



Park Community Church

GENESIS ————— //

# BOOKENDS

// ————— REVELATION

Genesis: Where our Story Begins

# Table of Contents

Curriculum Guide.....	3
Week One.....	4
The Birth of the Earth   Genesis 1.....	4
Week Two.....	7
The Start of our Story   Genesis 2.....	7
Week Three.....	10
Where our Story Went Wrong   Genesis 3.....	10
Week Four.....	13
The Spiral of Sin's Corruption   Genesis 4 - 5.....	13
Week Five.....	16
Noah Found Favor   Genesis 6 - 7.....	16
Week Six.....	19
God's Covenant with Noah   Genesis 8:1 - 9:17.....	19
Week Seven.....	22
The Tower of Babel & Abraham   Genesis 11 - 12:9.....	22
Week Eight.....	25
God's Covenant with Abraham   Genesis 15.....	25
Week Nine.....	28
Lot Escapes Sodom & Gomorrah   Genesis 19:1-29.....	28
Week Ten.....	31
The Sacrifice of Isaac   Genesis 22.....	31
Week Eleven.....	34
Isaac Blesses Jacob   Genesis 27-28.....	34
Week Twelve.....	37
Jacob Wrestles with God   Genesis 32:22-32.....	37
Week Thirteen.....	40
Joseph's Sorrows   Genesis 37:12-41.....	40
Week Fourteen.....	43
Joseph Forgives His Brothers   Genesis 42-50.....	43

# Curriculum Guide

## The Goal

Park Community Church's small groups are built upon three pillars: gather, transformation, and impact. Using these three fundamental pillars, we anticipate the Holy Spirit to mold everyone in our small groups into the likeness of Christ as we push back the darkness in our city. Much of this work comes from knowing God personally, correctly, and intimately. Our hope is that the small group curriculum will facilitate a deeper understanding of God through his revealed Word in a way that transforms our lives together and moves us into Christ-like action.

## Context Questions

Context is key when it comes to interpreting the Bible. Each week, we hope that you will take a few minutes to remind one another of where you are at in Genesis. Don't feel bound to the suggested questions, but feel free to let the conversation flow naturally. Especially as we study the Old Testament, it is important to understand the context in which the scripture is written.

## Textual Questions

As a group, you will observe the text and look for the details. What you are looking for in this section is simply what the *text* is saying. Do not feel the need to jump into application, that time will come. This section will help build a textual framework for the reflection questions that follow.

## Reflection Questions

This section is designed to help your group move from hearing and understanding the Word to letting it shape your life. Each week you'll reflect together on questions that invite vulnerability, personal sharing, and accountability. Use this time to consider how the lesson applies to your daily life, whether through a new way of thinking, a fresh heart posture, repentance, celebration, or a conviction to live differently. The goal is that faith would be stirred in both belief and practice, encouraging one another toward growth in Christ.

# Week One

*The Birth of the Earth | Genesis 1*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

As the opening chapter of the Bible, this passage outlines how the universe came to be. There is somewhat of a poetic rhythm to this passage which is hard to miss. Each day begins with "And God said," while each day ends with "And God saw that it was good." From this passage we see God's fingerprints in creation. The universe, with all of its beauty and order and capacity for life, is a product of the will of God.

### The Christological Focus

John 1 is helpful in discovering the Christological focus of Genesis 1. John 1 begins "In the beginning..." This is the Apostle's clear allusion to the Genesis 1 creation story, indicating that the Word of God that we read of in Genesis 1, is in fact Christ's Word. While the concept of the Trinity is discoverable in the Old Testament, it certainly comes to blazing clarity in the New Testament. Even our Genesis 1 passage in this study has some trinitarian leanings, "Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26). God seems to refer to himself using plural pronouns, hinting at the Trinity at work in creation. What's more, when we reflect on God's decision to create, we must remember that his decision included the full knowledge of all that would come to pass. The eternal God would one day not only enter His creation through the incarnation, but would suffer utterly at the crucifixion.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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## Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. Genesis 1:1 says "In the beginning, God..." What does this teach us about the nature of God and his relationship to time and space?
2. Each new aspect of creation comes into being through God's speech "And God said..." What does this teach us about the nature and the power of God?
3. What does verse 28 mean when God says of man, "And have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth?"
4. God's rhythm of declaring each day "good" is broken after the sixth day when he declares that "It was very good" (Genesis 1:31). What is implied by this change of language?
5. What would we be missing if this text was not included in the Bible?

