him still more because of his dreams and what he said. <sup>9</sup>He had another dream, which he told to his father and his brothers. He said, 'Listen: I have had another dream. The sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.' <sup>10</sup>When he told it to his father and his brothers, his father took him to task: 'What is this dream of yours?' he said. 'Must we come and bow low to the ground before you, I and your mother and your brothers?' <sup>11</sup>His brothers were jealous of him, but his father did not forget.

<sup>12</sup>Joseph's brothers went to mind their father's flocks in Shechem. <sup>13</sup>Israel said to him, 'Your brothers are minding the flocks in Shechem; come, I will send you to them', and he said, 'I am ready.' <sup>14</sup>He said to him, 'Go and see if all is well with your brothers and the sheep, and bring me back word.' So he sent off Joseph from the vale of Hebron and he came to Shechem. <sup>15</sup>A man met him wandering in the open country and asked him what he was looking for. He replied, <sup>16</sup>'I am looking for my brothers. Tell me, please, where they are minding the flocks.' <sup>17</sup>The man said, 'They have gone' away from here; I heard them speak of going to Dothan.' So Joseph followed his brothers and he found them in Dothan. <sup>18</sup>They saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. <sup>19</sup>They said to each other, 'Here comes that dreamer. <sup>20</sup>Now is our chance; let us kill him and throw him into one of these pits and say that a wild beast has devoured him. Then we shall see what will come of his dreams.' <sup>21</sup>When Reuben heard, he came to his rescue, urging them not to take his life. <sup>22</sup>'Let us have no bloodshed', he said. 'Throw him into this pit in the wilderness, but do him no bodily harm.' He meant to save him from them so as to restore him to his father. <sup>23</sup>When Joseph came up to his brothers, they stripped him of the long, sleeved robe which he was wearing, <sup>24</sup>took him and threw him into the pit. The pit was empty and had no water in it.

<sup>25</sup>Then they sat down to eat some food and, looking up, they saw an Ishmaelite caravan coming in from Gilead on the way down to Egypt, with camels carrying gum tragacanth and balm and myrrh. <sup>26</sup>Judah said to his brothers, 'What shall we gain by killing our brother and concealing his death? <sup>27</sup>Why not sell him to the Ishmaelites? Let us do him no harm, for he is our brother, our own flesh and blood'; and his brothers agreed with him. <sup>28</sup>Meanwhile some Midianite merchants passed by and drew Joseph up out of the pit. They sold him for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, and they brought Joseph to Egypt. <sup>29</sup>When Reuben went back to the pit, Joseph was not there. He rent his clothes <sup>30</sup>and went back to his brothers and said, 'The boy is not there. Where can I go?'

<sup>31</sup>Joseph's brothers took his robe, killed a goat and dipped it in the goat's blood. <sup>32</sup>Then they tore the robe, the long, sleeved robe, brought it to their father and said, 'Look what we have found. Do you recognize it? Is this your son's robe or not?' <sup>33</sup>Jacob did recognize it, and he replied, 'It is my son's robe. A wild beast has devoured him. Joseph has been torn to pieces.' <sup>34</sup>Jacob rent his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned his son for a long time. <sup>35</sup>His sons and daughters all tried to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. He said, 'I will go to my grave mourning for my son.' Thus Joseph's father wept for him. <sup>36</sup>Meanwhile the Midianites had sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's eunuchs, the captain of the guard [*Or executioner*].

**38**<sup>1</sup>ABOUT THAT TIME JUDAH LEFT HIS BROTHERS and went south and pitched his tent in company with an Adullamite named Hirah. <sup>2</sup>There he saw Bathshua the daughter of a Canaanite and married her. He slept with her, <sup>3</sup>and she conceived and bore a son, whom she called Er. <sup>4</sup>She conceived again and bore a son whom she called Onan. <sup>5</sup>Once more she conceived and bore a son whom she called Shelah, and she ceased to bear children [*ceased . . . children: or was at Kezib*] when she had given birth to him. <sup>6</sup>Judah found a wife for his eldest son Er; her name was Tamar. <sup>7</sup>But Judah's eldest son Er was

wicked in the LORD's sight, and the LORD took his life. <sup>8</sup>Then Judah told Onan to sleep with his brother's wife, to do his duty as the husband's brother and raise up issue for his brother. <sup>9</sup>But Onan knew that the issue would not be his; so whenever he slept with his brother's wife, he spilled his seed on the ground so as not to raise up issue for his brother. <sup>10</sup>What he did was wicked in the LORD's sight, and the LORD took his life. <sup>11</sup>Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, 'Remain as a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up'; for he was afraid that he too would die like his brothers. So Tamar went and stayed in her father's house.

<sup>12</sup>Time passed, and Judah's wife Bathshua died. When he had finished mourning, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite went up to Timnath at sheep-shearing. <sup>13</sup>When Tamar was told that her father-in-law was on his way to shear his sheep at Timnath, <sup>14</sup>she took off her widow's weeds, veiled her face, perfumed herself and sat where the road forks in two directions on the way to Timnath. She did this because she knew that Shelah had grown up and she had not been given to him as a wife. <sup>15</sup>When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, although she had veiled her face. <sup>16</sup>He turned to her where she sat by the roadside and said, 'Let me lie with you', not knowing that she was his daughter-in-law. She said 'What will you give me to lie with me?' <sup>17</sup>He answered, 'I will send you a kid from my flock', but she said, 'Will you give me a pledge until you send it?' <sup>18</sup>He asked what pledge he should give her, and she replied, 'Your seal and its cord, and the staff which you hold in your hand.' So he gave them to her and lay with her, and she conceived. <sup>19</sup>She then rose and went home, took off her veil and resumed her widow's weeds. <sup>20</sup>Judah sent the kid by his friend the Adullamite in order to recover the pledge from the woman, but he could not find her. <sup>21</sup>He asked the men of that place, 'Where is that temple-prostitute, the one who was sitting where the road forks?', but they answered, 'There is no temple-prostitute here.' <sup>22</sup>So he went back to Judah and told him that he had not found her and that the men of the place had said there was no such prostitute there. <sup>23</sup>Judah said, 'Let her keep my pledge, or we shall get a bad name. I did send a kid, but you could not find her.' <sup>24</sup>About three months later Judah was told that his daughter-in-law Tamar had behaved like a common prostitute and through her wanton conduct was with child. Judah said, 'Bring her out so that she may be burnt.' <sup>25</sup>But when she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law and said, 'The father of my child is the man to whom these things belong. See if you recognize whose they are, the engraving on the seal, the pattern of the cord, and the staff.' <sup>26</sup>Judah recognized them and said, 'She is more in the right than I am, because I did not give her to my son Shelah.' He did not have intercourse with her again. <sup>27</sup>When her time was come, there were twins in her womb, <sup>28</sup>and while she was in labour one of them put out a hand. The midwife took a scarlet thread and fastened it round the wrist, saying, 'This one appeared first.' <sup>29</sup>No sooner had he drawn back his hand, than his brother came out and the midwife said, 'What! you have broken out first!' So he was named Perez [*That is Breaking out*]. <sup>30</sup>Soon afterwards his brother was born with the scarlet thread on his wrist, and he was named Zerah [*That is Redness*].

