22

22:1-19 **God Tests Abraham’s Faith**

Gen 22:1**Then it happened after those things that God tested Abraham. And he said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Behold me.”**

**Then it happened after those things that**

“Sometime after those things happened” or “Sometime later” or “Several years later”. This is the beginning of a new episode that takes place as many as twelve years after Abraham and King Abimelech made their treaty (chapter 21). See how you translated “after those events” in Gen 15:1; it may be necessary to translate this phrase slightly differently here because of the context. (See: writing-newevent)

**God tested Abraham.**

“God {wanted/decided to} test Abraham.” Make sure your translation of this clause does not sound like the test was over. Rather it introduces what the following episode is about.

**And he said to him, “Abraham!”**

“So {one day} he called to him, “Abraham!” ” or “He called to him, “Abraham!” ” or “{This is what happened:} He/God called to him, “Abraham!” ”

**And he said,**

“Abraham replied/responded {to him},” Make sure the way you translate this quote margin fits the context well. (See: writing-quotations)

**“Behold me.”**

“I’m listening, {Lord/Master}.” or “Yes, {Lord/Master}?” or “What is it, {Lord/Master}?” Abraham’s reply is respectful and means that he is listening and ready to do what God wants him to do. Consider what is the best way to say this in your language. (See: figs-idiom)

Gen 22:2**Then he said, “Please take your son, your only {son} whom you love, Isaac, and go yourself to the land of Moriah and sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I will tell to you.”**

**Then he said,**

“Then God said {to him},” or “Then God commanded/told {him},” Translate this quote margin in a way that fits this context well. (See: writing-quotations)

**“Please take your son,**

“Take your son {with you},” See how you translated “please” when God is talking to a person in Gen 13:14; 15:5. Your translation of “take” here should not imply the use of force. See how you translated “took” in Gen 11:31; 12:5.

**your only {son} whom you love, Isaac,**

“{yes/indeed,} your only {son} Isaac whom you love,” This phrase repeats part of the previous phrase in order to emphasize it. Do what is natural in your language.

**and go yourself**

“and go/travel {with him}”. It is understood that he was to take Isaac with him. If this is not clear in your language, you could make that information explicit. (See: figs-explicit)

**to the land of Moriah**

“to the region of/called Moriah” or “to the Moriah Region” (See: translate-names)

**and sacrifice him there as a burnt offering**

“and sacrifice/offer him there {to me} as a burnt offering” or **“**There you are to burn him up {on an altar} as a sacrifice/offering {to me},”See how you translated a similar phrase in Gen 8:20.

**on one of the mountains**

“on {top of} one of the mountains” or “on {top of} a mountain”

**that I will tell to you.”**

“that I will show to you.” or “that I will point out to you.”

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Paragraph Break\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Gen 22:3 **So Abraham got up early in the morning and saddled his donkey. Then he took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son, and he cut wood for the burnt offering. Then he got up and left for the place that God had told to him.**

**So Abraham got up early in the morning**

“So the next morning, Abraham got up early” or “Early the next morning Abraham got up”. See how you translated “got up early in the morning” in Gen 20:8.

**and saddled his donkey.**

“put a {pack} saddle on his donkey {to get it ready} {for the trip}.” or “and got his donkey ready {for the trip}.” A donkey is like a small horse that people used to carry loads (as here). (See: translate-unknown)

**Then he took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son,**

“He took/brought two of his servants with him and his son Isaac” or “Then he took/got his son Isaac and two of his servants”

**and he cut wood**

“and he chopped/split {some} {fire}wood {with them}” or “and they chopped {some} {fire}wood {together}”. The reason Abraham is the only one mentioned in this clause and in the next sentence is that he is in focus. He did not travel alone and he probably did not chop the wood alone. Decide whether you need to make that explicit in your translation. (See: figs-explicit)

**for the burnt offering.**

“{to use} for the burnt offering {and loaded it on the donkey}.” or “that they would use to burn the sacrifice/offering {and loaded it on the donkey}.” Some languages must translate this noun phrase using a verb. Do what is natural in your language. See what you did in verse 2. (See: figs-abstractnouns)