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## Reflection Questions

1. Where do you feel tension between what Genesis says and what the world says about the world's origins?
  - a. What essential convictions should Christians hold about the creation account?
  - b. What questions continue to linger and how do we trust God even without knowing all the details?
  - c. What advice would you give a friend who claims they cannot believe in God based on the creation account in Genesis?

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2. Over and over, God delights in what He has made and calls it "good." He sees beauty and goodness in what He creates, even before it "does" anything.

- a. Do you believe God delights in you simply because you are His creation? Why or why not?
- b. Have you ever felt you need to “do something” for God to delight in you?

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3. God gave humanity dominion over the earth and called us to steward His creation responsibly (Genesis 1:26–28). This means intentionally caring for everything God has entrusted to us, as His representatives.

- a. What does it mean to be a steward of everything God has given you?
- b. Do you ever struggle to see yourself as a steward of all that God has entrusted to you? Why or why not?
- c. What is one thing God has entrusted you with that you could steward better? What steps are you taking to do that?

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4. Genesis begins with God as Creator and sets the tone for the whole book.

- a. Have you ever read the whole book of Genesis before?
- b. How might starting here, seeing God’s power, purpose, and care in creation shape the way you read the rest of Genesis?

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# Week Two

*The Start of our Story | Genesis 2*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

While Genesis 1 told the story of creation from a macro level, Genesis 2 zooms in and tells the story of the creation of humanity with greater detail. In this account of creation we learn that humanity is endowed with a divinely assigned purpose, to be stewards of God's creation under His ultimate authority. This fundamental purpose of humanity ought to function as a driving factor of our life. We are not static or free to do as we wish but are made for a purpose that has been assigned to us by God.

### The Christological Focus

Christ is central in a few Genesis 2 themes. First, from the New Testament we know that Christ is the true and greater Adam, who represents us before God. We are all either "in Adam" our representative head who failed at his task as priest and king, or we are "in Christ" our representative head who succeeded in his role as priest and King (Romans 5:15). Secondly, this passage provides the origin of marriage (Genesis 2:24). According to Ephesians 5:32, earthly marriage between a man and a woman is a visible picture for humanity of the divine ultimate marriage of Christ to his church. Here in Genesis 2, God is laying the seeds that will bear fruit in the Church Age that we now live in, the age where Christ is gathering his bride from among the nations.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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## Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. Genesis 2:7 describes God forming man from the dust and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. Why is this detail important?
2. In Genesis 2:15, God places Adam in the garden "to work it and keep it." What does this reveal about God's design for human work, worship, and responsibility?
3. The chapter ends with the man and woman being naked and unashamed (Genesis 2:25). What does this reveal about God's intent for innocence, trust, and intimacy before sin entered the world?
4. What would we be missing if this text was not included in the Bible?

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## Reflection Questions

1. God formed man from dust, then breathed life into him (v.7). This sequence reminds us of both our frailty and our intimate value before God.
  - a. Which side of that image do you forget more often: your weakness or your worth?
  - b. Why is recognizing both so important in the Christian life?

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2. In Genesis 1, time and time again God saw his creation and declared it "good." However, in 2:18 Adam's aloneness is called "not good" even before sin enters the story.
  - a. Why do you think that is?
  - b. How have you experienced the "not good" of being alone?

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3. God gave Adam meaningful work before sin entered the world. This shows that work is not a result of the fall, but rather part of God's design for the world and humanity's role in it.
- a. Consider the work you do today. Do you see it as an act of worship, a chore, a means to something else?
  - b. What would approaching your work and career with a Genesis 2 perspective look like at your job?
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4. God rested on the seventh day, showing that rest and shalom are central to His design for creation. This rhythm of rest later becomes the model for the Sabbath, offering regular rhythms of rest in a weary world.
- c. Is Sabbath currently a part of your life with God? If so, how? If not, why?
  - d. What steps can you take to weave regular Sabbath and rest into your life?
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# Week Three

*Where our Story Went Wrong | Genesis 3*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

Genesis 3 is a critical passage in our understanding of Scripture and of what it means to be human. In this chapter we have the account of sin's entrance into the human story. There are many modern ideologies in our society that attempt to provide a counter narrative to the Biblical story of what is wrong in the world. But here in Genesis 3 we have the ultimate truth, of how God's creation went wrong, as well as the glimmer of hope of how God intended to heal it.