**39**<sup>1</sup>WHEN JOSEPH WAS TAKEN DOWN TO EGYPT, he was bought by Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's eunuchs, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian. Potiphar bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him there. <sup>2</sup>The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered. He lived in the house of his Egyptian master, <sup>3</sup>who saw that the LORD was with him and

was giving him success in all that he undertook. <sup>4</sup>Thus Joseph found favour with his master, and he became his personal servant. Indeed, his master put him in charge of his household and entrusted him with all that he had. <sup>5</sup>From the time that he put him in charge of his household and all his property, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's household for Joseph's sake. The blessing of the LORD was on all that was his in house and field. <sup>6</sup>He left everything he possessed .in Joseph's care, and concerned himself with nothing but the food he ate.

<sup>7</sup>Now Joseph was handsome and good-looking, and a time came when his master's wife took notice of him and said 'Come and lie with me.' <sup>8</sup>But he refused and said to her, 'Think of my master. He does not know as much as I do about his own house, and he has entrusted me with all he has. <sup>9</sup>He has given me authority in this house second only to his own, and has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How can I do anything so wicked, and sin against God?' <sup>10</sup>She kept asking Joseph day after day, but he refused to lie with her and be in her company. <sup>11</sup>One day,he came into the house as usual to do his work, when none of the men of the household were there indoors. <sup>12</sup>She caught him by his cloak, saying, 'Come and lie with me', but he left the cloak in her hands and ran out of the house. <sup>13</sup>When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hands and had run out of the house, <sup>14</sup>she called out to the men of the household, 'Look at this! My husband has brought in a Hebrew to make a mockery of us. He came in here to lie with me, but I gave a loud scream. <sup>15</sup>When he heard me scream and call out, he left his cloak in my hand and ran off.' <sup>16</sup>She kept his cloak with her until his master came home, <sup>17</sup>and then she repeated her tale. She.said, 'That Hebrew slave whom you brought in to rnake a mockery of me, has been here with me. <sup>18</sup>But when I screamed for help and called out, he left his cloak in my hands and ran off.' <sup>19</sup>When Joseph's master heard his wife's story of what his slave had done to her; he was furious. <sup>20</sup>He took Joseph and put him in the Round Tower, where the king's prisoners were kept; and there he stayed in the Round Tower. <sup>21</sup>But the LORD was with Joseph and kept faith with him, so that he won the favour of the governor of the Round Tower. <sup>22</sup>He put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners in the tower and of all their work. <sup>23</sup>He ceased to concern himself with anything entrusted to Joseph, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in everything.

**40**<sup>1</sup>It happened later that the king's butler and his baker offended their master the king of Egypt. <sup>2</sup>Pharaoh was angry with these two eunuchs, the chief butler and the chief baker, <sup>3</sup>and he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the Round Tower where Joseph was imprisoned. <sup>4</sup>The captain of the guard appointed Joseph as their attendant, and he waited on them. <sup>5</sup>One night, when they had been in prison for some time, they both had dreams, each needing its own interpretation — the king of Egypt's butler and his baker who were imprisoned in the Round Tower. <sup>6</sup>When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they looked dejected. <sup>7</sup>So he asked these eunuchs, who were in custody with him in his master's house, why they were so downcast that day. <sup>8</sup>They replied, 'We have each had a dream and there is no one to interpret it for us.' Joseph said to them, 'Does not interpretation belong to God? Tell me your dreams.' <sup>9</sup>So the chief butler told Joseph his dream: 'In my dream', he said, 'there was a vine in front of me. <sup>10</sup>On the vine there were three branches, and as soon as it

budded, it blossomed and its clusters ripened into grapes. <sup>11</sup>Now I had Pharaoh's cup in my hand, and I plucked the grapes, crushed them into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup into Pharaoh's hand.' <sup>12</sup>Joseph said to him, 'This is the interpretation. The three branches are three days: <sup>13</sup>within three days Pharaoh will raise you and restore you to your post, and then you will put the cup into Pharaoh's hand as you used to do when you were his butler. <sup>14</sup>But when things go well with you, if you think of me, keep faith with me and bring my case to Pharaoh's notice and help me to get out of this house. <sup>15</sup>By force I was carried off [*Or stolen*] from the land of the Hebrews, and I have done nothing here to deserve being put in this dungeon.'

<sup>16</sup>When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favourable interpretation, he said to him, 'I too had a dream, and in my dream there were three baskets of white bread on my head. <sup>17</sup>In the top basket there was every kind of food which the baker prepares for Pharaoh, and the birds were eating out of the top basket on my head.' <sup>18</sup>Joseph answered, 'This is the interpretation. The three baskets are three days: <sup>19</sup>within three days Pharaoh will raise you and hang you up on a tree, and the birds of the air will eat your flesh.'

<sup>20</sup>The third day was Pharaoh's birthday and he gave a feast for all his servants. He raised the chief butler and the chief baker in the presence of his court. <sup>21</sup>He restored the chief butler to his post, and the butler put the cup into Pharaoh's hand; <sup>22</sup>but he hanged the chief baker. All went as Joseph had said in interpreting the dreams for them. <sup>23</sup>Even so the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

**41**<sup>1</sup>Nearly two years later Pharaoh had a dream: he was standing by the Nile, <sup>2</sup>and there came up from the river seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed on the reeds. <sup>3</sup>After them seven other cows came up from the river, gaunt and lean, and stood on the river-bank beside the first cows. <sup>4</sup>The cows that were gaunt and lean devoured the cows that were sleek and fat. Then Pharaoh woke up. <sup>5</sup>He fell asleep again and had a second dream: he saw seven ears of corn, full and ripe, growing on one stalk. <sup>6</sup>Growing up after them were seven other ears, thin and shrivelled by the east wind. <sup>7</sup>The thin ears swallowed up the ears that were full and ripe. Then Pharaoh woke up and knew that it was a dream. <sup>8</sup>When morning came, Pharaoh was troubled in mind; so he summoned all the magicians and sages of Egypt. He told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for him. <sup>9</sup>Then Pharaoh's chief butler spoke up and said, 'It is time for me to recall my faults. <sup>10</sup>Once Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. <sup>11</sup>One night we both had dreams, each needing its own interpretation. <sup>12</sup>We had with us a young Hebrew, a slave of the captain of the guard, and we told him our dreams and he interpreted them for us, giving each man's dream its own interpretation. <sup>13</sup>Each dream came true as it had been interpreted to us: I was restored to my position, and he was hanged.'

