

GENESIS



IN THE
BEGINNING
GOD
CREATED
THE
HEAVENS
& THE
EARTH

GENESIS 1:1



Welcome to our study of Genesis! We are so glad you've decided to study the first book of the Bible with us.

Genesis means "beginnings." Just hearing about a fresh start stirs up feelings of excitement. A beginning brings anticipation and the hope of something new.

This is the beginning of the greatest Story ever told. It is a love story, where we learn our Heavenly Father has created us for a relationship with Him. We will see how the first man and woman turned away from Him, and the Lord has been in pursuit of our hearts ever since. It is remarkable, because the characters are far from perfect and yet the Lord weaves each one into this incredible story of redemption.

Each week begins with a verse that we have selected as important to the story for the week. We hope the verse will remind you to take a few minutes each day to invite the Lord into your time. Ask Him to speak to you through His word.

Our hope is for our time in Genesis to ignite a new understanding of God's love for us and to increase our love for Him. We are thankful for your willingness to go through Genesis with us.

Janet Fulmer
Jackson Shaver
Thom Fulmer

**“On the seventh day God had
finished his work of creation,
so he rested from all his work.”**

GENESIS 2:2



WEEK ONE

DAY 1

THE BEGINNING / GENESIS 1:1-23



Read Genesis 1:1. If the universe were to have been created by a strand of random events that resulted in the existence of mankind, then that would mean all value for human life is based on our own assigned significance. The first verse of the Bible indicates otherwise—that there is a Creator. One who moves and acts with intentionality. What does that say about your worth? Is your value only self-assigned, or do you hold weight in the eyes of the Most High?

In Hebrew, Moses uses the word Elohim when speaking about God in Genesis 1:1. The word Elohim is a plural form to represent a singular idea or collection. What is Moses conveying in doing this?

Read Genesis 1:2-5. What did God create on the first day?

Read Genesis 1:6-19. If you have not before, take a moment to consider the exact measurements of the Earth that must exist in order for human life to inhabit the planet. What does this say to you about the qualities of God?

Read Genesis 1:20-23. Do you notice any parallels between the days? Specifically day 2 (Genesis 1:6-8) and day 5 (Genesis 1:20-23)?

Take a moment to rest in today's passage and the power of the Lord that is displayed in it. Do not try to interpret it. That has been done and done again, but often serves as a distraction rather than a focusing point on the power of the Lord. Simply let the words of the passage mean what they may in your mind, and guide you to find peace in the mighty God.

DAY 2

CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE / GENESIS 1:24-31



Read Genesis 1:24-27. Look at the language that is used when creating the land animals in verses 24 and 25. Now, look at what is said when God is creating mankind, "Let us make man in our image." What does this infer about the difference between mankind and the rest of God's creation? What does this say about our shared aspects with God (personality, morality, and spirituality)?

Read Genesis 1:28. What is the Lord's divine command for man?

Think back on helping your parents cook a meal when you were a child. Did they need your help? What was their intention in inviting you into that process? The Lord is perfectly capable of creating more humans, as well as having dominion over the creatures of Heaven and Earth. He is also capable of cultivating the Garden of Eden on his own, but instead he includes Adam and Eve in the process. What do you feel the Lord is teaching you from this idea?

Read Genesis 1:29-30. What is God's gift to man as well as to the animals?

Read Genesis 1:31. Why does God call this day's work "very good"? What does this say to you about the Lord's value given to mankind versus the rest of creation?

Often we find ourselves in love with nature: the mountains, the beach, the hill country. We attribute so much value to these natural elements, but when we see human beings we are often not met with the same thoughts of beauty. Take a moment to pray that you would see the beauty of mankind that the Lord sees, and that you would value other humans as He does.

What comforts do you find in today's passage? Set aside the pressures of the day and consider the image of God, including the beauty of the creation of mankind.

DAY 3

THE SABBATH / GENESIS 2:1-3



Read Genesis 2:1-3. Why do you think God rested from his work in Genesis 2:2?

Read Isaiah 40:28. The Lord does not need to rest because he does not grow weary. He is merely setting the example for the pace at which mankind is able to live the most healthy way of life in the physical, emotional, and spiritual sense. Write down some examples of this within the Bible, or within your own life where the Lord is leading you by example.

What does the Lord do to the seventh day in Genesis 2:3? What does this label of sanctity reveal about the importance of the Sabbath?

As Christians, we are not called to directly follow all the laws of the earliest Jewish writings, meaning the modern concept of the Sabbath is for the benefits of our heart and soul, not a legal requirement. Read Hebrews 4:9-11. What does the concept of Sabbath look like for you?

Hebrews 4:11 (KJV) says, “let us labor therefore to enter into that rest,” pointing out it takes work to enter the rest of God. Know that it takes discipline and an amount of trial and error to come to the point of entering the Lord’s rest. Take a moment to pray that you, with the guidance of the Lord, through the sacrifice of the Christ, would enter into a holy rest with him.

DAY 4

THE GARDEN / GENESIS 2:4-17



Read Genesis 2:4-7. The Hebrew word for ground or earth is *adamah*, meaning the word *adam* is defined as “being from the ground”. What do you think the Lord’s intention in doing this was as you read Genesis 2:7?

Consider also that the Hebrew word for “humility” shares a linguistic heritage with *adamah*. What does this infer about the meaning of humility, and God’s stressed importance of the virtue?

Read Genesis 2:8-14. Why do you think God chose for the first humans to be cultivators of a garden? What do you think the garden represents other than the experience of the beauty of nature?

The Lord put the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil next to each other, in the middle of the garden. How do you feel when you see the tree that tempted mankind into the first sin was a central piece to the garden with the tree of life?

Reread Genesis 2:7, and then read Genesis 2:15-17. What actions did God take to set man apart from the other creatures in the garden? Is God's breathing into the nostrils of man an indication of a spiritual connection that exists only between God and mankind?

God asks Adam to tend and keep the garden in this passage. Working can be challenging at times, but keep in mind that you can invite the Lord into those challenges. Adam was not a perfect gardener, but the Lord is, and he wants you to invite him into the learning processes he has put in your life.

What does God say is the punishment for eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in Genesis 2:17?

DAY 5

THE FIRST WOMAN / GENESIS 2:18-25



Read Genesis 2:18. This is the first time God has said something is not good. What is he saying is not good for Adam?

There is surely beauty in moments of solitude, but it is clear those moments are meant to recharge us to come to God's true intention for us: to live in community. Pray the Lord would be with you in your solitude so you may be ready to go and live with others as is the Lord's heart for you.

Read Genesis 2:19-20. Consider how Adam was given the opportunity to name the animals. This is another example of a task the Lord could have done on his own, yet he invited Adam into the process. Write down a time when the Lord included you in doing something he could have done on his own.

Read Genesis 2:21-23. What does Adam mean in verse 23 when he says “bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh”?

Humans are meant to be in relation with others. There are certain relationships in our life that are sacred which drive us into closer unity with God, like Adam and Eve’s relationship. What people are in your life that are pushing you closer to God? What people are you encouraging to lean on the Lord? Take a moment to give thanks for these individuals with whom God has blessed you.

Read Genesis 2:24-25. Does the Lord want us to feel shame when we are vulnerable? What is his true intention?

“The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too.”

GENESIS 3:6



WEEK TWO

DAY 1

ADAM & EVE SIN / GENESIS 3:1-8



The greatest Story ever told takes a tragic turn in the 3rd chapter of Genesis. The serpent, inhabited by Satan, approaches Eve and begins to challenge the goodness of God. Read Genesis 3:1-3. How did Satan begin to gain Eve's trust?