### The Christological Focus

Hidden in Genesis 3 is the first prophetic word in Scripture regarding the crucifixion of Christ. In stating the curse over the serpent, God says, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). At the cross, Satan thought he was gaining victory by killing Christ, but he was only able to "bruise his heel." Christ, through that death, gave the ultimate death-blow to Satan's schemes and "bruised his head." Even though all goes wrong in this passage, the pointer towards Christ reveals that God's plan of redemption would not fail.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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### Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. In verse 1, how does the serpent change God’s command and why might that change be significant?
2. Compare God’s original command in Genesis 2:16–17 with Eve’s response in 3:2–3. What differences do you notice?
3. God’s question in verse 9, “Where are you?” is followed by several others (vv. 11, 13). How do these questions structure the dialogue?
4. Look at the judgments given to the serpent, the woman, and the man (vv. 14–19). How are they similar and how are they different?
5. What would we be missing if this text was not included in the Bible?

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## Reflection Questions

1. In verses 1-5, the serpent twists God’s words and introduces doubt into the mind of Adam and Eve. Today, Satan’s method of deception has not changed, he takes good things and twists them for worse.
  - a. When have you found yourself questioning, “Did God really say...?”
  - b. What triggered that doubt and how did you respond?

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2. In verse 9, God reaches out to Adam and Eve, who are trying to hide because of their shame, by asking “Where are you?”
  - a. What is God really asking with this question?
  - b. What does this question reveal about His character and pursuit?
  - c. Consider what Adam says when God asks him where he is. If God asked you today, “Where are you?” how would you honestly answer from a spiritual, emotional, and relational perspective?

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3. Throughout the exchange between Eve and the serpent, Adam does not speak. However, we know he was with Eve because scripture says "She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate." (v. 6b)
- a. What does this scene suggest about the sin of passivity?
  - b. What does this type of passivity look like today?
  - c. In what situations have you "stood silent" instead of speaking or acting faithfully? What held you back?

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4. In verse 11, God confronts Adam about eating the forbidden fruit. Instead of taking responsibility, Adam shifts the blame first to Eve and then even to God: "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." (v.12)
- a. Why do you think the natural response is to shift blame to others?
  - b. Where have you seen this happen in the world around you?
  - c. Share a time in your own life when you've tried to shift blame instead of owning your part in something? What happened?

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# Week Four

*The Spiral of Sin's Corruption | Genesis 4 - 5*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

Scripture teaches us that sin often leads to more sin, and that is precisely what we see in the account of Cain and Abel. Clearly, Cain's heart and motivation was not right before God when he brought his gift. Rather than repenting and correcting his behavior, he escalated the situation to the highest degree, by murdering his brother. And while we wish Cain's line of sin would have ended with him, we eventually read of Lamech who boasted of being more wicked than Cain. This passage provides a great opportunity to speak about the spiraling effect of sin, and how Christ enables us to break that spiral.

### The Christological Focus

Christ is the one who can break the spiral of sin. As Christians, Christ always stands at the door and knocks. Even in our backsliding, in our spiritual laziness, and in our ongoing habits of sin, Christ never stops knocking at the door, offering his power to transform and to heal. The truth is that Cain's heart is not much different than ours at all. And if left on our own, with no intervention by Christ, our sin would spiral like Cain's in one way or another. Praise God that Christ has graciously intervened.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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## Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. In Genesis 4: 3–5, what is the difference between Cain’s offering and Abel’s? How does the text describe God’s response?
2. After Cain kills Abel, God asks him, “Where is Abel your brother?” (v.9). How does Cain’s reply compare to Adam’s response in Genesis 3?
3. In Genesis 4:16, Cain settles “east of Eden.” How does this detail connect to the earlier theme of being sent out from God’s presence (Gen. 3:24)?
4. What patterns do you recognize in the genealogy and how might these be significant?
5. What would we be missing if this text was not included in the Bible?