<sup>14</sup>Pharaoh thereupon sent for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon. He shaved and changed his clothes, and came in to Pharaoh. <sup>15</sup>Pharaoh said to him, 'I have had a dream, and no one can interpret it to me. I have heard it said that

you can understand and interpret dreams.' <sup>16</sup>Joseph answered, 'Not I, but God, will answer for Pharaoh's welfare.' <sup>17</sup>Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile, <sup>18</sup>and there came up from the river seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed on the reeds. <sup>19</sup>After them seven other cows came up that were poor, very gaunt and lean; I have never seen such gaunt creatures in all Egypt. <sup>20</sup>These lean, gaunt cows devoured the first cows, the fat ones. <sup>21</sup>They were swallowed up, but no one could have guessed that they were in the bellies of the others, which looked as gaunt as before. Then I woke up. <sup>22</sup>After I had fallen asleep again, I saw in a dream seven ears of corn, full and ripe, growing on one stalk. <sup>23</sup>Growing up after them were seven other ears, shrivelled, thin, and blighted by the east wind. <sup>24</sup>The thin ears swallowed up the seven ripe ears. When I told all this to the magicians, no one could explain it to me.'

<sup>25</sup>Joseph said to Pharaoh, 'Pharaoh's dreams are one dream. God has told Pharaoh what he is going to do. <sup>26</sup>The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears of corn are seven years. It is all one dream. <sup>27</sup>The seven lean and gaunt cows that came up after them are seven years, and the empty ears of corn blighted by the east wind will be seven years of famine. <sup>28</sup>It is as I have said to Pharaoh: God has let Pharaoh see what he is going to do. <sup>29</sup>There are to be seven years of great plenty throughout the land <sup>30</sup>After them will come seven years of famine; all the years of plenty in Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will ruin the country. <sup>31</sup>The good years will not be remembered in the land because of the famine that follows; for it will be very severe. <sup>32</sup>The doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that God is already resolved to do this, and he will very soon put it into effect. <sup>33</sup>Pharaoh should now look for a shrewd and intelligent man, and put him in charge of the country. <sup>34</sup>This is what Pharaoh should do: appoint controllers over the land, and take one fifth of the produce of Egypt during the seven years of plenty. <sup>35</sup>They should collect all this food produced in the good years that are coming and put the corn under Pharaoh's control in store in the cities, and keep it under guard. <sup>36</sup>This food will be a reserve for the country against the seven years of famine which will come upon Egypt. Thus the country will not be devastated by the famine.

<sup>37</sup>The plan pleased Pharaoh and all his courtiers, <sup>38</sup>and he said to them, 'Can we find a man like this man, one who has the spirit of a god [*Or* of God] in him?' <sup>39</sup>He said to Joseph, 'Since a god [*Or* God] has made all this known to you, there is no one so shrewd and intelligent as you. <sup>40</sup>You shall be in charge of my household, and all my people will depend on your every word. Only my royal throne shall make me greater than you.' <sup>41</sup>Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I hereby give you authority over the whole land of Egypt.' <sup>42</sup>He took off his signet-ring and put it on Joseph's finger, he had him dressed in fine linen, and hung a gold chain round his neck. <sup>43</sup>He mounted him in his viceroy's chariot and men cried 'Make way!' before him. Thus Pharaoh made him ruler over all Egypt <sup>44</sup>and said to him, 'I am the Pharaoh. Without your consent no man shall lift hand or foot throughout Egypt.' <sup>45</sup>Pharaoh named him Zaphenath-paneah, and he gave him as wife Asenath the daughter of Potiphara priest of On. And Joseph's authority extended over the whole of Egypt.

<sup>46</sup>Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. When he took his leave of the king, he made a tour of inspection through the country. <sup>47</sup>During the seven years of plenty there were abundant harvests, <sup>48</sup>and Joseph gathered all the food produced in Egypt during those years and stored it in the cities, putting in each the food from the surrounding country. <sup>49</sup>He stored the grain in huge quantities; it was like the sand of the sea, so much that he stopped measuring: it was beyond all measure.

<sup>50</sup>Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath the daughter of Potiphara priest of On. <sup>51</sup>He named the elder Manasseh [*That is Causing to forget*], 'for', he said, 'God has caused me to forget all my troubles and my father's family.' <sup>52</sup>He named the second Ephraim [*That is Fruit*], 'for', he said, 'God has made me fruitful in the land of my hardships.' <sup>53</sup>When the seven years of plenty in Egypt came to an end, <sup>54</sup>seven years of famine began, as Joseph had foretold. There was famine in every country, but throughout Egypt there was bread. <sup>55</sup>So when the famine spread through all Egypt, the people appealed to Pharaoh for bread, and he ordered them to go to Joseph and do as he told them. <sup>56</sup>In every region there was famine, and Joseph opened all the granaries and sold corn to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe. <sup>57</sup>The whole world came to Egypt to buy corn from Joseph, so severe was the famine everywhere.

**42**<sup>1</sup>WHEN JACOB SAW that there was corn in Egypt, he said to his sons, 'Why do you stand staring at each other? <sup>2</sup>I have heard that there is corn in Egypt. Go down and buy some so that we may keep ourselves alive and not starve.' <sup>3</sup>So Joseph's brothers, ten of them, went down to buy grain from Egypt, <sup>4</sup>but Jacob did not let Joseph's brother Benjamin go with them, for fear that he might come to harm.

<sup>5</sup>So the sons of Israel came down with everyone else to buy corn, because of the famine in Canaan. <sup>6</sup>Now Joseph was governor of all Egypt, and it was he who sold the corn to all the people of the land. Joseph's brothers came and bowed to the ground before him, <sup>7</sup>and when he saw his brothers, he recognized them but pretended not to know them and spoke harshly to them. 'Where do you come from?' he asked. 'From Canaan,' they answered, 'to buy food.' <sup>8</sup>Although Joseph had recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. <sup>9</sup>He remembered also the dreams he had had about them; so he said to them, 'You are spies; you have come to spy out the weak points in our defences.' <sup>10</sup>They answered, 'No, sir: your servants have come to buy food. <sup>11</sup>We are all sons of one man. Your humble servants are honest men, we are not spies.' <sup>12</sup>'No,' he insisted, 'it is to spy out our weaknesses that you have come.' <sup>13</sup>They answered him, 'Sir, there are twelve of us, all brothers, sons of one man in Canaan. The youngest is still with our father, and one has disappeared.' <sup>14</sup>But Joseph said again to them, 'No, as I said before, you are spies. <sup>15</sup>This is how you shall be put to the proof: unless your youngest brother comes here, by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place. <sup>16</sup>Send one of your number to bring your brother; the rest will be kept in prison. Thus your story will be tested, and we shall see whether you are telling the truth. If not, then, by the life of Pharaoh, you must be spies.' <sup>17</sup>So he kept them in prison for three days.