Read Genesis 3:4-5. Which of Satan's comments are true? Does he say anything to Eve that is a lie? What thoughts did Satan give Eve to consider?

Satan uses a very similar approach with us – suggesting doubt, fear, and comparison – which causes us to wonder if God has a plan for us, or if His plan is good. Which of Satan’s tactics with Eve are most effective with you? Why do you think this?

Read Genesis 3:6. What do you think caused Eve to fall?

Read Genesis 3:7-8. In these verses, we see that immediately after Adam and Eve sin, they are overwhelmed with guilt, and feel shame for the first time ever. How do they respond?

“If you’re God’s child, when you sin, you can run toward God and not away from him, because all your sin is covered by the blood of Jesus.” — Paul Tripp

Like Adam and Eve, our tendency is to run away when we sin, but how can we now respond when we sin against God?

DAY 2

PARADISE LOST / GENESIS 3:9-24



Imagine the beauty of the Garden of Eden. Take a moment to consider what it must have been like to walk alongside the Lord. This glorious existence changed dramatically as a result of Adam and Eve's choice to ignore God's command. In fact, we are still dealing with the results of their fall from God's presence. Many wonder why God would place the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden. God wanted Adam and Eve to choose to obey Him. Without any options to disobey, their obedience would not have meant much. God is after more than just our obedience; He invites us into a relationship, and He is after our heart.

Read Genesis 3:9-10. Surely God knew where Adam and Eve were hiding. Why do you think He asked them where they were? What is strange about their reply?

Read Genesis 3:12-13. It is difficult for us to take responsibility for something we have done wrong. Who do Adam and Eve blame for their disobedience? Why do you think they struggled to admit they had made a mistake?

All of God's commands are for our benefit. Like Adam and Eve, we may not always understand the reasons for His commands, but we can trust that He has given them for our benefit. Read Genesis 3:14-19. As you read, consider how drastically Adam's and Eve's choice to ignore God's one command changed their circumstances.

What punishment did the Lord give to Adam, Eve and Satan? How are these still part of our daily struggle on earth?

Read Genesis 3:20-24. Adam and Eve begin to adjust to a new, more difficult life. However, the Lord is still watching over them. List a couple of great ways God provided for and protected them.

DAY 3

THE FIRST FAMILY / GENESIS 4:1-8



Read Genesis 4:1-2. Adam and Eve began their life outside the garden. What was their first born's name, and what did he do when he grew up?

What was the name of their second born, and what did he do?

Read Genesis 4:3-5. The Bible doesn't indicate why Cain and his gift were not acceptable to God. It might have been his motivation about giving, or his heart toward the Lord or his heart toward Abel. Regardless, the Lord accepted Abel and his gift. What gifts did each of them offer?

Read Genesis 4:6-8 to see how Cain responded. Cain lashes out at Abel, because of his insecurity before the Lord. Can you relate? How often do we allow comparison and jealousy to make us angry?

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Now one of their sons has committed murder. Our sinful nature has the ability to lead us into situations that spiral out of control. We're all prone to take out our frustrations on someone else, or to be driven to do something we regret because of our anger. What about God's advice to Cain (Genesis 4:6-7) is most useful for you?

DAY 4

CAIN'S PUNISHMENT / GENESIS 4:9-16



Yesterday we read about the first murder, which involved Cain taking the life of Abel. Read Genesis 4:9. Why do you think Cain responded to the Lord like he did?

Read Genesis 4:10-16. At times, the Lord's punishment seems harsh, but it is just and it is given to help us turn back to the Lord, so our fellowship can be restored.

“For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.” Hebrews 12:6 NLT

Describe how the Lord’s punishment of Cain was just.

Why was Cain afraid?

So far, the story of the Bible has only included four people (Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel). However, God instructed Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply. If Cain is afraid others might kill him, it is likely those other people would be siblings of he and Abel. These siblings would naturally be upset with Cain for murdering Abel. How did the Lord protect Cain?

DAY 5

FAMILY TREE OF ADAM & EVE / GENESIS 5



There are ten generations from Adam to Noah. It is interesting that the records are in the Bible. Typically, I'm prone to push right past a genealogy, but let's look a little closer to see what we can understand about why this list is in the Bible.

Read Genesis 5:1-2. What does it say about how God created people? Why is this significant for us?

Read Genesis 5:3-22. What is a common truth about all of these people?

Who are some people in these verses with whom you are familiar?

There are several theories about the age of these people. Some say the years recorded are the number of years each person's family lived. Others think the Lord allowed people to live longer. According to Scripture, which one of Adam's descendants lived the longest?

Read Genesis 5:23-32. What unique event happened to Enoch? Why?

Who was Noah's dad? Who were Noah's sons?

Why do you think it is important for us to know that Noah is one of Adam's descendants?

“Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on the earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God.”

GENESIS 6:9



WEEK THREE

DAY 1

MANKIND BECAME EVIL / GENESIS 6:1-7



The account of Noah and the flood begins with the reason God decided to judge the earth. Read Genesis 6:1-7. Share your thoughts about what was going on during Noah's lifetime?

So why had mankind become so evil? The answer seems to lie with "the sons of God," or the "Nephilim." Who were they? Scholars think there were several options. Either they were evil men, or as some say, men from the line of Cain, or evil kings who took any women they wanted, or fallen angels. If it was the case that fallen angels came to earth and intermarried with human women, it would constitute a massive breach of God's ordained order, and would explain the evil that was prevalent in Noah's time.

We cannot know for sure, but given the discussion above, who do you think the “sons of God” were?

Genesis 6:5-6 says, “The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and He saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil,” and this broke His heart.

Are you surprised that God’s emotions can be affected by what is in a man’s heart (meaning what a person thinks, feels, and decides)? Why or why not?

How would you say God feels about the status of your heart today?

How can one be sure his or her heart is right before God?

DAY 2

BUILD AN ARK / GENESIS 6:8-22



In contrast to the rest of mankind, “Noah found favor with the Lord.” Read Genesis 6:8-22.

What must it have been like for Noah to be the only person on earth who walked with God?

What was the world filled with during Noah’s time?

What plan did God share with Noah?

What did God command Noah to do?

What did God promise Noah?

Read Hebrews 11:7. Why was it remarkable that Noah believed God about the flood and obeyed His instructions?

Noah's name sounds like the Hebrew word for "comfort." How would you say Noah was a comfort in his time?

DAY 3

NOAH ENTERED THE ARK / GENESIS 7



Read Genesis 7:1-24. Who and what entered the ark with Noah?

How old was Noah when the flood began? How old was he when it ended? (Genesis 8:13)

How long did it rain, and how deep was the water?

Genesis 7:16 states that God Himself shut the door of the ark ensuring the safety of Noah, his family, and all of the animals. We know from Scripture that God provides protection for His followers. (See Psalm 91).

How have you recently seen God's protection for you and your family?

DAY 4

GOD PROTECTED THE ARK / GENESIS 8:1-19



Read Genesis 8:1-19. What do you think it meant that God “remembered” Noah and all in the ark?

How did Noah check to see if the land was drying?

When the dove brought the olive branch, did Noah leave the ark immediately, or wait for God’s instruction?

What did God want all the creatures from the ark to do?
(Genesis 8:17)

What would you like God to remember about your circumstances right now?

Are you tempted to charge ahead on your own to “fix” the situation, or will you purpose to wait for His answer and instructions?