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## Reflection Questions

1. God warns Cain, “Sin is crouching at your door... but you must rule over it” (v. 4:7). This is a picture of sin as something active, waiting, and close.
    - a. Where in your life do you feel sin “crouching at the door?”
    - b. What tools have you been given to “rule over it?”
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2. Lamech is a descendant of Cain and his brief story shows how sin isn’t idle, it escalates. Lamech takes two wives (departing from God’s design), boasts of killing a man for wounding him, and declares that if Cain is avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold. His words reflect pride, violence, and a growing hardness of heart.
    - a. What do you notice about how sin and pride have grown through Cain’s line by the time we reach Lamech?
    - b. Have you seen patterns of sin (anger, entitlement, self-justification, etc.) grow stronger over time when left unexamined in your life? If so, what steps can you take to bring them into the light?

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3. All of Chapter 5 is a genealogy of Adam's descendants, leading to Noah. Here we see that Adam's legacy, being made in the Imago Dei (Image of God), is passed down (v.1-2) but so is the curse.
- a. How do you see patterns (healthy or broken) from your own family affecting your life today?
  - b. Where do you need God to bring redemption across generations?

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4. Throughout chapter 5, the rhythm "...and he died" repeats as a sober reminder of the consequences of sin and the reality of human brevity. Yet suddenly, this rhythm is interrupted by Enoch who walked with God and was taken (v.24). He didn't experience death in the same way.
- a. What do you believe the author of Genesis is communicating through Enoch's life?
  - b. Can you think of someone in your life who "walks with God" in a way that clearly stands out from the world around them?
  - c. What about their life are you trying to emulate with yours?

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# Week Five

*Noah Found Favor | Genesis 6 - 7*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

This is the first of two weeks that we will spend in the story of Noah and the flood. In these first two chapters we encounter two opposite ends of the spectrum. On the one hand we have the increasing corruption on earth as told through the story of the Nephilim in Genesis 6:1-7.

Things were so bad that we are told, "The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." And in the midst of this radically depraved society, one man found favor with God, Noah. God, by His grace, gave a plan to not only save Noah and his family from the judgment to come but to save His creation from annihilation.

### The Christological Focus

Noah is a type of Christ. Noah's name means "rest." While the rest that Noah gave would only be temporary, Christ the greater Noah came to give us a true and everlasting rest. Just as Noah is described in the New Testament as a "herald of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5), so is Christ the ultimate righteous one. Further, the ark that Noah constructed was a mechanism of deliverance from judgment. As Noah and his family took refuge in the ark of wood, the judgment passed by them. In the same way, when we take refuge in Christ and his cross of wood, the judgment of death passes by us.

### \*Special Note For This Week

There may be some in your group who are very animated about the story of the Nephilim, and who could spend hours discussing the various views of who they were and whether or not they survived the flood. While we encourage good discussion on the observations of the text, do not allow your study to be overwhelmed by Nephilim debate. While interesting to some, it is a distraction for others.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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## Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. How does the opening description of humanity (vv.1–4) set the stage for the flood?
2. What does the repeated emphasis on Noah’s righteousness (vv.8–10) suggest about his role in the narrative?
3. Why might the text specifically mention Noah’s age at the time of the flood (vv.6–7)?
4. What is the significance of God “shutting the door of the ark” (v.16) in the context of judgment and protection?
5. What would we be missing if this text was not included in the Bible?

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## Reflection Questions

1. “The Lord saw... that every intention of the thoughts of [man's] heart was only evil continually. And the Lord regretted that he had made man... and it grieved him to his heart” (v. 6:5) In the face of the world’s sin, God is not distant or indifferent. He willingly chose to feel the weight and pain of a broken world.
  - a. Have you ever considered that God suffers as a result of the world’s brokenness and sin? What does this reveal about His character?
  - b. Are there parts of your own life, or the world, that you believe grieve God's heart today?

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2. Noah was asked to build something massive, time-consuming, and was probably ridiculed by others for it. Still, he stayed faithful.