<sup>18</sup>On the third day Joseph said to the brothers, 'Do what I say and your lives will be spared; for I am a God-fearing man: <sup>19</sup>if you are honest men, your brother there shall be kept in prison, and the rest of you shall take corn for your hungry households <sup>20</sup>and bring your youngest brother to me; thus your words will be proved true, and you will not die [*prob. rdg, Heb adds and they did so*].'

<sup>21</sup>They said to one another, 'No doubt we deserve to be punished because of our brother, whose suffering we saw; for when he pleaded with us we refused to listen. That is why these sufferings have come upon us.' <sup>22</sup>But Reuben said, 'Did I not tell you not to do the boy a wrong? But you would not listen, and his blood is on our heads, and we must pay.' <sup>23</sup>They did not know that Joseph understood, because he had used an interpreter. <sup>24</sup>Joseph turned away from them and wept. Then, turning back, he played a trick on them. First he took Simeon and bound him before their eyes; <sup>25</sup>then he gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to return each man's silver, putting it in his sack, and to give them supplies for the journey. All this was done; <sup>26</sup>and they loaded the corn on to their asses and went away. <sup>27</sup>When they stopped for the night, one of them opened his sack to give fodder to his ass, and there he saw his silver at the top of the pack. <sup>28</sup>He said to his brothers, 'My silver has been returned to me, and here it is in my pack.' Bewildered and trembling, they said to each other, 'What is this that God has done to us?'

<sup>29</sup>When they came to their father Jacob in Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them. They said, <sup>30</sup>'The man who is lord of the country spoke harshly to us and made out that we were spies. <sup>31</sup>We said to him, "We are honest men, we are not spies. <sup>32</sup>There are twelve of us, all brothers, sons of one father. One has disappeared, and the youngest is with our father in Canaan." <sup>33</sup>This man, the lord of the country, said to us, "This is how I shall find out if you are honest men. Leave one of your brothers with me, take food for your hungry households and go. <sup>34</sup>Bring your youngest brother to me, and I shall know that you are not spies, but honest men. Then I will restore your brother to you, and you can move about the country freely." ' <sup>35</sup>But on emptying their sacks, each of them found his silver inside, and when they and their father saw the bundles of silver, they were afraid. <sup>36</sup>Their father Jacob said to them, 'You have robbed me of my children. Joseph has disappeared; Simeon has disappeared; and now you are taking Benjamin. Everything is against me.' <sup>37</sup>Reuben said to his father, 'You may kill both my sons if I do not bring him back to you. Put him in my charge, and I shall bring him back.' <sup>38</sup>But Jacob said, 'My son shall not go with you, for his brother is dead and he alone is left. If he comes to any harm on the journey, you will bring down my grey hairs in sorrow to the grave.'

**43**<sup>1</sup>The famine was still severe in the country. <sup>2</sup>When they had used up the corn they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, 'Go back and buy a little more corn for us to eat.' <sup>3</sup>But Judah replied, 'The man plainly warned us that we must not go into his presence unless our brother was with us. <sup>4</sup>If you let our brother go with us, we will go down and buy food for you. <sup>5</sup>But if you will not let him, we will not go; for the man said to us, "You shall not come into my presence, unless your brother is with you." ' <sup>6</sup>Israel said, 'Why have you treated me so badly? Why did you tell the man that you had

yet another brother?’ <sup>7</sup>They answered, ‘He questioned us closely about ourselves and our family: “Is your father still alive?” he asked, “Have you a brother?”, and we answered his questions. How could we possibly know that he would tell us to bring our brother to Egypt?’ <sup>8</sup>Judah said to his father Israel, ‘Send the boy with me; then we can start at once. By doing this we shall save our lives, ours, yours, and our dependants’, and none of us will starve. <sup>9</sup>I will go surety for him and you may hold me responsible. If I do not bring him back and restore him to you, you shall hold me guilty all my life. <sup>10</sup>If we had not wasted all this time, by now we could have gone back twice over.’

<sup>11</sup>Their father Israel said to them, ‘If it must be so, then do this: take in your baggage, as a gift for the man, some of the produce for which our country is famous: a little balsam, a little honey, gum tragacanth, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. <sup>12</sup>Take double the amount of silver and restore what was returned to you in your packs; perhaps it was a mistake. <sup>13</sup>Take your brother with you and go straight back to the man. <sup>14</sup>May God Almighty make him kindly disposed to you, and may he send back the one whom you left behind, and Benjamin too. As for me, if I am bereaved, then I am bereaved.’ <sup>15</sup>So they took the gift and double the amount of silver, and with Benjamin they started at once for Egypt, where they presented themselves to Joseph.

<sup>16</sup>When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his steward, ‘Bring these men indoors, kill a beast and make dinner ready, for they will eat with me at noon.’ <sup>17</sup>He did as Joseph told him and brought the men into the house. <sup>18</sup>When they came in they were afraid, for they thought, ‘We have been brought in here because of that affair of the silver which was replaced in our packs the first time. He means to trump up some charge against us and victimize us, seize our asses and make us his slaves.’ <sup>19</sup>So they approached Joseph’s steward and spoke to him at the door of the house. <sup>20</sup>They said, ‘Please listen, my lord. After our first visit to buy food, <sup>21</sup>when we reached the place where we were to spend the night, we opened our packs and each of us found his silver in full weight at the top of his pack. We have brought it back with us, <sup>22</sup>and have added other silver to buy food. We do not know who put the silver in our packs.’ <sup>23</sup>He answered, ‘Set your minds at rest; do not be afraid. It was your God, the God of your father, who hid treasure for you in your packs. I did receive the silver.’ Then he brought Simeon out to them.