Do you believe that God has good plans for you, or do you tend to doubt His goodness?

How can the account of Noah strengthen your faith?

DAY 5

GOD'S PROMISE / GENESIS 8:20-22



Read Genesis 8:20-22. What did Noah do in response to God's faithfulness?

In Genesis 8:21 we read, "The Lord was pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice," meaning the sacrifice was acceptable to Him. What promise did God make to Himself?

Genesis 8 ends with a summary poem, a beautiful song of faith, which recalls God's promise to Noah:

"As long as the earth remains,
there will be planting and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
day and night."

Genesis 8:22

Spend some time reflecting on the Noah account.

Do you think Noah, the ark, and the flood, was a historical event, or a fictional story? What is the reason for your opinion? (See Matthew 24:37-39)

In the NIV Bible, 2 Peter 2:5 calls Noah “a preacher of righteousness.” How can you be a Noah in your generation?

Have you thanked God recently for His faithfulness in your life?

How will you worship Him today?

**Then God said,
“I have placed My rainbow in the clouds.
It is the sign of My covenant with you
and with all the earth.”**

GENESIS 9:13



WEEK FOUR

DAY 1

GOD BLESSES NOAH / GENESIS 9:1-7



God chose the only righteous man on earth to survive the flood, and restart all mankind. For this reason, Noah has been called the “second Adam.” God blessed Noah, as He did Adam, with similar blessings. Both were told to “be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.” (Genesis 1:28, 9:1) Both were given dominion over the animals. (Genesis 1:26, 9:2) Both were given food to eat: Adam was given plants, and Noah was given animals and plants. (Genesis 2:16, 9:3) And both were told what not to eat.

Read Genesis 9:1-7. Remembering our study of Genesis 2, what was Adam told not to eat and why?

What was Noah told not to eat?

Read Leviticus 17:11-12. How does this passage further explain the restriction God gave to Noah?

Which verse in Genesis 9:1-7 assures us that sin has not negated the fact that man bears the image of God?

Remembering our study of Genesis 1, what does it mean to bear the image of God?

How does being God's image-bearer encourage you today?

DAY 2

GOD'S COVENANT / GENESIS 9:8-17



Read Genesis 9: 8-17. God not only blessed Noah, but He gave him a covenant. What did God promise not to do?

In Scripture there are conditional covenants and unconditional covenants. A conditional covenant is when God says, "I will do this, as long as you do that." Unconditional covenants are promises made and kept by God regardless of what man does. Which do you think describes Noah's covenant?

How does this encourage you?

What is the sign of Noah's covenant?

How can seeing this sign in the sky encourage you about God's promises?

DAY 3

NOAH'S SIN / GENESIS 9:18-29



Even though Noah was considered a righteous man (Genesis 6:9), who had deep faith (Hebrews 11:7), and obeyed God (Genesis 6:22), he was still capable of sin.

Read Genesis 9:18-29. What happened in this scene?

How did Ham disrespect his father?

How did Shem and Japheth honor their father?

Who was Canaan, and what curse did Noah declare about him?

God knew the Canaanites would become godless, evil people. How did this curse come true in the future? (See Genesis 12:6-7)

We know to, “honor your father and mother,” is one of the Ten Commandments.

Whether they are living or not, how can you honor your parents today?

DAY 4

NOAH'S SONS' FAMILY TREE / GENESIS 10



There are ten genealogies in Genesis. Genealogies help confirm the Bible was written about real, historical figures. In Genesis 10 we find a genealogy that is unique in several ways. First of all, the families are listed horizontally instead of vertically. Genesis 10 shows the simultaneous development of the descendants of Noah's three sons: Japheth, Ham, and Shem. The second unique factor is that this genealogy emphasizes the development of nations. We are being prepared for God to introduce His plan to choose one nation as his chosen people through Abraham.

Read Genesis 10:2-5. Are there any heirs of Japheth that you recognize from Scripture?

Read Genesis 10:6-20. This section is where the Hamites are listed. We have already learned that one of the sons of Ham was Canaan.

In Genesis 10:8-12, which evil cities in Nimrod's kingdom do you recognize?

Read Genesis 10:21-31. Finally, we see the development of the Shemites. It is interesting to note that from the line of Shem would come the Hebrew nation. We know this to be true from the genealogy of Christ in Luke 3.

While each section in Genesis 10 ends with the refrain, "these are the descendants, identified by clan, language, territory, and national identity," Chapter 11 begins with, "At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words." So Chapters 10 and 11 are not in chronological order. Scholars think that the Tower of Babel incident happened during the life of Peleg (meaning division), because it says in Genesis 10:25 that he got his name because, "during his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups."

How does this genealogy help you believe Scripture is historically correct?

DAY 5

TOWER OF BABEL / GENESIS 11:1-9



Read Genesis 11:1-4. Where did this event happen?

What was the plan?

What was the motivation behind the building?

Many times we have read that God's desire for mankind was to, "be fruitful and multiply, and to fill the earth." (Genesis 9:1) How were the people at the Tower of Babel rebelling against God's instructions?

Read Genesis 11:5-9. What did God decide to do?

What was the result?

What have you learned about the character of God this week?

“The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.’”

GENESIS 12:1-3



WEEK FIVE

DAY 1

GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAM / GENESIS 12



God has not spoken since the Tower of Babel. He now speaks directly to Abram. We will see Abram receive his new name, Abraham. He is blessed by God for his faith. We will see that Abram is not perfect, but he is faithful. Abram is one of the most honored men in history, as he holds a special respect with Christians, Jews and Muslims. The rest of Genesis will be about Abram and his descendants, as the Lord narrows his redemption plan to one family and then blesses all families through this one family.

Read Genesis 12:1-9. God makes a difficult and specific request of Abram. What is it?

In return, God offers to do great things in Abram's life and through his descendants. Write down the great promises the Lord makes to Abram.

Read Galatians 3:6-9. How do these promises God made to Abram relate to us?

How old was Abram when he left Haran? Why is Abram's age significant in understanding the promises God made to him?

After arriving in Canaan, how did the Lord affirm Abram was in the right place?

Read Genesis 12:10-20. Why did Abram and Sarai go to Egypt?

Abram was a wealthy owner of livestock. His arrival in Egypt would not go unnoticed. The Lord often nudges us to do things that are uncomfortable. How does Abram doubt God's promise in Genesis 12:11-13?

We can see Abram was not perfect. His strength was his relationship with the Lord. Explain how the Lord rescued Sarai and Abram.

DAY 2

DEALING WITH LOT / GENESIS 13:1-14:16



Abram was an honorable patriarch of his family. Today, we will see how he cared for Lot and his family, even at his own expense.

Read Genesis 13:1-13. Who took the initiative in resolving the conflict between Abram & Lot's herdsmen?

How did Abram resolve the dispute?

What lesson can we take away from how Abram handled this dispute with Lot?

Read Genesis 13:14-18. How did the Lord honor Abram's gracious attitude with his nephew?

Read Genesis 14:1-16. To help understand this passage, it's important to note that most cities had kings during Abram's time. How did Lot's desire for the best land result in trouble for his family?

How did Abram respond when he heard the news of what happened to Lot?

What does this tell you about Abram?

Also, it's significant to know the Lord has promised Abram that he will be famous and a blessing to others. We can see in this story the Lord has already begun to answer that promise. Having 318 men, all born in his household, trained and ready for war, shows us that Abram was a man with many resources.