- a. Is there anything in your life that feels like “building an ark” - something slow, costly, or misunderstood by those around you?
- b. How do you stay faithful when others don’t understand or support the way you’re trying to live in obedience to God?

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3. Often walking in faithfulness looks like consistent, unseen, and ordinary obedience over a long time. This chapter demonstrates this clearly when it says, “Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him” (v. 22).
- a. What act of persistent obedience have you been tempted to overlook or dismiss as insignificant?
  - b. What is one responsibility in your life that you see as unspiritual or unimportant, but might actually be an opportunity to walk in unseen, ordinary faithfulness?

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4. When God spoke to Noah, he obeyed completely and built the ark, likely over the course of decades, even before there was a drop of rain.
- a. How difficult do you think it would have been for Noah in the waiting? Would you have felt the same way?
  - b. Where in your life might God be asking you to obey, even when the outcome isn’t clear or visible yet?
  - c. How do you practice building trust in the Lord? What would this look like for you practically this week?

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# Week Six

*God's Covenant with Noah | Genesis 8:1 - 9:17*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

This is the second part of a two part study on Noah. In this study we want to focus on what theologians call the "Noahic Covenant" (Gen. 9:9) and the sign of that covenant, the rainbow. Despite the fact that even after the flood, God said that "man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. 8:21), God has promised to never destroy the earth by flood. Rather, the sign of the rainbow is to be a constant visual reminder to God's people of his overwhelming grace, despite our continual sin.

### The Christological Focus

When we step back and view the flood narrative as a whole, it can be said that God saved Noah from God. In other words, the flood was a just consequence of great moral evil. And yet in the midst of that flood God not only provided an ark to mercifully save his elect, but He showered Noah in further grace by making a covenant with him. At the cross we see both of these in effect in an even greater way. On the one hand, on the cross, all the judgment of God was poured out on Christ's shoulders. In other words, Christ absorbed the flood on our behalf. And on the other side of that flood, He has made a covenant with us (Hebrews 8:6), a New Covenant of Grace.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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### Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. What commands and blessings does God give Noah and his sons in Genesis 9:1–7?  
How does this connect to the creation mandate in Genesis 1?
2. What other parallels do you find between these verses and Genesis 1-2?
3. What is the downward spiral of sin progress from Genesis 3 to this point?
4. Noah builds an altar and offers sacrifices to God. Why do you think the text emphasizes this act immediately after leaving the ark?
5. What would we be missing if this text was not included in the Bible?

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## Reflection Questions

1. In Genesis 8:10-12, Noah sends out a dove, which returns with an olive leaf. Though the waiting was not over, this small sign gave Noah hope that new life was ahead.
  - a. Have you ever received a “small sign” of God’s faithfulness in the middle of waiting?
  - b. What have been some ways God has reminded you of his presence or faithfulness when you’ve been waiting for something or going through a difficult circumstance?

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2. Just as Noah and his family were kept safe in the ark through God’s judgment, we are kept safe in Christ, who bore judgment for us.
  - a. How does seeing Christ as your “ark” deepen your confidence, trust, and understanding of salvation?
  - b. Are there any parallels between Noah in this story and how you experienced the Gospel in your own life?

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3. God's covenant is not only with Noah and his descendants, but also with every living creature on earth (9:8–17).
- a. What does this show us about God's relationship with all of creation, not just humanity?
  - b. What do you think the Christian responsibility is toward caring for the earth?
  - c. What does this look like in your day-to-day life?

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4. The Hebrew word for "bow" in verse 8:13 is the same Hebrew word for a military "warbow."
- a. What might be the significance that God "set his warbow in the sky" (bent and pointed away from the earth) as the sign of his covenant with Noah, his descendants, and the rest of creation?
  - b. What symbolic similarities do you see between the Noahic covenant and the New Covenant found in the person of Jesus?
  - c. What role do God's covenantal symbols play in the Christian life today?