<sup>24</sup>The steward brought them into Joseph’s house and gave them water to wash their feet, and provided fodder for their asses. <sup>25</sup>They had their gifts ready when Joseph arrived at noon, for they had heard that they were to eat there. <sup>26</sup>When Joseph came into the house, they presented him with the gifts which they had brought, bowing to the ground before him. <sup>27</sup>He asked them how they were and said, ‘Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?’ <sup>28</sup>They answered, ‘Yes, my lord, our father is still alive and well.’ And they bowed low and prostrated themselves. <sup>29</sup>Joseph looked and saw his own mother’s son, his brother Benjamin, and asked, ‘Is this your youngest brother, of whom you told me?’, and to Benjamin he said, ‘May God be gracious to you, my son!’ <sup>30</sup>Joseph was overcome; his feelings for his brother mastered him, and he was near to tears. So he went into the inner room and wept. <sup>31</sup>Then he washed his face and came out; and, holding back his feelings, he ordered the meal to be served. <sup>32</sup>They served him by himself, and the brothers by themselves, and the

Egyptians who were at dinner were also served separately ; for Egyptians hold it an abomination to eat with Hebrews. <sup>33</sup>The brothers were seated in his presence, the eldest first according to his age and so on down to the youngest: they looked at one another in astonishment. <sup>34</sup>Joseph sent them each a portion from what was before him, but Benjamin's was five times larger than any of the other portions. Thus they drank with him and all grew merry.

**44**<sup>1</sup>Joseph gave his steward this order: 'Fill the men's packs with as much food as they can carry and put each man's silver at the top of his pack. <sup>2</sup>And put my goblet, my silver goblet, at the top of the youngest brother's pack with the silver for the corn.' He did as Joseph said. <sup>3</sup>At daybreak the brothers were allowed to take their asses and go on their journey; <sup>4</sup>but before they had gone very far from the city, Joseph said to his steward, 'Go after those men at once, and when you catch up with them, say, "Why have you repaid good with evil? Why have you stolen the silver goblet? <sup>5</sup>It is the one from which my lord drinks, and which he uses for divination. You have done a wicked thing." ' <sup>6</sup>When he caught up with them, he repeated all this to them, <sup>7</sup>but they replied, 'My lord, how can you say such things? No, sir, God forbid that we should do any such thing! <sup>8</sup>You remember the silver we found at the top of our packs? We brought it back to you from Canaan. Why should we steal silver or gold from your master's house? <sup>9</sup>If any one of us is found with the goblet, he shall die; and, what is more, my lord, we will all become your slaves.' <sup>10</sup>He said, 'Very well, then ; I accept what you say. The man in whose possession it is found shall be my slave, but the rest of you shall go free.' <sup>11</sup>Each man quickly lowered his pack to the ground and opened it. <sup>12</sup>The steward searched them, beginning with the eldest and finishing with the youngest, and the goblet was found in Benjamin's pack.

<sup>13</sup>At this they rent their clothes; then each man loaded his ass and they returned to the city. <sup>14</sup>Joseph was still in the house when Judah and his brothers came in. They threw themselves on the ground before him, <sup>15</sup>and Joseph said, 'What have you done? You might have known that a man like myself would practise divination.' <sup>16</sup>Judah said, 'What shall we say, my lord? What can we say to prove our innocence? God has found out our sin. Here we are, my lord, ready to be made your slaves, we ourselves as well as the one who was found with the goblet.' <sup>17</sup>Joseph answered, 'God forbid that I should do such a thing! The one who was found with the goblet shall become my slave, but the rest of you can go home to your father in peace.'

<sup>18</sup>Then Judah went up to him and said, 'Please listen, my lord. Let me say a word to your lordship, I beg. Do not be angry with me, for you are as great as Pharaoh. <sup>19</sup>You, my lord, asked us whether we had a father or a brother. <sup>20</sup>We answered, "We have an aged father, and he has a young son born in his old age; this boy's full brother is dead and he alone is left of his mother's children, he alone, and his father loves him." <sup>21</sup>Your lordship answered, "Bring him down to me so that I may set eyes on him." <sup>22</sup>We told you, my lord, that the boy could not leave his father, and that his father would die if he left him. <sup>23</sup>But you answered, "Unless your youngest brother comes here with you, you shall not enter my presence again." <sup>24</sup>We went back to your servant our father, and told him what your lordship had said. <sup>25</sup>When our father told us to go and buy food, <sup>26</sup>we answered, "We cannot go down; for without our youngest brother we cannot enter the

man's presence; but if our brother is with us, we will go." <sup>27</sup>Our father, my lord, then said to us, "You know that my wife bore me two sons. <sup>28</sup>One left me, and I said, 'He must have been torn to pieces.' I have not seen him to this day. <sup>29</sup>If you take this one from me as well, and he comes to any harm, then you will bring down my grey hairs in trouble to the grave." <sup>30</sup>Now, my lord, when I return to my father without the boy – and remember, his life is bound up with the boy's – what will happen is this: <sup>31</sup>he will see that the boy is not with us and will die, and your servants will have brought down our father's grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. <sup>32</sup>Indeed, my lord, it was I who went surety for the boy to my father. I said, "If I do not bring him back to you, then you shall hold me guilty all my life." <sup>33</sup>Now, my lord, let me remain in place of the boy as your lordship's slave, and let him go with his brothers. <sup>34</sup>How can I return to my father without the boy? I could not bear to see the misery which my father would suffer.'

**45**<sup>1</sup>Joseph could no longer control his feelings in front of his attendants, and he called out, 'Let everyone leave my presence.' So there was nobody present when Joseph made himself known to his brothers, <sup>2</sup>but so loudly did he weep that the Egyptians and Pharaoh's household heard him. <sup>3</sup>Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph; can my father be still alive?' His brothers were so dumbfounded at finding themselves face to face with Joseph that they could not answer. <sup>4</sup>Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come closer', and so they came close. He said, 'I am your brother Joseph whom you sold into Egypt. <sup>5</sup>Now do not be distressed or take it amiss that you sold me into slavery here; it was God who sent me ahead of you to save men's lives. <sup>6</sup>For there have now been two years of famine in the country, and there will be another five years with neither ploughing nor harvest. <sup>7</sup>God sent me ahead of you to ensure that you will have descendants on earth, and to preserve you all, a great band of survivors. <sup>8</sup>So it was not you who sent me here, but God, and he has made me a father [*Or* counsellor] to Pharaoh, and lord over all his household and ruler of all Egypt. <sup>9</sup>Make haste and go back to my father and give him this message from his son Joseph: "God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not delay. <sup>10</sup>You shall live in the land of Goshen and be near me, you, your sons and your grandsons, your flocks and herds and all that you have. <sup>11</sup>I will take care of you there, you and your household and all that you have, and see that you are not reduced to poverty; there are still five years of famine to come." <sup>12</sup>You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is Joseph himself who is speaking to you. <sup>13</sup>Tell my father of all the honour which I enjoy in Egypt, tell him all you have seen, and make haste to bring him down here.' <sup>14</sup>Then he threw his arms round his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin too embraced him weeping. <sup>15</sup>He kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and afterwards his brothers talked with him.