**Then he got up and left for the place**

“Then he set out {with them} for/toward the place/mountain” or “Then they started traveling toward/to the place/mountain”. In this context, “got up” is used as an idiom that means Abraham started an activity. It does not mean that he was sitting down and literally stood up. (See: figs-idiom)

**that God had told to him.**

**“**that God had told/commanded him/Abraham {to go to}.**”**

Gen 22:4**On the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and he saw the place from a distance.**

**On the third day**

“Three days later,” or “After walking/traveling for three days,”

**Abraham lifted his eyes**

“Abraham/he looked ahead”. See how you translated the idiom “lifted his eyes” in Gen 18:2. It may be necessary to translate it differently here, because of the different context. (See: figs-idiom)

**and he saw the place from a distance.**

“and he could see the place/mountain {where they were headed} in the distance.” or “and in the distance he could see the place/mountain {where they were headed/going}.” Consider where it is best in your language to put the location phrase “from a distance” or “in the distance”. (See: figs-infostructure)

Gen 22:5**Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here by yourselves with the donkey, and I and the boy will go over there and bow down, then we will come back to you.”**

**Then Abraham said to his young men,**

“Then Abraham/he told his servants,” Be consistent here with how you translated “young men” in verse 3.

**“Stay here by yourselves with the donkey,**

“You {two} stay here with the donkey,” Some languages have special dual pronouns (that refer to only two people) that can be used in verse 5 to refer to Abraham’s two servants. (See: figs-youdual)

**and I and the boy will go**

“while the young man and I go” or “while my son and I go”. See how you translated “the boy” in Gen 21:12, 17-20. We do not know for sure how old Isaac was at this time, but estimates range between 18 and 37 years old. Make sure your translation of “boy” allows for that fact.

**over there**

“over there {to that mountain}” or “{to the mountain} over there”

**and bow down,**

“and bow down {to worship God}” or “and worship {God}”. In that culture, people had the custom of bowing down to worship God. Make sure it is clear in your translation why Abraham and Isaac would bow down. (See: translate-symaction)

**then we will come back to you.”**

“Then we will return to you {here}.” or “After that, we will come back {here} to you.”

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Paragraph Break\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Gen 22:6**Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put {it} on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand{s} the fire and the knife. Then the two of them went on together,**

**Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering**

“Then Abraham/he took the {fire}wood for the burnt offering {off the donkey},” or “Then Abraham/he took the {fire}wood that they would use to burn the/their sacrifice/offering,” See how you translated “{fire}wood” and “burnt offering” in verse 3.

**and put {it} on Isaac his son,**

“and loaded/put {it} on his son Isaac{’s shoulder/back} {to carry},” or “and gave {it} to his son Isaac to carry,” The Hebrew text does not specify exactly where Abraham put the wood on Isaac. Only specify that in a translation if it is necessary in your language.

**and he took in his hand{s}**

“and/while he himself carried” or “He himself carried”. Consider whether or not it is better to begin a new sentence here in your language.

**the fire**

“a fire pot {with hot coals in it}” or “the {other} things to make/start a fire”. The “fire” can either refer to hot coals (in a pot) or to a flint stone and wood chips that they would use to start the fire on the altar. Make sure that the way you translate this does not mean that Abraham was holding fire or hot coals in his bare hands.

**and the knife.**

“and a knife {to kill the sacrifice}.” or “and a {sacrifice} knife.”

**Then the two of them**

“Then Abraham and Isaac” or “Then they”. Some languages have a dual pronoun that could be used here. (See: figs-dual)

**went on together,**

“walked on together,” or “continued walking/heading {toward the mountain},”

Gen 22:7**and Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father?” And he said, “Behold me, my son.” Then he said, “Behold the fire pot and the wood, but where {is} the lamb for the burnt offering?”**

**and Isaac**

“and {as they went/walked,} Isaac” or “{As they walked,} Isaac”. Consider whether or not it is better in your language to begin a new sentence here.