DAY 3

THE COVENANT / GENESIS 14:17-15:18



Read Genesis 14:17-24. History is full of mysteries. As we study history, we come across characters who grab our attention, though there is little said about them. We wonder where they came from and what happened to them. Melchizedek is one of those characters in the Bible. While there are many theories about him, we know he was a king of Salem. His name meant king of righteousness and being king of Salem, made him a king of Peace.

Who did Melchizedek credit with Abram's victory?

How did Abram respond to Melchizedek? Why do you think that's significant?

By contrast, how did Abram respond to the king of Sodom?

Read Genesis 15:1-18. The Lord graciously affirms His promise to Abram, and promises to protect him. But Abram has another concern. What was Abram's concern? How does the Lord respond to Abram?

Still, Abram seeks assurance of the Lord's promise. It's helpful to remember, Abram has left his home, and followed the Lord to a new land. And though the Lord promised to make him a father of a great nation, Abram still doesn't have any offspring. When the Lord asks Abram to gather these animals for a sacrifice, Abram understands the Lord is going to enter into a covenant with him. For us, it would be like a legally binding business agreement; even more serious. Yet this agreement is very unique. In Genesis 15:12-16, what does the Lord say will happen to Abram's descendants?

Typically, a covenant would require both participants to walk between the sacrificed animals, agreeing it will cost them their own blood if they fail to keep this covenant with each other. We see this representation of the Lord in other places in Scripture, like when the Israelites were led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. This smoking fire pot and flaming torch represent the Lord's Presence making the covenant with Abram. The Lord guaranteed this covenant alone, and He did not require anything of Abram.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. How is the covenant with Abram like our new covenant with God, through Jesus?

DAY 4

THE COVENANT / GENESIS 16



In Abram's day, if a woman was not able to bear children, she would often give her servant to her husband to bear a child. However, the Lord had told Abram he would be a father of a great nation, and then affirmed His promise with a covenant. Yet, it has been 10 years. So Abram and Sarai decided to take things into their own hands.

Read Genesis 16:1-6. Where was Hagar from?

How did Hagar act toward Sarai when she became pregnant?

Describe Abram's reaction to Sarai's complaint about Hagar. Do you think this was the right way for Abram and Sarai to respond to Hagar?

Often we bring misery on ourselves by making decisions apart from God. We have to deal with issues the Lord would have never chosen for us. Yet, the Lord still walks faithfully with us as we struggle with the ramifications of our own sinful choices.

Read Genesis 16:7-16. What did the angel of the Lord tell Hagar to do?

Through this angel, what instructions and promise did God give to Hagar?

How did this make Hagar feel?

The realities of this story continue to plague our world with conflict, as descendants of Ishmael and Isaac continue to fight with one another. How is this story significant for you, as you try to faithfully follow the Lord?

DAY 5

THE COVENANT / GENESIS 17:1-26



The idea of new names occurs multiple times in the Bible. Such people as Abram, Sarai, Jacob and Simon are given new names, for specific purposes. This is our story, too, as we come to know the Lord and He transforms us into the new men and women He has created us to be.

Read Genesis 17:1-8. What does the name Abraham mean? Why does the Lord give this new name to Abram?

Read Romans 4:16-22. How has the Lord fulfilled His promise to Abraham that he would become the father of many nations?

Read Genesis 17:9-14. Describe the sign of the covenant the Lord has given to Abraham.

The Lord asks Abraham to obey the terms of the covenant. What are the terms of the covenant?

Read Genesis 17:15-26. Sarai means 'my princess,' but Sarah means 'princess' or 'princess of the multitudes.' Why do you think the Lord changed her name?

How did Abraham respond to the Lord's request of him?

How old was Abraham? How old was Sarah?

What does this reveal to you about the Lord?

**“Then Abraham looked up
and saw a ram caught in a
bush. So he took the ram and
sacrificed it as a burnt offer-
ing in the place of his son.”**

GENESIS 22:13



WEEK SIX

DAY 1

A PROMISE TO SARAH / GENESIS 18



Abram has become Abraham, promised by God to become the father of a multitude of nations. Upon receiving this promise Abraham is visited by the Lord. Three visitors come to see him, and one of the three is the Lord. The other two are angels. This is one of very few accounts in the Old Testament where the Lord actually comes into the physical presence of those He is addressing.

Read Genesis 18:1-15. Abraham is very hospitable to his guests. Hebrews 13:2 encourages us to be hospitable, offering that we may not know when we are entertaining angels. In this case, that's exactly who Abraham is hosting. What are some things Abraham did for his guests?

What does one of his guests say will happen to Sarah?

How does Sarah respond?

Look at Genesis 18:14 again. Do you have anything before you that is too hard for you, or beyond your abilities to resolve? Take a minute to offer it to the Lord, and tell Him you know nothing is too hard for Him.

Read Genesis 18:16-33. Abraham makes repeated requests of the Lord for Sodom and Gomorrah. Does he change the mind of the Lord?

As Moses wrote Genesis, we are allowed to see how God considers the sinful behavior of these two towns, and whether or not He will share his thoughts with Abraham. We also see how Abraham appeals to the Lord. How would you describe Abraham's approach?

Why do you think the Lord is patient with Abraham as he pleads for these two wicked towns?

What can we learn about the nature of God from this interaction?

DAY 2

JUDGMENT / GENESIS 19:1-29



Read Genesis 19:1-11. In Abraham's day, important men in the city met at the city gate to make decisions about the town and conduct business. What does it tell us about Lot if he's a regular at the city gate of Sodom?

How do we know how wicked the men of Sodom were?

What did they demand of Lot?

Lot offered this mob his daughters. Some commentaries suggested this was just a ploy, but there can be no excuse for offering his children to this evil mob outside of his house. How was Lot rescued from this mob?

Read Genesis 19:12-29. Describe the warnings the angels gave to Lot.

How did Lot respond to the angels?

What did the Lord do to Sodom and Gomorrah?

As we read these accounts of people in the Bible, it is important for us to remember these folks lived real lives, just like we do. There are lessons from their lives that still offer wise advice to us today.

Read Luke 17:28-33. Explain what happened to Lot's wife, why you think it happened and why it is a relevant warning for us.

DAY 3

LOT'S SORDID STORY / GENESIS 19:30-20:18



The Bible is brutally honest. We see real men and women, mistakes and all, as they try to follow the Lord. Today we see two unflattering stories. These stories tell us in the same way God rescued imperfect and undeserving men, so He is willing to rescue us.

Read Genesis 19:30-38. The offspring of Lot and his daughters became the Moabites and Ammonites. These two tribes settled east of the Jordan River and were two of Israel's greatest enemies. How is this story relevant to us today?

Ruth, King David's great-grandmother and an ancestor of our Lord Jesus, was a Moabite. What does this tell you about the nature of the Lord, that He would include one of Lot's daughters in David and Jesus' ancestry?

Read Genesis 20:1-18. Based on what we learned from Genesis 17:17, we know Sarah is 90, and yet for some reason Abraham feels like he has to deceive King Abimelech by not admitting that Sarah is his wife.

Why do you think the Lord intervened in this story?

How did Abimelech reconcile this issue with Abraham?

What did God do to the women in Abimelech's life and how did He restore them?

DAY 4

ABRAHAM & SARAH'S SON / GENESIS 21



Twenty-five years after moving far from his home, having an illegitimate son, going through many trials and promises, Isaac is finally born. This marks the beginning of the Lord's promise to Abraham being fulfilled.