<sup>16</sup>When the report that Joseph's brothers had come reached Pharaoh's house, he and all his courtiers were pleased. <sup>17</sup>Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Say to your brothers: "This is what you are to do. Load your beasts and go to Canaan. <sup>18</sup>Fetch your father and your households and bring them to me. I will give you the best that there is in Egypt, and you shall enjoy the fat of the land." <sup>19</sup>You shall also tell them: "Take wagons from Egypt for your dependants and your wives and fetch your father and come. <sup>20</sup>Have no regrets at leaving your possessions, for all the best that there is in Egypt is yours." ' <sup>21</sup>The sons

of Israel did as they were told, and Joseph gave them wagons, according to Pharaoh's orders, and food for the journey. <sup>22</sup>He provided each of them with a change of clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothing. <sup>23</sup>Moreover he sent his father ten asses carrying the best that there was in Egypt, and ten she-asses loaded with grain, bread, and provisions for his journey. <sup>24</sup>So he dismissed his brothers, telling them not to quarrel among themselves on the road, and they set out. <sup>25</sup>Thus they went up from Egypt and came to their father Jacob in Canaan. <sup>26</sup>There they gave him the news that Joseph was still alive and that he was ruler of all Egypt. He was stunned and could not believe it, <sup>27</sup>but they told him all that Joseph had said; and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to take him away, his spirit revived. <sup>28</sup>Israel said, 'It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive; I will go and see him before I die.'

**46**<sup>1</sup>SO ISRAEL SET OUT with all that he had and came to Beersheba where he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. <sup>2</sup>God said to Israel in a vision by night, 'Jacob, Jacob', and he answered, 'I am here.' <sup>3</sup>God said, 'I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you a great nation. <sup>4</sup>I will go down with you to Egypt, and I myself will bring you back again without fail; and Joseph shall close your eyes.' <sup>5</sup>So Jacob set out from Beersheba. Israel's sons conveyed their father Jacob, their dependants, and their wives in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry them. <sup>6</sup>They took the herds and the stock which they had acquired in Canaan and came to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him, <sup>7</sup>his sons and their sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters: he brought all his descendants to Egypt.

8 [vv8-25: cp Exod. 6.14-16; Num. 26.5-50; 1Chr. 4.I, 24; 5.3; 6.1; 7.1, 6, 13, 30; 8.1-5] These are the names of the Israelites who entered Egypt: Jacob and his sons, as follows: Reuben, Jacob's eldest son. <sup>9</sup>The sons of Reuben: Enoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi. <sup>10</sup>The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Saul, who was the son of a Canaanite woman. <sup>11</sup>The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath and Merari. <sup>12</sup>The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerah; of these Er and Onan died in Canaan. The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. <sup>13</sup>The sons of Issachar: Tola, Pua, Iob and Shimron. <sup>14</sup>The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon and Jahleel. <sup>15</sup>These are the sons of Leah whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, and there was also his daughter Dinah. His sons and daughters numbered thirty-three in all.

<sup>16</sup>The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi and Areli. <sup>17</sup>The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel. <sup>18</sup>These are the descendants of Zilpah whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah; sixteen in all, born to Jacob.

<sup>19</sup>The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. <sup>20</sup>Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph in Egypt. Asenath daughter of Potiphera priest of On bore them to him. <sup>21</sup>The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher and Ashbel; and the sons of Bela: Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim and Ard. <sup>22</sup>These are the descendants of Rachel; fourteen in all, born to Jacob.

<sup>23</sup>The son [prob. rdg, Heb. sons] of Dan: Hushim. <sup>24</sup>The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni,

Jezer and Shillem. <sup>25</sup>These are the descendants of Bilhah whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel; seven in all, born to Jacob.

<sup>26</sup>The persons belonging to Jacob who came to Egypt, all his direct descendants, not counting the wives of his sons, were sixty-six in all. <sup>27</sup>Two sons were born to Joseph in Egypt. Thus the house of Jacob numbered seventy when it entered Egypt.

<sup>28</sup>Judah was sent ahead that he might appear before Joseph in Goshen, and so they entered Goshen. <sup>29</sup>Joseph had his chariot made ready and went up to meet his father Israel in Goshen. When they met, he threw his arms round him and wept, and embraced him for a long time, weeping. <sup>30</sup>Israel said to Joseph, 'I have seen your face again, and you are still alive. Now I am ready to die.' <sup>31</sup>Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, 'I will go and tell Pharaoh; I will say to him, "My brothers and my father's household who were in Canaan have come to me." ' <sup>32</sup>Now his brothers were shepherds, men with their own flocks and herds, and they had brought them with them, their flocks and herds and all that they possessed. <sup>33</sup>So Joseph said, 'When Pharaoh summons you and asks you what your occupation is, <sup>34</sup>you must say, "My lord, we have been herdsmen all our lives, as our fathers were before us." You must say this if you are to settle in the land of Goshen, because all shepherds are an abomination to the Egyptians.'

**47**<sup>1</sup>Joseph came and told Pharaoh, 'My father and my brothers have arrived from Canaan, with their flocks and their cattle and all that they have, and they are now in Goshen.' <sup>2</sup>Then he chose five of his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh, <sup>3</sup>who asked them what their occupation was, and they answered, 'My lord, we are shepherds, we and our fathers before us, <sup>4</sup>and we have come to stay in this land; for there is no pasture in Canaan for our sheep, because the famine there is so severe. We beg you, my lord, to let us settle now in Goshen.' <sup>5</sup>Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'So your father and your brothers have come to you. <sup>6</sup>The land of Egypt is yours; settle them in the best part of it. Let them live in Goshen, and if you know of any capable men among them, make them chief herdsmen over my cattle.'

<sup>7</sup>Then Joseph brought his father in and presented him to Pharaoh, and Jacob gave Pharaoh his blessing. <sup>8</sup>Pharaoh asked Jacob his age, <sup>9</sup>and he answered, 'The years of my earthly sojourn are one hundred and thirty; hard years they have been and few, not equal to the years that my fathers lived in their time.' <sup>10</sup>Jacob then blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence. <sup>11</sup>So Joseph settled his father and his brothers, and gave them lands in Egypt, in the best part of the country, in the district of Rameses, as Pharaoh had ordered. <sup>12</sup>He supported his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with all the food they needed.

<sup>13</sup>There was no bread in the whole country, so very severe was the famine, and Egypt and Canaan were laid low by it. <sup>14</sup>Joseph collected all the silver in Egypt and Canaan in return for the corn which the people bought, and deposited it in Pharaoh's treasury.