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# Week Seven

*The Tower of Babel & Abraham | Genesis 11 - 12:9*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

This story is the last in Genesis before our introduction to Abraham. In fact, these two stories rightly belong back to back. In the Babel account, man tried to become like God (“to make a name for themselves”) and was dispersed among the nations. In the Abraham account, a man was chosen from among the nations to bring people back to God. One of the Big Idea’s of this passage is sin’s usurping effect on our heart. Our true purpose is to make God’s name great, but Babel reveals that sin has deceived us into thinking life will be better if we can make our name great.

### The Christological Focus

Babel divided us, but Christ unites us. Man’s hungering for selfish ambition, to be like God, ultimately separates us from one another. But Christ, through his sacrificial act of love on the cross, has offered a path back to God’s original design. Through Christ, and Christ alone, the never-ending pursuit of making our name great is broken. The one whose name is truly great offers us peace and wholeness that the world could never offer.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we’re studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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### Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. What similarities do you notice between the sin at the Tower of Babel and the first sin in Genesis 3?

2. Knowing that this story immediately follows the Flood narrative, what is the author of Genesis communicating about the nature of sin?
  3. What is the significance that the people "migrated from the east" (v. 2)?
  4. What was God concerned about regarding the people of earth before He dispersed them?
  5. Why did God wait until Abram was 75 years old before telling him of His promised blessings?
  6. How does the Tower of Babel story contrast the calling of Abram?
  7. What would we be missing if this text was not included in the Bible?
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## Reflection Questions

1. In Genesis 11, the technological advancement and discovery of brick building sparked human pride and the desire to ascend to the heavens in order to "make a name for themselves."
  - a. Looking at our world today, how do you see technology, creativity, and ambition intersect with the human desire to "make a name for themselves" or ascend to the heavens and "be like God" (Gen 3:5)?
  - b. Where does this tension show up in your own life?

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2. On the surface, Abram seems like an ordinary, old, even insignificant man; childless, with no record of remarkable achievements in his genealogy or past.
  - a. Why do you think God chooses someone like Abram to be a blessing to the nations?
  - b. How does this challenge the ways you view God's work in your own life and the people He might use to accomplish His purposes?

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3. The people of Babel sought to “make a name for themselves” through a massive project of their own design (v. 11:4). In contrast, God later promises to “make Abram’s name great” (v. 12:2).

- a. How does this text impact the way we should be thinking about self recognition and greatness?

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4. When God called Abram, He was very clear about what he needed to leave behind (his country, his people, and his father’s household) but gave only a vague picture of where he was going (Gen 12:1).

- a. Why do you think God sometimes asks people to follow Him without revealing the full destination?
- b. Can you think of other stories in Scripture where God calls someone in a similar way?
- c. How does this pattern resonate with your walk with God? How has this been difficult? How has it been easy?

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# Week Eight

*God's Covenant with Abraham | Genesis 15*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

In Genesis 15, God establishes a foundational covenant with Abraham promising a son, descendants, land, and grace, despite forthcoming hardships in Egypt and beyond. These promises are not merely historical but extend to the Christian church today, forming the bedrock of God's redemptive plan. The covenant reveals God's faithfulness, as He unilaterally binds Himself to fulfill these promises, demonstrating that His grace undergirds the hope of His people through all generations, even in the face of trials.

### The Christological Focus

The covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15 points directly to Christ and His church. The promise of a son, "your very own son," ultimately finds fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the true seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16). The promise of descendants as numerous as the stars foreshadows the church, a multitude from every nation united in Christ (Rev. 7:9). The foretold hardships reflect the world's opposition, yet Christ endured ultimate affliction to secure redemption. The promised land signifies the eternal inheritance believers receive through Christ. While the passing of the pot and flaming torch symbolizes the Covenant of Grace, fully realized in Christ's sacrificial death, which guarantees God's unbreakable commitment to His people.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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## Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. Genesis 15:6 is the first mention of righteousness in Scripture. What does this verse communicate about its nature?
2. In Genesis 15:8, Abram asks, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" prompting God to establish a covenant through a unique ritual (verses 9-17). What elements of this covenant ceremony stand out to you and what do they suggest about God's commitment to His promises? What do the elements in the ceremony signify?
3. Why is the covenant significant in the context of Abram's doubts?
4. God's promise to Abram includes both a vast number of descendants and a specific land (verses 18-21). Consider the whole book of Genesis. Why do you think the promise of land is so central to this covenant and what does it reveal about God's desire to establish a place of rest for His people?
5. If Genesis 15 were not included in the Bible, what insights about God's character, faith, and the nature of His covenants would we miss?