**spoke to Abraham his father and said,**

“said to his father Abraham,” or “said,” Consider what is the most natural way to translate this quote margin in your language. (See: writing-quotations)

**“My father?”**

“Father.”

**And he said,**

“Abraham said/replied {to him},” (See: writing-quotations)

**“Behold me, my son.”**

“I’m listening, my son.” or “Yes, my son?” or “What is it, my son?” See how you translated the idiom “Behold me” in verse 1. (See: figs-idiom)

**Then he said,**

“Then Isaac asked {him},” or “Isaac asked {him},” (See: writing-quotations)

**“Behold**

“Here is/are” or “I see {that we have}”

**the fire and the wood,**

“the fire {pot/coals} and the {fire}wood,” or “what/everything we need to make a fire {to burn the sacrifice},” See how you translated “fire” in verse 6.

**but where {is} the lamb**

“but where {is} the lamb/sheep” or “but why is there no lamb/sheep” or “but why don’t we have a lamb”

**for the burnt offering?”**

“{for us} to use as the burnt offering?” or “{for us} to burn as the/our sacrifice {to God}?” or “that we will burn as a/our sacrifice/offering {to God}?”

Gen 22:8**And Abraham said, “God will see for himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” Then the two of them went on together.**

**And Abraham said,**

“Then Abraham said {to him},” or “Abraham answered {him},” (See: writing-quotations)

**“God will see for himself**

“God himself will see {to it that there is}” or “God himself will provide”. This is an idiom that means God will provide the lamb. Make sure this meaning is clear in your translation. (See: figs-idiom)

**the lamb for the burnt offering,**

“a lamb/sheep for the burnt offering,” or “a lamb/sheep for us to burn as a/our sacrifice/offering {to him},” See how you translated this phrase in verse 7.

**my son.”**

Consider whether it is more natural in your language to put this address first in this quote and say, “My son, God himself will...” (See: figs-infostructure)

**Then the two of them**

**“**Then/So the two of them” or “Then/So they”. See how you translated “the two of them” in verse 6. (See: figs-dual)

**went on together.**

“walked on together.” or “continued walking together {toward the mountain}.”

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Gen 22:9**Then they came to the place that God had told to him, and there Abraham built the altar and arranged the wood. Then he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.**

**Then they**

“When/After they”

**came to**

“got to” or “arrived at” or “reached”

**the place that God had told to him,**

“the place/mountain that God had told him {to go to}”. See how you translated this phrase in verse 3.

**and there Abraham built the altar**

“Abraham built/made a {stone} altar there”. Consider whether or not it is better in your language to begin a new sentence here. See how you translated “altar” in Gen 13:4, 18.

**and arranged the wood.**

“and laid/put the wood {on top of it}.” Abraham arranged the wood on top of the altar so that it would burn well. Make sure your translation of this phrase does not sound like he lit the fire yet; he did not do that until verse 13 when he sacrificed the ram.

**Then he bound Isaac his son**

“Then he bound/tied his son Isaac{‘s arms and legs} {with rope}”. (See figs-explicit)

**and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.**

“and put him on top of the wood {that was} on the altar.” Consider which order of these phrases is the clearest and most natural in your language. (See: figs-infostructure)

Gen 22:10 **Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.**

**Then Abraham**

“Then he”. Consider whether it is more natural to use a noun or a pronoun here to refer to Abraham. (See: writing-pronouns)

**reached out his hand and took the knife**

“took the knife in his hand” or “picked up the knife”. See how you translated “knife” in verse 6.

**to kill his son.**

“{in order} to kill his son {before sacrificing his body on the altar}.” Sacrifices were not burned alive, but were killed first. Some translation teams prefer to put cultural information like this in a footnote rather than make it explicit in a translation. Do what your team decides is best. (See: figs-explicit)

Gen 22:11 **But an angel of Yahweh called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham! Abraham!” And he said, “Behold me.”**

**But**

“But {just then}” or “But {before he/Abraham could use the knife,}” Make sure in your translation that it does **not** sound like Abraham killed Isaac.

**an angel of Yahweh**

“an angel from Yahweh” or “one of Yahweh’s angels”. See how you translated “an angel of Yahweh” in Gen 21:17.