<sup>15</sup>When all the silver in Egypt and Canaan had been used up, the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, 'Give us bread, or we shall die before your eyes. Our silver is all spent.'

<sup>16</sup>Joseph said, 'If your silver is spent, give me your herds, and I will give you bread in

return.’ <sup>17</sup>So they brought their herds to Joseph, who gave them bread in exchange for their horses, their flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, and their asses. He maintained them that year with bread in exchange for their herds. <sup>18</sup>The year came to an end, and the following year they came to him again and said, ‘My lord, we cannot conceal it from you: our silver is all gone and our herds of cattle are yours. Nothing is left for your lordship but our bodies and our lands. <sup>19</sup>Why should we perish before your eyes, we and our land as well? Take us and our land in payment for bread, and we and our land alike will be in bondage to Pharaoh. Give us seed-corn to keep us alive, or we shall die and our land will become desert.’ <sup>20</sup>So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh, because the Egyptians sold all their fields, so severe was the famine; the land became Pharaoh’s. <sup>21</sup>As for the people, Pharaoh set them to work as slaves from one end of the territory of Egypt to the other. <sup>22</sup>But Joseph did not buy the land which belonged to the priests; they had a fixed allowance from Pharaoh and lived on this, so that they had no need to sell their land.

<sup>23</sup>Joseph said to the people, ‘Listen; I have today bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Here is seed-corn for you. Sow the land, <sup>24</sup>and give one fifth of the crop to Pharaoh. Four fifths shall be yours to provide seed for your fields and food for yourselves, your households, and your dependants.’ <sup>25</sup>The people said, ‘You have saved our lives. If it please your lordship, we will be Pharaoh’s slaves.’ <sup>26</sup>Joseph established it as a law in Egypt that one fifth should belong to Pharaoh, and this is still in force. It was only the priests’ land that did not pass into Pharaoh’s hands.

<sup>27</sup>Thus Israel settled in Egypt, in Goshen; there they acquired land, and were fruitful and increased greatly. <sup>28</sup>Jacob stayed in Egypt for seventeen years and lived to be a hundred and forty-seven years old. <sup>29</sup>When the time of his death drew near, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, ‘If I may now claim this favour from you, put your hand under my thigh and swear by the LORD that you will deal loyally and truly with me and not bury me in Egypt. <sup>30</sup>When I die like my forefathers, you shall carry me from Egypt and bury me in their grave.’ He answered, ‘I will do as you say’; <sup>31</sup>but Jacob said, ‘Swear it.’ So he swore the oath, and Israel sank down over the end of the bed.

**48**<sup>1</sup>The time came when Joseph was told that his father was ill, so he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. <sup>2</sup>Jacob heard that his son Joseph was coming to him, and he summoned his strength and sat up on the bed. <sup>3</sup>Jacob said to Joseph, ‘God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in Canaan and blessed me. <sup>4</sup>He said to me, “I will make you fruitful and increase your descendants until they become a host of nations. I will give this land to your descendants after you as a perpetual possession.” <sup>5</sup>Now, your two sons, who were born to you in Egypt before I came here, shall be counted as my sons; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine as Reuben and Simeon are. <sup>6</sup>Any children born to you after them shall be counted as yours, but in respect of their tribal territory they shall be reckoned under their elder brothers’ names. <sup>7</sup>As I was coming from Paddan-aram I was bereaved of Rachel your mother on the way, in Canaan, whilst there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, and I buried her there by the road to Ephrath, that is Bethlehem.’

<sup>8</sup>When Israel saw Joseph’s sons, he said, ‘Who are these?’ <sup>9</sup>Joseph replied to his father,

'They are my sons whom God has given me here.' Israel said, 'Bring them to me, I beg you, so that I may take them on my knees [*Or may bless them*]?' <sup>10</sup>Now Israel's eyes were dim with age, and he could not see; so Joseph brought the boys close to his father, and he kissed them and embraced them. <sup>11</sup>He said to Joseph, 'I had not expected to see your face again, and now God has granted me to see your sons also.'  
<sup>12</sup>Joseph took them from his father's knees and bowed to the ground. <sup>13</sup>Then he took the two of them, Ephraim on his right at Israel's left and Manasseh on his left at Israel's right, and brought them close to him. <sup>14</sup>Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, although he was the younger, and, crossing his hands, laid his left hand on Manasseh's head ; but Manasseh was the elder. <sup>15</sup>He blessed Joseph and said:

'The God in whose presence my forefathers lived,  
my forefathers Abraham and Isaac,  
the God who has been my shepherd all my life until this day,  
<sup>16</sup>the angel who ransomed me from all misfortune,  
may he bless these boys ;  
they shall be called by my name,  
and by that of my forefathers, Abraham and Isaac;  
may they grow into a great people on earth.'

<sup>17</sup>When Joseph saw that his father was laying his right hand on Ephraim's head, he was displeased; so he took hold of his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's. <sup>18</sup>He said, 'That is not right, my father. This is the elder; lay your right hand on his head.'  
<sup>19</sup>But his father refused; he said, 'I know, my son, I know. He too shall become a people; he too shall become great, but his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall be a whole nation in themselves.'  
<sup>20</sup>That day he blessed them and said:

'When a blessing is pronounced in Israel,  
men shall use your names and say,  
God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh',

thus setting Ephraim before Manasseh. <sup>21</sup>Then Israel said to Joseph, 'I am dying. God will be with you and will bring you back to the land of your fathers. <sup>22</sup>I give you one ridge of land more than your brothers: I took it from the Amorites with my sword and my bow.'

**49**<sup>1</sup>JACOB SUMMONED HIS SONS and said, 'Come near, and I will tell you what will happen to you in days to come.

<sup>2</sup>Gather round me and listen, you sons of Jacob;  
listen to Israel your father.

<sup>3</sup>Reuben, you are my first-born,  
my strength and the first fruit of my vigour,  
excelling in pride, excelling in might,  
<sup>4</sup>turbulent as a flood, you shall not excel;  
because you climbed into your father's bed;  
then you defiled his concubine's couch.

<sup>5</sup>Simeon and Levi are brothers,  
their spades became weapons of violence.

<sup>6</sup>My soul shall not enter their council,

my heart shall not join their company;  
for in their anger they killed men,  
wantonly they hamstrung oxen.

<sup>7</sup>A curse be on their anger because it was fierce;  
a curse on their wrath because it was ruthless!  
I will scatter them in Jacob,  
I will disperse them in Israel.