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## Reflection Questions

1. In verses 2–6, Abram voices his doubts and fears to God, suggesting that Eliezer of Damascus might be his heir. But God reassures him that His promise still stands: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir" (v. 4). Abram believes, but later his patience falters and he takes matters into his own hands with Hagar.
  - a. Have you walked through a season like this, torn between trust and self-reliance?
  - b. What was that struggle like for you and how did God meet you there?

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2. Before entering into a covenantal relationship, God tells Abram that His promises won't be fulfilled without pain. He says that before his offspring inherit the promised land, they will be "sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years" (v.13).
- a. Why does God include this piece before establishing his covenant?
  - b. What does this tell us about the way God works in our lives and Israel's story?
  - c. Do you have any examples of this from your own life?

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3. In Abram's time, it was common for both parties in a covenant to walk between the pieces of sacrificed animals. This symbolized that if either party broke the contractual agreement, they would share the same fate and death as the animals. But in this passage, Abram never walks through the sacrificed animals; only God does. This means the weight of the covenant and consequences of failure rest entirely on God. This foreshadows the gospel; God Himself bearing the cost of his people's failure in Christ.
- a. What does it reveal about God that he entered into a covenant with His people, knowing the cost it would have for him?
  - b. What comes to mind when you think about the fact that God would rather take death upon Himself than abandon you?

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4. Abram had to look forward in faith to promises that he would never see fulfilled in his lifetime (v. 13–16).
- a. Why do you think God made these long-term promises to a man who would never see them fulfilled?
  - b. How are you being called to live faithfully in areas where you cannot see the full outcome? What promises are you clinging to?

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# Week Nine

*Lot Escapes Sodom & Gomorrah | Genesis 19:1-29*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

Genesis 19:1-29 reveals the depth of human sin through the depravity of Sodom and Gomorrah and Lot's troubling attachment to the city's corrupt ways. Despite this, God's grace rescues Lot and his family from destruction, highlighting that our salvation from sin's consequences is not due to our merit but God's merciful intervention. The passage underscores the pervasive and lingering effects of sin, even in those spared, urging us to recognize its depth in our own lives.

### The Christological Focus

In Genesis 19, Lot's rescue from Sodom's judgment points to Christ as the ultimate deliverer from sin's destruction. Just as Sodom's sin demanded divine judgment, our sinfulness merits God's wrath. However, Christ absorbs that judgment on the cross and secures our salvation by grace alone (Eph. 2:8-9). Lot's lingering attachment to Sodom mirrors our own struggle with sin, but Christ's redemptive work frees us from its grip. While Lot's wife looked back and was judged, Christ calls us to look to Him, the one who leads us out of condemnation into eternal life, breaking sin's corruption through His transformative grace.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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### Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. Read the verses preceding this story (18:22-33). What does this textual context reveal about God's act of judgment on these cities?
2. Why did God decide to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah? Where does the text show the evil of the city?
3. Lot sat at the gate of Sodom, a place of social prominence in a wicked city. What might this reveal about the pull of influence, comfort, or reputation in shaping where we "sit."
4. What is the author communicating when he writes, "But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house"?
5. Genesis 19:29 notes that God remembered Abraham and saved Lot for his sake. How does this verse connect the events of Genesis 19 to Abraham's intercession in Genesis 18:22-33?
6. The angels warned Lot to flee the city. How did he respond? How do others respond when they are told to flee?

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## Reflection Questions

1. This story is filled with hesitations to heed God's warning and flee, despite the promise of impending destruction. Lot's sons-in-law dismiss his warning as a joke (v. 14-15), Lot himself lingers until the angels must drag him out (v. 16), and Lot's wife looks back at the city and is turned into a pillar of salt (v. 26).
  - a. What do these different responses teach us about the attachments humans have to sin, even when God calls us to obedience?
  - b. What might "looking back" look like in your walk with God today, and what does it reveal about where your heart finds security?

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2. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because "the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave" (v.18:20). In other words, God heard the cries of those suffering from their injustice and He acted accordingly by destroying the cities.