**called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham! Abraham!”**

“called/shouted to him/Abraham from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!” ” The angel repeats Abraham’s name to communicate urgency and that he wants him to stop and listen. Make sure your translation does not sound like the angel was angry or criticizing Abraham.

**And he said,**

“Abraham replied {to the angel},” (See: writing-quotations)

**“Behold me.”**“I’m listening, {Lord}.” or “What is it, {Lord}?” or “Yes, {Lord}?” See how you translated “Behold me” in verse 1. (See: figs-idiom)

Gen 22:12 **Then he said, “Do not reach out your hand against the boy! And do not do anything to him, because now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”**

**Then he said,**

“Then the angel said,” or “Then the angel told him,”

**“Do not reach out your hand against**

“Do not lay your hands on” or “Do not harm/kill”. Consider whether your language has an idiom that has the same meaning as the Hebrew idiom here. (See: figs-idiom)

**the boy**

“the young man” or “your son”. See how you translated this in verse 5.

**And do not do anything to him,**

“Do not do anything to {harm} him” or “You must not do anything to {harm} him” or “You must not harm him in any way”. The angel repeats the previous command using different words in order to emphasize that Abraham should not hurt Isaac. Most languages can do something similar. Do what is natural in your language. (See: figs-parallelism)

**because now I know**

“Now I know/see” or “You have shown me”. Yahweh is the one talking here, represented by the angel who speaks on his behalf, or perhaps God is appearing to Abraham as an angel.

**that you fear God,**

“that you fear/revere me” or “that you deeply respect me”. See how you translated “fear” in Gen 20:11.

**since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”**

“since/because you {obeyed me and} did not hold back your son from me, {yes,} your only son.” or “since/because you {obeyed me and} did not refuse to sacrifice your son to me, {even though he is} your only son.” See how you translated “your son, your only son” in verse 2.

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Gen 22:13 **Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and behold a ram {was} behind {him}, caught in the thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.**

**Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked,**

“Then Abraham looked around”. See how you translated this idiom in verse 4. It may be necessary to translate it differently here, because of the different context. (See: figs-idiom)

**and behold a ram {was} behind {him},**

“and suddenly he saw a ram behind {him}” or “and there behind {him} he saw a ram”. A ram is an adult male sheep or goat. See how you translated the term in Gen 15:9.

**caught in the thicket by its horns.**

“that had caught/tangled its horns in the thicket/bushes.” or “that had its horns caught/stuck in a bush.” (See: figs-activepassive)

**So Abraham**

“So/Then {after releasing Isaac,} Abraham/he” or “Then Abraham/he {released/untied Isaac and}”. For some languages it may be necessary to explicitly state that Abraham untied Isaac and took him off the altar before he sacrificed the ram. (See: figs-explicit)

**went and took the ram,**

“took/untangled the ram {from the thicket/bush}”

**and sacrificed it as a burnt offering**

“{Then he killed/slaughtered the ram} and burned it on the altar as a sacrifice/offering {to God}”.Animals that were sacrificed to God as burnt offerings were killed first before they were burned on an altar. Make sure your translation does not sound like the ram was burned alive. If that is not clear, you could make some of the above implied information explicit in your translation. (See: figs-explicit)

**instead of his son.**

“in place of his son.” or “as a substitute for his son.”

Gen 22:14 **So Abraham called the name of that place “Yahweh-Yireh,” as it is said {to} this day, “On mountain of Yahweh it will be seen.”**

**So Abraham**

“That is why Abraham” or “{Because God provided the ram,} Abraham”. Make sure it is clear that what Yahweh did in verse 13 is the reason that Abraham gave that place the name “Yahweh-Yireh” in verse 14.

**called the name of that place**

“called/named that place”

**“Yahweh-Yireh,”**

“Yahweh-Yireh, {which means “Yahweh will see/provide,”}” If you include the meaning of this name in your translation or in a footnote, be consistent with how you translate the verb “see/provide” in verse 8 (and later in verse 14), which the name is based on. (See: translate-names)

**as it is said {to} this day,**

“{Even} today/now people {still} say,” This refers to the time period when Moses was writing this book. If that is not clear, you could put that information in a footnote.