<sup>8</sup>Judah, your brothers shall praise you,  
your hand is on the neck of your enemies.  
Your father's sons shall do you homage.

<sup>9</sup>Judah, you lion's whelp,  
you have returned from the kill, my son,  
and crouch and stretch like a lion;  
and, like a lion [*Or lioness*], who dare rouse you?

<sup>10</sup>The sceptre shall not pass from Judah,  
nor the staff from his descendants,  
so long as tribute is brought to him  
and the obedience of the nations is his.  
To the vine he tethers his ass,

<sup>11</sup>and the colt of his ass to the red vine;  
he washes his cloak in wine,  
his robes in the blood of grapes.

<sup>12</sup>Darker than wine are his eyes,  
his teeth whiter than milk.

<sup>13</sup>Zebulun dwells by the sea-shore,  
his shore is a haven for ships,  
and his frontier rests on Sidon.

<sup>14</sup>Issachar, a gelded ass  
lying down in the cattle-pens,

<sup>15</sup>saw that a settled home was good  
and that the land was pleasant,  
so he bent his back to the burden  
and submitted to perpetual forced labour.

<sup>16</sup>Dan – how insignificant his people,  
lowly as any tribe in Israel [*Or Dan shall judge his people as one of the  
tribes of Israel*]!

<sup>17</sup>Let Dan be a viper on the road,  
a horned snake on the path,  
who bites the horse's fetlock  
so that the rider tumbles backwards.

<sup>18</sup>For thy salvation I wait in hope, O LORD.

<sup>19</sup>Gad is raided by raiders,  
and he raids them from the rear.

<sup>20</sup>Asher shall have rich food as daily fare,  
and provide dishes fit for a king.

<sup>21</sup>Naphtali is a spreading terebinth  
putting forth lovely boughs.

<sup>22</sup>Joseph is a fruitful tree [*Or a fruitful ben-tree*] by a spring  
with branches climbing over the wall.

<sup>23</sup>The archers savagely attacked him,  
they shot at him and pressed him hard,

<sup>24</sup>but their bow was splintered by the Eternal  
and the sinews of their arms were torn apart

by the power of the Strong One of Jacob,  
by the name of the Shepherd [*prob. rdg, Heb adds stone*] of Israel,

<sup>25</sup>by the God of your father – so may he help you,  
by God Almighty – so may he bless you

with the blessings of heaven above,  
the blessings of the deep that lurks below.

The blessings of breast and womb

<sup>26</sup>and the blessings of your father are stronger  
than the blessings of the everlasting pools [*Or hills*]

and the bounty of the eternal hills.

They shall be on the head of Joseph,

on the brow of the prince among [*the prince among: or the one cursed by*]  
his brothers.

<sup>27</sup>Benjamin is a ravening wolf:

in the morning he devours the prey,

in the evening he snatches a share of the spoil.'

<sup>28</sup>These, then, are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father Jacob said to them, when he blessed them each in turn. <sup>29</sup>He gave them his last charge and said, 'I shall soon be gathered to my father's kin ; bury me with my forefathers in the cave on the plot of land which belonged to Ephron the Hittite, <sup>30</sup>that is the cave on the plot of land at Machpelah east of Mamre in Canaan, the field which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite for a burial-place. <sup>31</sup>There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah; there Isaac and his wife Rebecca were buried; and there I buried Leah. <sup>32</sup>The land and the cave on it were bought from the Hittites.' <sup>33</sup>When Jacob had finished giving his last charge to his sons, he drew his feet up on to the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his father's kin.

**50**<sup>1</sup>Then Joseph threw himself upon his father, weeping and kissing his face. <sup>2</sup>He ordered the physicians in his service to embalm his father Israel, and they did so, <sup>3</sup>finishing the task in forty days, which was the usual time for embalming. The Egyptians mourned him for seventy days; <sup>4</sup>and then, when the days of mourning for Israel were over, Joseph approached members of Pharaoh's household and said, 'If I can count on your goodwill, then speak for me to Pharaoh; tell him that <sup>5</sup>my father made me take an

oath, saying, "I am dying. Bury me in the grave that I bought [*Or dug*] for myself in Canaan." Ask him to let me go up and bury my father, and afterwards I will return.'<sup>6</sup>Pharaoh answered, 'Go and bury your father, as he has made you swear to do.'<sup>7</sup>So Joseph went to bury his father, accompanied by all Pharaoh's courtiers, the elders of his household, and all the elders of Egypt,<sup>8</sup>together with all Joseph's own household, his brothers, and his father's household; only their dependants, with the flocks and herds, were left in Goshen.<sup>9</sup>He took with him chariots and horsemen ; they were a very great company.<sup>10</sup>When they came to the threshing-floor of Atad beside the river Jordan, they raised a loud and bitter lament; and there Joseph observed seven days' mourning for his father.<sup>11</sup>When the Canaanites who lived there saw this mourning at the threshing-floor of Atad, they said, 'How bitterly the Egyptians are mourning!'; accordingly they named the place beside the Jordan Abel-mizraim [*That is Mourning (or Meadow) of Egypt*].

<sup>12</sup>Thus Jacob's sons did what he had told them to do.<sup>13</sup>They took him to Canaan and buried him in the cave on the plot of land at Machpelah, the land which Abraham had bought as a burial-place from Ephron the Hittite, to the east of Mamre.<sup>14</sup>Then, after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him.

<sup>15</sup>When their father was dead Joseph's brothers were afraid and said, 'What if Joseph should bear a grudge against us and pay us out for all the harm that we did to him?'<sup>16</sup>They therefore approached Joseph with these words: 'In his last words to us before he died, your father gave us <sup>17</sup>this message for you: "I ask you to forgive your brothers' crime and wickedness; I know they did you harm." So now forgive our crime, we beg; for we are servants of your father's God.' When they said this to him, Joseph wept.<sup>18</sup>His brothers also wept [*prob. rdg, Heb came*] and prostrated themselves before him; they said, 'You see, we are your slaves.'<sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>You meant to do me harm; but God meant to bring good out of it by preserving the lives of many people, as we see today.<sup>21</sup>Do not be afraid. I will provide for you and your dependants.' Thus he comforted them and set their minds at rest.

<sup>22</sup>Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's household. He lived there to be a hundred and ten years old <sup>23</sup>and saw Ephraim's children to the third generation; he also recognized as his the children of Manasseh's son Machir.<sup>24</sup>He said to his brothers, 'I am dying; but God will not fail to come to your aid and take you from here to the land which he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.'<sup>25</sup>He made the sons of Israel take an oath, saying, 'When God thus comes to your aid, you must take my bones with you from here.'<sup>26</sup>So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. He was embalmed and laid in a coffin in Egypt.