Read Genesis 21:1-7. How would you have responded if God promised you something and you waited 25 years before you began to see evidence of His promise being fulfilled?

Read Genesis 21:8-21. Describe what happened to Hagar and Ishmael.

What did the Lord promise Hagar He would do for Ishmael?

Read Genesis 21:22-34. What was the name of the well where Abimelech and Abraham made a treaty?

DAY 5

ABRAHAM'S FAITH IS TESTED / GENESIS 22



Read Genesis 22:1-24. The Lord makes an almost impossible request of Abraham. What was it?

We understand fire purifies silver by burning away the impurities. In the same way, heat and pressure refine our character. What does this test reveal to you about Abraham's character?

This is one of the greatest acts of faith in history. Upon being asked to sacrifice his son, Abraham, Isaac and a servant traveled three days, and then Abraham took his son and wood for the sacrifice up a mountain. When Isaac questioned him about the sacrifice they were about to make, how did Abraham answer?

Also look at Hebrews 11:17-19. Based on this story, and the verses from Hebrews, what is one thing we can know to be true about God?

Specifically in Genesis 22:10-13, how did the Lord respond to Abraham's faith?

How did God bless Abraham for his faithful response to this test?

What is most significant for you about this story?

**“Live here
as a foreigner
in this land,
and I will be
with you and
bless you...”**

GENESIS 26:3



WEEK SEVEN

DAY 1

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD / GENESIS 24:1-27



In Genesis 24 we find the beautiful story of Isaac and Rebekah. It was a tale that was treasured by Hebrew storytellers because of its lingering style, lavish details, and dramatic repetitions. It is a story that celebrates the providence of God, meaning that He is a God who cares about and is involved in the details of our lives. And it is a story that continually reminds us of God's unfailing love.

Read Genesis 24:1-11. Why do you think Abraham was determined that Isaac not marry a Canaanite woman?

Why do you think he would not let his servant take Isaac with him on this journey?

The journey the servant took with ten camels and a band of men was roughly 450 miles long. If you were the servant, what thoughts and fears do you think you would have had on the way?

Read Genesis 24:12-23. What was the first thing the servant did when he reached the hometown of Nahor?

What happened before he had finished praying?

How did God specifically answer the servant's prayer?

Read Genesis 24:24-27. What characteristics of God did the servant recognize in this passage?

DAY 2

THE PROVISION OF GOD / GENESIS 24:28-67



Read Genesis 24:28-41. List the specific things, in this passage, that God provided for the servant.

Read Genesis 24:42-51. How did Laban, Rebekah's brother, respond to the servant's story?

Read Genesis 24:52-61. It must have been very hard for Rebekah's family to let her go on such short notice, and it must have been extremely hard for Rebekah to go. They probably wondered if they would ever see each other again. How do you think God's specific answer to prayer helped Rebekah's family know this was God's will for her?

Have you ever seen God answer your prayer in such a specific way that you knew the answer was from Him?

Read the beautiful conclusion to this story in Genesis 24:62-67.

What did God provide for Isaac?

Looking back over the last few months, how have you seen God's gracious provision in your life?

DAY 3

THE PLAN OF GOD / GENESIS 25



Read Genesis 25:1-11. Abraham lived to be 175 years old. He saw his son happily married, and he was able to pass everything he owned to Isaac. Abraham was a man of great faith, who believed God, and walked with Him all his days.

Read Hebrews 11:8-16. The only spot Abraham ever owned in the Promised Land was the field with the cave of Machpelah, which he bought from the Hittites, to bury Sarah.

Do you think Abraham considered God to be faithful in all his promises? Why or why not?

What did Abraham understand about God?

How does this strengthen your faith in God's promises to you?

Read Genesis 25:19-26. We read that Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife to be able to bear children. The word pleaded indicates persistent, passionate prayer. How long did Isaac and Rebekah have to wait for God's answer?

It was a difficult pregnancy for Rebekah. When she asked the Lord about it, what did He tell her?

In Hebrew families, the oldest child would receive the birthright, meaning a double portion of the inheritance. In this chosen family, the heir would also receive the guardianship of God's promise. In what way did God choose to break with tradition?

Read Genesis 25:27-34. What happened in this scene?

What does it mean that Esau "showed contempt" for his firstborn rights?

DAY 4

THE PROTECTION OF GOD / GENESIS 26:1-22



Read Genesis 26:1-11. How do we see history repeat itself in this passage? (See Genesis 20)

The term “Abimelek” is a title, much like King, Pharaoh, or Herod. It is unlikely that this is the same person in Genesis 20. But isn’t it remarkable that fear drove Isaac to lie just like his father did.

How did God protect Rebekah and Isaac?

Looking back on your family history, are you able to recognize patterns of behavior across generations?

If it is a pattern of sin, how do you plan to prayerfully break this pattern?

If there is a legacy of good, will you thank God for it?

Read Genesis 26:12-22. In Isaac's time, water was as valuable as gold. Digging a well meant you were laying claim to the surrounding land. God exceedingly blessed Isaac's crops and herds, so much so that his Philistine neighbors became jealous. He was forced to move around, chasing water. This must have been very difficult for Isaac and all the people with him. In the end God led him to a good place, probably one Isaac had never anticipated living in, but one of God's choosing.

Which verse shows that Isaac recognized God's protection and provision during this time?

DAY 5

THE PROMISE OF GOD / GENESIS 26:23-33



Read Genesis 26:23-33. God renewed His covenant with Isaac. It is remarkable that from then on God would associate His own name with Isaac: “the God of Abraham and Isaac...”

This week we have seen evidence of God’s providence, provision, plan, protection, and promise. Let’s consider:

Do you believe God is interested and involved in the details of your life? Why or why not?

Looking back over your life, are you able to see glimpses of God’s plan for you?

Have you seen His hand of guidance even in events that didn’t make sense at the time?

Will you ask for Him to reveal His plan for you step by step, and for the faith to follow it?

Do you believe God has placed you in this time and space for a reason? Why or why not?

Will you accept where God has you right now, even if it is not where you would like to be?

And finally, God promises to be with His followers, just as He promised to be with Isaac. (See Matthew 28:20)

Do you believe that God will keep His promise to you?

**“Surely the Lord is in this place,
and I was not aware of it.”**

GENESIS 28:16



WEEK EIGHT

DAY 1

STOLEN BLESSING / GENESIS 27:1-28:5



This week we continue with the story of Isaac and Rebekah and their twin boys, Jacob and Esau. We remember Rebekah had a difficult pregnancy, and God told her two rival nations struggled inside. God also told her the older son would serve the younger. Jacob, whose name meant “heel grabber,” physically lived up to his name following his brother in birth by grabbing Esau’s heel. He intellectually lived up to his name by tricking his brother out of his birthright.

Read Genesis 27:1-29. Do you think Rebekah’s deceit came from her favoritism of Jacob, or was she trying to make sure God’s prophecy would come true, or both?

A father’s blessing was part of the oldest son’s birthright, and it initiated the benefits. In that culture, the blessing was considered prophetic, and once conferred, it could not be retracted.

Certainly, Isaac would have known about the message God gave Rebekah when she was pregnant, and that Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob. Why do you think Isaac planned to bless Esau instead of Jacob?

Read Genesis 27:30-46. What happened after Jacob left his father's room and Esau came in?

Do you think Esau regretted selling his birthright?

What did he threaten to do to Jacob?

What plan did Rebekah make to protect her favorite son?