**“On the mountain of Yahweh**

“On Yahweh’s mountain”

**it will be seen.”**

“it will be provided {by him}.” or “he will see to it {that we have what we need}.” or “he will provide what we/you need.” See how you translated this idiom in verse 8. (See: figs-idiom)

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Gen 22:15 **Then the angel of Yahweh called to Abraham a second time from heaven**

**Then the angel of Yahweh**

“Then Yahweh’s angel”. See how you translated “angel” in verses 11-12.

**called to Abraham a second time from heaven**

“called/spoke to Abraham from heaven again”. See how you translated “called...from heaven” in verse 11.

Gen 22:16 **and said, “I swear by myself, a declaration of Yahweh, that it is because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,**

**and said,**

“He said,” Decide whether or not it is more natural to begin a new sentence here in your translation.

**“I swear by myself, a declaration of Yahweh,**

“This is what Yahweh declares/says {to you}: ‘I swear by my own name” or “These are Yahweh’s own words: ‘With myself {as my own witness}, I vow/promise {to you}”. See how you translated “swear” in Gen 21:23-24.

**that it is because you have done this thing**

“that because/since you have done what I said/commanded” or “that since you obeyed me”

**and have not withheld your son,**

“and did not hold back your son {from me},” or “and did not refuse to sacrifice your son {to me},” or “were willing to give/sacrifice your son {to me}”. See how you translated a similar phrase in verse 12.

**your only son,**

“{yes,} your only son” or “{even though he is} your only son”. See how you translated this in verse 12.

Gen 22:17 **that I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your offspring as the stars of the heavens and as the sand that {is} on the shore of the sea, and your offspring will possess the gate{s} of their enemies.**

**that I will greatly bless you,**

“I will abundantly/surely bless you” or “I will {surely} cause you to prosper greatly”. This phrase repeats the verb to communicate that the blessing is certain and will be abundant. Do what is natural in your language.

**and I will greatly multiply your offspring**

“and will greatly multiply/increase {the number of} your descendants {so that they will be}” or “and I will give you so many descendants {that they will be}”

**as the stars of the heavens**

“{as many/numerous} as the stars in the heavens/sky”. Make sure it is clear in your translation that God is comparing the number of stars and grains of sand to the number of descendants Abraham will have. There will be so many that no one can count them all (as in Gen 13:16 and 15:6). (See: figs-simile)

**and as the sand that {is} on the shore of the sea,**

“and {as many/numerous} as the {grains of} sand on the seashore”

**and your offspring**

“and your descendants” or “Your offspring/descendants” or “They”. Consider whether or not it is better in your language to begin a new sentence here.

**will possess the gate{s} of their enemies.**

“will conquer the cities of {all} their enemies.” or “will conquer/defeat {all} their enemies and rule over them.” This phrase refers to cities and their inhabitants. Make sure that is clear in your translation. Cities were surrounded by stone walls that had gates. (See: figs-metonymy)

Gen 22:18 **And in your offspring all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you listened to my voice.”**

**And in your offspring**

“In/Through your offspring/descendants” or “Because of your offspring/descendants” or “By means of your offspring/descendants”. See how you translated “offspring” in verse 17.

**all the nations of the earth will be blessed,**

“all the nations/peoples of/on the earth will be blessed {by me},” or “{I} will bless all the people/ethnic groups {that live} on the earth,” See how you translated a similar sentence (“in/through...all the...of/on the earth will be blessed”) in Gen 12:3 and 18:18. (See: activepassive)

**because you listened to**

“because you heeded/obeyed” or “{I will do that} because you obeyed”. Consider whether or not it is better in your language to begin a new sentence here.

