

embarrassment I may have caused you. This will settle any claim against me in this matter."

¹⁷Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and the other women of the household, so they could have children. ¹⁸For the LORD had stricken all the women with infertility as a warning to Abimelech for having taken Abraham's wife.

^{21:1} THEN the LORD did exactly what he had promised. ²Sarah became pregnant, and she gave a son to Abraham in his old age. It all happened at the time God had said it would. ³And Abraham named his son Isaac. ⁴Eight days after Isaac was born, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. ⁵Abraham was one hundred years old at the time.

⁶And Sarah declared, "God has brought me laughter! All who hear about this will laugh with me. ⁷For who would have dreamed that I would ever have a baby? Yet I have given Abraham a son in his old age!"

⁸As time went by and Isaac grew and was weaned, Abraham gave a big party to celebrate the happy occasion. ⁹But Sarah saw Ishmael—the son of Abraham and her Egyptian servant Hagar—making fun of Isaac. ¹⁰So she turned to Abraham and demanded, "Get rid of that servant and her son. He is not going to share the family inheritance with my son, Isaac. I won't have it!"

¹¹This upset Abraham very much because Ishmael was his son. ¹²But God told Abraham, "Do not be upset over the boy and your servant wife. Do just as Sarah says, for Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted. ¹³But I will make a nation of the descendants of Hagar's son because he also is your son."

¹⁴So Abraham got up early the next

morning, prepared food for the journey, and strapped a container of water to Hagar's shoulders. He sent her away with their son, and she walked out into the wilderness of Beersheba, wandering aimlessly. ¹⁵When the water was gone, she left the boy in the shade of a bush. ¹⁶Then she went and sat down by herself about a hundred yards away. "I don't want to watch the boy die," she said, as she burst into tears.

¹⁷Then God heard the boy's cries, and the angel of God called to Hagar from the sky, "Hagar, what's wrong? Do not be afraid! God has heard the boy's cries from the place where you laid him. ¹⁸Go to him and comfort him, for I will make a great nation from his descendants."

¹⁹Then God opened Hagar's eyes, and she saw a well. She immediately filled her water container and gave the boy a drink. ²⁰And God was with the boy as he grew up in the wilderness of Paran. He became an expert archer, ²¹and his mother arranged a marriage for him with a young woman from Egypt.

²²About this time, Abimelech came with Phicol, his army commander, to visit Abraham. "It is clear that God helps you in everything you do," Abimelech said. ²³"Swear to me in God's name that you won't deceive me, my children, or my grandchildren. I have been loyal to you, so now swear that you will be loyal to me and to this country in which you are living."

²⁴Abraham replied, "All right, I swear to it!" ²⁵Then Abraham complained to Abimelech about a well that Abimelech's servants had taken violently from Abraham's servants.

²⁶"This is the first I've heard of it," Abimelech said. "And I have no idea who is responsible. Why didn't you say something about this before?"

²⁷Then Abraham gave sheep and oxen to Abimelech, and they made a treaty. ²⁸But when Abraham took seven additional ewe lambs and set them off by themselves, ²⁹Abimelech asked, "Why are you doing that?"

³⁰Abraham replied, "They are my gift to you as a public confirmation that I dug this well." ³¹So ever since, that place has been known as Beersheba—"well of the oath"—because that was where they had sworn an oath. ³²After making their covenant, Abimelech left with Phicol, the commander of his army, and they returned home to the land of the Philistines. ³³Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and he worshiped the LORD, the Eternal God, at that place. ³⁴And Abraham lived in Philistine country for a long time.

^{22:1} LATER on God tested Abraham's faith and obedience. "Abraham!" God called.

"Yes," he replied. "Here I am."

²"Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will point out to you."

³The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son Isaac. Then he chopped wood to build a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place where God had told him to go. ⁴On the third day of the journey, Abraham saw the place in the distance. ⁵"Stay here with the donkey," Abraham told the young men. "The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back."

⁶Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the knife and

the fire. As the two of them went on together, ⁷Isaac said, "Father?"

"Yes, my son," Abraham replied.

"We have the wood and the fire," said the boy, "but where is the lamb for the sacrifice?"

⁸"God will provide a lamb, my son," Abraham answered. And they both went on together.

⁹When they arrived at the place where God had told Abraham to go, he built an altar and placed the wood on it. Then he tied Isaac up and laid him on the altar over the wood. ¹⁰And Abraham took the knife and lifted it up to kill his son as a sacrifice to the LORD. ¹¹At that moment the angel of the LORD shouted to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Yes," he answered. "I'm listening."

¹²"Lay down the knife," the angel said. "Do not hurt the boy in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld even your beloved son from me."

¹³Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering on the altar in place of his son. ¹⁴Abraham named the place "The LORD Will Provide." ¹⁵This name has now become a proverb: "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

¹⁶Then the angel of the LORD called again to Abraham from heaven, ¹⁷"This is what the LORD says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your beloved son, I swear by my own self that ¹⁸I will bless you richly. I will multiply your descendants into countless millions, like the stars of the sky and the sand on the seashore. They will conquer their enemies, ¹⁹and through your descendants, ²⁰all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me." ²¹Then they returned to