It is chilling to read in Genesis 27:13, that Rebekah called down the curse for the deceit on herself. She, in fact, never saw Jacob again, because she died before he returned from Haran. (Genesis 35:16-20)

Read Genesis 28:1-5. Isaac now realized that God's plan would stand, and he spoke the words of the covenant over his son Jacob, as he sent him off to find a wife from among Rebekah's relatives.

DAY 2

COVENANT / GENESIS 28:10-22



Read Genesis 28:10-14. In this passage we see that God revealed Himself to Jacob in a dream. What details did Jacob see?

Even after Jacob's lie to cheat his brother, God, in His great mercy, confirmed the covenant of Abraham and Isaac on Jacob. What did God promise Jacob?

It is clear that Jacob was not chosen because of merit, but because of God's grace. This was true for all the patriarchs, as well as Jacob's twelve sons, from whom the twelve tribes of Israel would descend.

Has there been a time recently when you experienced God's gracious blessing, when you knew you did not deserve it?

What does this experience teach you about God's character?

How are you encouraged by this?

Read Genesis 28:15-17. In Genesis 28:15-16, we read that the Lord told Jacob, "I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you." Jacob awoke and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it."

The truth was that God's presence and protection had been with Jacob his whole life, starting in the womb. God had a good plan for Jacob's life. Yes, discipline and direction would be part of this plan, to mold Jacob into the leader he needed to be. Jacob, "the heel grabber," would one day return to the Promised Land as Israel, "the one who persists with God."

Read Genesis 28:18-22. The same presence and protection is part of our inheritance as Christ followers.

How will you thank God and worship Him today?

DAY 3

JACOB'S MARRIAGES / GENESIS 29:1-30



Read Genesis 29:1-14. History repeats itself in this family again. Just as Abraham's servant found Rebekah at the well in Haran, so Jacob found Rachel at the same well. No doubt, both Jacob and Rachel had grown up hearing the story of Isaac and Rebekah. Laban welcomed Jacob into his home claiming, "you are my own flesh and blood." This statement meant that Laban was willing to adopt Jacob as a son.

How relieved do you imagine Jacob was to reach his relatives safely and to be welcomed so warmly?

Read Genesis 29:15-19. Laban had two daughters, Leah and Rachel. Most likely the sisters resembled each other, but Rachel was considered beautiful, while Leah lacked "sparkle." Jacob fell in love quickly and completely with Rachel. Since he left home on the run, he probably arrived empty handed, so he didn't have the money for a dowry. When he asked Laban for Rachel's hand, he offered his labor instead.

We read in Genesis 29:20, "Jacob worked seven years to pay for Rachel. But his love for her was so strong that it seemed to him but a few days."

Read Genesis 29:21-30. So the deceiver was deceived. In Genesis 29:25, the Hebrew word for tricked is the same word used in Genesis 27:35 when Isaac realized he had been tricked by Jacob. Jacob was reaping what he had sown, and it was devastating. Laban also devastated both of his daughters, and as we will see, set them up to be rivals for the rest of their lives.

The morning after the wedding feast:

How do you think Leah felt?

How did Rachel feel?

How did Jacob feel?

How was the firstborn and second born traded twice in Jacob's life?

DAY 4

JACOB'S ELEVEN SONS / GENESIS 29:31-30:24



Read Genesis 29:31-35. Our pain does not go unnoticed by God.

What do the names Leah chose for her sons tell us about her faith?

What do we learn about her desire for her husband's love?

Even though Leah was in a very difficult marriage, how do you see God's tender care and blessing for her?

Read Genesis 30:1-13. Rachel envied Leah's ability to have children. Leah envied Rachel's relationship with Jacob. Jacob was caught in the crossfire, but instead of praying for his wives, he became angry. How would you describe the atmosphere in the tents of Jacob during this time?

Both women ended up giving Jacob their maids as concubines, in order to have children. Even though this was an accepted custom of the day, it is doubtful it brought peace and harmony to this family.

Has there been a time in your life when you allowed jealousy to rob you of joy? What did you learn from this experience?

Read Genesis 30:14-21. Mandrakes were considered an aphrodisiac. Leah paid Rachel for time with Jacob with her mandrakes. At this point in his life, Jacob was still doing what he was told, just like he had with his mother. He was a far cry from the spiritual leader of God's chosen nation.

Read Genesis 30:22-24. "God remembered Rachel's plight and answered her prayers," (not because of the mandrakes). She gave birth to Joseph whose name meant "May the Lord add, and He has taken away."

What did the Lord add, and what did He take away?

DAY 5

JACOB'S WEALTH / GENESIS 30:25-43



Read Genesis 30:25-36. What do we learn about Laban's character from this passage?

What do we learn about Jacob's character?

Read Genesis 30:37-43. It is uncertain why Jacob used stripped branches to develop his flock. Maybe this was a herdsman's superstition at the time. Do you think God was responsible for Jacob's success? Why or why not?

Deception seemed to be the name of the game for this extended family, but God chose this family out of His gracious, unmerited favor. Scripture never hides people's flaws, but demonstrates God's grace in spite of those flaws.

How does this encourage you today?

**“We are now going to Bethel
(the house of God), where I will
build an altar to the God who
answered my prayers when I
was in distress. He has been
with me wherever I have gone.”**

GENESIS 35:3



WEEK NINE

DAY 1

JACOB FLEES FROM LABAN / GENESIS 31



Jacob had lived with his family in Laban's household for 20 years, and now he realized it was time to go home. Laban's attitude toward him had changed, and his sons were accusing Jacob of robbing their father of his wealth. Furthermore, God confirmed to Jacob, it was time to go.

Read Genesis 31:1-16. What did the Lord promise Jacob in Genesis 31:3?

What reasons did Jacob give to Rachel and Leah for leaving?

How did the sisters respond?

Read Genesis 31:17-21. So Jacob (the heel-grabber) once again turned to deception, and did not tell Laban they were leaving. What did Rachel do when her father was gone shearing the sheep? Why do you think she did this?

Read Genesis 31:22-30. What warning did Laban receive from God?

Did he heed this warning?

Do you think Laban's complaint was valid or not?

Read Genesis 31:31-42. Do you think Jacob was rash in saying the person caught with the idols would die?

What do we learn about Jacob's work environment while he was in Haran?

What do we learn about Jacob's faith in God?

God not only saw, but also cared about Jacob's hardship. He protected Jacob, although Laban had cheated him ten times. Do you believe God cares about your hardship?

Read Genesis 31:43-55. So Jacob and Laban decided to make a covenant with each other. They made a pile of stones and called it a "witness heap," or a "watchtower." What covenant was made?

Who was called to witness, and who was called to watch?

DAY 2

JACOB & ESAU / GENESIS 32:1-21



As Jacob moved on from Gilead, God allowed him to see the angels traveling with his family. In this miraculous display of God's care, Jacob saw they were not alone, God's angel army would encamp around them. Jacob named the place "Mahanaim," meaning double camp.

Read Genesis 32:1-8. When was the last time the two brothers had seen each other?

How had Jacob's attitude toward his brother changed since he last saw Esau?

How did Esau respond to the news that Jacob was nearby?

Read Jacob's prayer in Genesis 32:9-12. How did Jacob address God?

Which promises did Jacob remind God of?

How did Jacob express his thankfulness to God?

What request did he make of God?

This is a great example of the way to approach a holy God. What do you learn about prayer from Jacob?

Read Genesis 32:13-21. Jacob sent a gift of over 550 animals ahead to try to appease Esau. Maybe Jacob was trying to restore part of the birthright he had stolen from his brother. What did Jacob instruct the men to say to Esau when they saw him?