**my voice.”**

“my command.” or “what I said/commanded.” or “me.” Make sure it is clear in your translation that this phrase refers to what God commanded Abraham. (See: figs-metonymy)

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Gen 22:19 **Then Abraham returned to his young men, and they got up and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham stayed at Beersheba.**

**Then Abraham returned**

“After that, Abraham returned {with Isaac}” or “Afterwards/Then Abraham {and Isaac} went back”. Make sure your translation does not sound like Abraham returned alone, without Isaac. (See: figs-explicit)

**to his young men**

“to his/the {two] servants”. Be consistent here with how you translated “young men” in verses 3 and 5.

**and they got up and went together to Beersheba.**

“Then they returned {home} together to {the city of} Beersheba,” or “Then together they {all} traveled {back} {home} to {the city of} Beersheba,” At that time, Abraham and his family were living in Beersheba (Gen 21:31-34). So in your translation, it should not sound like Beersheba was a new destination; they were returning home. (See: figs-explicit)

**And Abraham stayed at Beersheba.**

“and Abraham {and his family} stayed there.” or “and Abraham continued to live there {with his family}.” or “where Abraham {and his family} continued to live.” Make sure your translation does not sound like Abraham was living alone in Beersheba apart from his family. (See: figs-explicit)

*22:20-24* **Abraham’s Brother Nahor’s Twelve Sons**

Gen 22:20 **Then it happened after those things that it was told to Abraham, saying, “Behold, Milcah, she too, has born sons for Nahor your brother:**

**Then it happened after those things that**

“Sometime after that” or “Sometime later”. This introduces a new topic. Consider the best way to do that in your language. (See: writing-newevent)

**it was told to Abraham, saying, “Behold,**

“someone told Abraham, “Listen,” or “someone told Abraham, “I have {some} news {for you}:” or “news reached Abraham that” or “Abraham found out that”. Consider whether it is more natural in your language to use a direct or indirect quote here. (See: figs-quotations}

**Milcah, she too, has born sons for Nahor your brother:**

“Milcah the wife of your brother Nahor has born {some} sons for him” or “your brother Nahor and his wife Milcah also have {some} sons”

Gen 22:21 **Uz his firstborn and Buz his brother and Kemuel, the father of Aram,**

**Uz his firstborn and Buz his brother and Kemuel,**

“{including} their firstborn/oldest {son} Uz, then Buz and Kemuel,” or “The first/oldest son/one is Uz, the second is Buz, and the third is Kemuel,”

**the father of Aram,**

“{who is} the father of Aram” or “who fathered Aram” or “whose son is Aram”

Gen 22:22 **and Kesed and Hazo and Pildash and Jidlaph and Bethuel.”**

**and Kesed and Hazo and Pildash and Jidlaph and Bethuel.”**

“{They also have sons named} Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.” Make sure it is clear in your translation that the people listed in verse 22 were sons of Nahor and Milcah, not sons of Kemuel (verse 21). Also consider whether it is best in your language to use a conjunction between each name in the list (like Hebrew does), or only before the last name in the list. See what you did for a similar list of names in Gen 10:26-29.

Gen 22:23 **And Bethuel fathered Rebekah. Those {are} the eight {sons} Milcah bore for Nahor, the brother of Abraham.**

**And Bethuel fathered Rebekah.**

“Bethuel was the father of Rebekah.” or “who has {a daughter named} Rebekah.” See how you translated “fathered” in Gen 11:27.

**Those {are} the eight {sons} Milcah bore for Nahor, the brother of Abraham.**

“Those {are} the eight {sons} {that} Milcah had for Abraham’s brother Nahor.” or “Those {are} {the names of} the eight {sons} whom Abraham’s brother Nahor and {his wife} Milcah had together.” or “{Altogether} Milcah bore/had eight sons for Abraham’s brother Nahor.”

Gen 22:24 **And his concubine, and her name {was} Reumah, and she also bore Tebah and Gaham and Tahash and Maacah.**

**And**

“In addition to that,” or “Besides that,”

**his concubine, and her name {was} Reumah, and she also bore**

“Nahor’s concubine Reumah also bore/had {some sons, whom they named}” or “Nahor and his servant wife Reumah also had {some sons, including}”

**Tebah and Gaham and Tahash and Maacah.**

“Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.” See how you connected the list of names in verse 22.