DAY 3

WRESTLING MATCH / GENESIS 32:22-33:20



This passage marks the hinge point of Jacob's life.

Read Genesis 32:22-32. What happened in this scene?

Do you think this was an actual wrestling match, or a dream?

Do you think Jacob knew who the man was who wrestled with him? How can you support your answer?

Why do you think the man dislocated Jacob's hip?

Why do you think Jacob was given a new name at this point in his life?

As the sun rose the next day, Jacob went to face Esau. Read Genesis 33:1-20. What emotion do you think Jacob felt when he first saw Esau approaching?

What emotion did Esau express?

Are you surprised by Esau's response? Why or why not?

Jacob told his brother he would meet him at Seir. But where did Jacob actually go?

Do you think Jacob planned to stay there a while or move on?

DAY 4

DINAH & SHECHEM / GENESIS 34



Shechem was a city filled with pagan idol worshippers who did not fear God, and did not live by the standards God had set up for His covenant family. Shechem was much like Sodom and Gomorrah, and just like Lot, Jacob thought it would be alright to live outside the city.

Read Genesis 34:1-12. Who was Dinah, and who was Shechem?

What did Jacob do when he heard about the incident?

What did Shechem, and his father Hamor, offer Jacob and his sons?

Why was it a bad idea for Jacob's family to intermarry with the Shechemites?

Read Genesis 34:13-31. What scheme did Jacob's sons plan in order to get revenge for what Shechem did to Dinah?

How did Jacob react to his sons' actions?

Inarguably, it was a horrible thing that Shechem did to Dinah, but we also know that God has said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay." (See Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:19)

What should Jacob have done when he first heard about the violation?

What example should he have set for his sons, and what discussion do you think he should have had with them?

DAY 5

JACOB RETURNS TO BETHEL / GENESIS 35



Read Genesis 35:1-5. Jacob had lost his way in Shechem. His leadership as head of his household was weak. His sons were out of control, and his family owned pagan idols. It was time to retrace his steps, and go to the place where he began with God. It was time to go to Bethel.

Reread Genesis 28:10-22. What memories would Jacob have had in Bethel?

What promises did God make to Jacob, the first time he was there?

What promises did Jacob make to God?

Read Genesis 35:6-15. What did God promise Jacob again?

How did Jacob respond?

Read Genesis 35:16-29. We learn that Jacob lost his beloved Rachel, but gained his twelfth son, Benjamin. Jacob was able to see his father Isaac, before he died, and since he and Esau were reconciled, they were able to bury their father together. God was faithful, and as Jacob had said, "He has been with me wherever I have gone."

Looking back over your life, how have you seen God's faithfulness to you?

**“Pharaoh said to Joseph,
‘I hereby put you in charge of
the entire land of Egypt.’”**

GENESIS 41:41



WEEK TEN

DAY 1

JOSEPH / GENESIS 37



Read Genesis 37:1-4. Joseph was only 17 years old when this story begins. This is a recurring theme in the Old Testament where an unlikely heir is chosen by God to lead Israel. Where else have we seen this in Genesis? Where else is an unlikely leader appointed later in the Bible?

Why do you think the Lord selects people like these?

Read Genesis 37:5-11. How do the brothers respond to hearing Joseph's first dream? How does the whole family respond to hearing the second dream?

Do you think Joseph was being prideful in sharing these dreams with his family? Why or why not?

Read Genesis 37:12-22. The dreams God revealed to Joseph did not involve anything about what is to come in this current portion of Joseph's life, nor for many years to come. Do you think these plots of Joseph's brothers could prevent the Lord's will from coming to pass?

Recall Reuben's actions in Genesis 35:22. What is Reuben's redemptive moment in Genesis 37:21-22? Did the Lord allow Reuben's past sins to prevent him from following the will of God?

Read Genesis 37:23-36. What became of Joseph's coat of many colors? What does this say about human pride?

Where did Joseph end up at the end of this chapter? Keep this ending in mind as we move forward and see the Lord's plan unfold for Joseph.

DAY 2

JOSEPH & POTIPHAR'S WIFE / GENESIS 38-39



Read Genesis 38. Though the methods are unconventional, the Lord is still operating in this chapter. Similar to what we have seen with Joseph so far, the Lord does not always take the route that we anticipated to fulfill his promises or our requests. Share a time in your life where the Lord was working to benefit you, even though it did not seem like it initially. Explain how our life experiences help increase our trust in God?

Read Genesis 39:1-6. How did Joseph's trust in the Lord's will end up rewarding him?

Here we see a time in which Joseph shows a sense of surrender to the will of the Lord and is repaid for it. It would have been easy for Joseph to abandon the Lord given that he was being sold into slavery by his own brothers, but he sustained his faith despite the circumstances. The Lord does not work by our schedule or circumstances, however, in the end, his will is always for our spiritual benefit.

Read Genesis 39:7-18. When being approached by Potiphar's wife, what does Joseph say to ward off the temptation and remain faithful to his employer as well as God?

It was not an easy task for Joseph to do the right thing in this situation. What does this instance reveal about Joseph's character?

Read Genesis 39:19-23. Joseph is a great example of trusting the Lord through hardships. How does Joseph respond to being thrown in prison? What lessons can we learn from Joseph about how to respond to difficult circumstances in our lives?

DAY 3

JOSEPH INTERPRETS DREAMS / GENESIS 40



Read Genesis 40:1-8. According to some commentaries, the “captain of the guard” in this chapter is Potiphar. Despite the accusations from his wife, Potiphar still chose to entrust Joseph with the charge of the Pharaoh’s butler and baker. Why do you think Potiphar still trusted Joseph?

There are moments throughout the Old Testament where men and women take credit for the actions of God. In Genesis 40:8, how does Joseph give credit to the Lord rather than trying to take the credit himself?

Read Genesis 40:9-15. What does Joseph say the butler’s dream means?

Read Genesis 40:16-19. How does the baker's dream interpretation differ from the butler's? Despite the difficulty of the message, did Joseph lie in his interpretation of the baker's dream?

Read Genesis 40:20-23. At the end of all he did for Pharaoh's workers, the butler forgot to bring up Joseph's interpreting of his dream. Why do you think that the Lord allowed this to happen?

Here is another instance where Joseph is forced to trust the Lord, even though he remained in prison. Sometimes the Lord is at work in our lives, even in negative circumstances. Take a moment to pray to the Lord that he would reveal himself to you even in the moments that feel like they are not times of progress in your life.

DAY 4

JOSEPH & PHARAOH / GENESIS 41



Read Genesis 41:1-7. Joseph was still in prison waiting for the Lord to call him next into action. Do you find that waiting and trusting are still common themes or virtues in the Christian faith? Why or why not?

Read Genesis 41:8-14. Who did Pharaoh initially ask to help interpret his dreams who could not help him? Who recommended Joseph to Pharaoh after all this time?

Read Genesis 41:15-24. Knowing that Joseph struggled with pride in earlier chapters, do you think the Lord used his time in prison to develop his character? Why or why not?

Read Genesis 41:25-36. When Joseph interpreted the dream, did it require him to deliver bad news to Pharaoh?

Look again at verses 33-36. Along with revealing the interpretation to Joseph, what else did the Lord give Joseph to help guide Pharaoh?

Read Genesis 41:37-45. What does Pharaoh say to Joseph in verse 39 after receiving his dream interpretation and advice?

Did Joseph's trust in the Lord pay off in the end?

Read Genesis 41:46-57. Take a moment to write down a time in your life where you felt that the Lord honored your trust in him.

DAY 5

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS IN EGYPT / GENESIS 42



Read Genesis 42:1-8. Which of Jacob's sons did not travel to Egypt with the rest?

We now begin to see the early prophecies for Joseph come true. Let's look again at Genesis 37:5-8. What does Joseph's dream say his brothers will do one day? How has this come to be true?

Read Genesis 42:9-17. According to verse 13, what do the brothers think happened to Joseph after they sold him away?

Why do you think Joseph kept his identity hidden, and also imprisoned his brothers as spies?

Read Genesis 42:18-24. Do the brothers still seem to have a guilty conscience about what they did to Joseph?

Why do you think Joseph cried when hearing his brothers? Does he have sympathy for them despite their actions? What does this say about how the Lord's grace works in us?

Read Genesis 42:25-28. What did Joseph secretly give to his brothers before they return home for Benjamin?

Read Genesis 42:29-37. Why were the brothers afraid when they found their money had been returned to them?

In Genesis 42:36 Jacob says that all things are against him. However, he is not fully seeing the plans of the Lord operate. When things seem to be so far out of control and we feel like our circumstances are against us, we forget the Lord is at work in our lives. Most likely Jacob would have done things differently; Joseph would not be in Egypt, he would never have been able to aid Egypt in managing the famine, and the family of Israel would not grow into what it later becomes. Pray for the Lord to increase your trust, grant you peace and to remind you that he is at work in your life.

**“You intended to harm me,
but God intended it all for
good. He brought me to this
position so I could save the
lives of many people.”**

GENESIS 50:20



WEEK ELEVEN

DAY 1

THE BROTHERS RETURN / GENESIS 43-44



Read Genesis 43:1-14. What does Jacob anticipate will happen to his sons when they return to Egypt for a second time? What preparations does he make to try to prevent a harsh situation?

Read Genesis 43:15-26. This is a beautiful picture of the grace of God. It is not out of Joseph's own work to forgive his brothers, but rather the work of God through Joseph. Through trusting the Lord, Joseph was able to forgive his brothers even before the brothers had the chance to apologize. How is Joseph's response similar to the way the Lord responds to us when we return to him?

“And so I discovered that it is not on our forgiveness any more than on our goodness that the world’s healing hinges, but on His. When He tells us to love our enemies, He gives, along with the command, the love itself.” — Corrie Ten Boom

Read Genesis 43:27-34. How would you describe Joseph’s encounter with Benjamin in Egypt?

Read Genesis 44:1-10. Why do you think Joseph set up his brothers like this? How do they initially respond when approached by the steward?

Read Genesis 44:11-15. What were the brothers afraid of that caused them to tear their clothes in verse 13?

Read Genesis 44:16-34. What do you think of Judah’s speech for Joseph? What is his final offer, and how does this reflect the radical change of the brothers from when they sold Joseph into slavery all those years ago?

DAY 2

JOSEPH PROVIDES / GENESIS 45



Read Genesis 45:1-8. Here Joseph finally reveals his identity to his brothers and remarkably forgives them for what they have done to him. Who did Joseph say had control over his life and the lives and actions of his brothers?

Read Genesis 45:9-15. Where does Joseph send his brothers? What are they to do when they reach their destination?

Read Genesis 45:16-24. In these verses, Pharaoh prepares a place for Joseph's family, and a luxurious place at that. Why did Pharaoh do this?

Read Genesis 45:25-28. The verses in this section are careful about the name they use to refer to the father of Joseph. He is called Jacob when he refuses to believe that Joseph is alive. He is called Israel when he offers gratitude. Why do you think this distinction is made?

DAY 3

ISRAEL'S FAMILY REUNITED / GENESIS 46-47



Read Genesis 46:1-4. What promises did God make to Jacob?

Read Genesis 46:5-30. Despite the general trials and tribulations of Joseph's story, the goodness of the Lord is still present in the end, and his promises are fulfilled. As Jacob is reunited with Joseph, how has Jacob's attitude changed since Genesis 42:36?

Read Genesis 46:31-34. Put yourself in the shoes of Joseph's brothers in this situation. Joseph is here offering to be something of a middle man between shepherds from a foreign land, and Pharaoh, the leader of Egypt. As a Christian, Jesus is the intermediary between God and us. Without this connection, we would not have a personal relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Read Genesis 47:1-6. How does Pharaoh treat Joseph's family?

Read Genesis 47:7-12. In this section, Jacob blesses Pharaoh. What is the significance of this action considering that in Egyptian culture, Pharaoh himself was seen as a god? What does this say about Pharaoh's perception of Jacob's wisdom?

Where did Joseph's family set up their homes?

Read Genesis 47:13-31. Where did Jacob want to be buried when he died? Why do you think he wanted this?

DAY 4

JACOB'S BLESSING / GENESIS 48



Read Genesis 48:1-7. When the Lord blesses Jacob in Luz, which is Bethel, what blessing did he give Jacob that echoes that of the divine command in Genesis 1:28?

Read Genesis 48:8-12. The name Manasseh means forgetfulness, and the name Ephraim means fruitfulness. Why do you think Joseph gave his children these names? Refer back to Genesis 41:51-52 if needed.

What does Jacob say to express his gratefulness to meet Joseph's sons before his death?

When Joseph sees his father in this passage he bows his face to the ground. Joseph is a high ranking official in all of Egypt, and has not seen his father in many years, and had no contact in the time between seeing each other. However, this did not diminish the respect that Joseph held for his father.

Read Genesis 48:13-16. How was Jacob blessing Joseph when blessing his children?

When talking about God in his blessing, Jacob says that God has fed him all his life, every day. To whom is Jacob giving credit for all of his works?

Read Genesis 48:17-22. What is the significance of Ephraim being blessed before Manasseh?

What is the last thing Jacob says to Joseph in their last one-on-one interaction of his life? How would you say we can see spiritual maturity in Jacob, with regard to what he said to Joseph?

DAY 5

DEATH OF JACOB & JOSEPH / GENESIS 49-50



Read Genesis 49:1-7. These first two prophetic blessings are not exactly what one has in mind when they think of the term “blessing”. In fact, they both seem more like curses. Why do you think Jacob is saying these things?

Why will Reuben never excel? Why will Simeon and Levi be scattered?

Read Genesis 49:8-21. Judah was not a picture of spiritual health in his time from Genesis 37 to now. However, what did he do in Genesis 44:18-34 that redeemed his character? Would you say the Lord chooses perfect people or people who the Lord can mold through their failures and suffering?

Read Genesis 49:22-33. What do you think of Joseph’s blessing from his father?

It was not until the Lord had completed his will in Jacob that his life came to an end. Also, the Lord carried Jacob to what would be called a happy ending to his life in the presence of his children and grandchildren.

Read Genesis 50:1-14. To whom did Joseph appeal when asking to go bury Jacob?

Who was present at the burial of Jacob, and where did it take place?

Read Genesis 50:15-21. Why do you think that the brothers said that Jacob commanded Joseph to forgive them instead of asking for forgiveness directly?

What was Joseph's response to this plea for forgiveness?

Read Genesis 50:22-26. Joseph's death and burial is the conclusion of Genesis. Take a moment to reflect on Joseph's life. Many scholars have said no character of the Old Testament better reflects the life of Jesus than that of Joseph. What qualities did you see in him that resembled Christ? What qualities did you see that made him feel so human?

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