- a. What does this reveal about God's response to human suffering and the finality of all injustice?
- b. What terrible injustice is happening around us today and what responsibility do we as Christians have in crying out to God against it?
- c. Spend time as a group praying that God would bring His justice in those areas of our broken world.

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3. Ultimately, even Lot hesitated to leave Sodom despite the angels' clear warnings of God's judgment. He had to be forcibly carried away to safety (v. 16). This hesitation shows how deeply sin and worldly comforts can grip the human heart, even when salvation is offered.

- a. What does this reveal about the nature of salvation?
- b. How have you experienced God's mercy pulling you out of places or patterns you couldn't escape on your own?

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4. Each person in this passage responds differently to God's mercy: Abraham pleads for it, Lot hesitates to accept it, his wife looks back at the life she was saved from, and the angels act urgently.

- a. Which of these responses do you recognize in yourself today and how is God speaking to you through it?

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# Week Ten

*The Sacrifice of Isaac | Genesis 22*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

Genesis 22 reveals how God tests Abraham's faith through the unthinkable command to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac. Abraham's immediate obedience, even in the face of profound loss, demonstrates a trust that rests not in circumstance but in God's character. Yet the test is not without mercy; God provides a substitute, sparing Isaac and reaffirming His covenant promises. Through this, we see that trials are never wasted in God's hands. Instead they expose the depth of our trust, reveal His gracious provision, and lead to greater blessing on the other side of faithful surrender.

### The Christological Focus

The testing of Abraham in Genesis 22 powerfully foreshadows Christ's redemptive work. Just as Abraham was asked to sacrifice his only son, God the Father offered His only Son, Jesus, as the ultimate sacrifice for sin (John 3:16). The ram caught in the thicket, provided as a substitute for Isaac, points to Christ who is the Lamb of God and takes our place to bear God's judgment (John 1:29). Abraham's obedience and God's provision in the trial reflect the greater reality of Christ's obedience on the cross, through which believers receive the ultimate blessing of salvation and eternal life.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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## Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. How does the description of Isaac as “your son, your only son, whom you love” intensify the emotional and spiritual weight of God’s command to Abraham?
2. At what point does the angel of the Lord intervene and what is said (v. 11–12)?
3. What is the author trying to communicate by repeatedly using Abraham’s name? What is significant about this name in light of God’s covenant with him (Gen. 17:5)?
4. What name does Abraham give to the place and what is the meaning given in the text (v. 14)?
5. What parallels do you see between this story and the Gospel?
6. How does God reaffirm His covenant promises to Abraham (v. 16–18)?
7. What specific blessings are promised to Abraham and his descendants as a result of his obedience?

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## Reflection Questions

1. Imagine you are Abraham in this story, asked to sacrifice your only son whom you have been anticipating to come for decades.
  - a. What do you think was going through Abraham’s mind throughout this narrative?
  - b. Has there ever been a time when God asked you to give up something that seemed good for His sake?

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2. Abraham’s call to sacrifice Isaac shows us that before God uses someone greatly, He often tests them deeply.
  - a. What other examples in Scripture can you think of where God tested someone before using them in a significant way?

- b. Can you think of a time in your own life when God tested your faith? How did you respond?

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3. Abraham was asked to give up his only son, Isaac. Tim Keller, in *Counterfeit Gods*, points out that we can often identify our idols by looking at our greatest fears. These things may be good in themselves, but they become idols when we refuse to give God access to them. What you are most afraid of losing (fear of being single, unemployed, unrecognized, unsuccessful, etc.) often reveals what you love most.

- a. What is the 'Isaac' you hold most dear - the thing you are most afraid to surrender to God?
- b. How might He be calling you to trust Him with the things you love, even when it feels impossible or painful?

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4. At the last moment, God spared Abraham from sacrificing Isaac. Yet Scripture shows that God would not spare His own Son, offering Him up for the sake of the world and the forgiveness of our sins.

- a. On a *human level*, how does this story help you grasp the incredible cost and love involved in God giving up His Son for you?
- b. How does this reflection draw you into a deeper love for Him and a fuller understanding of the Gospel?

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# Week Eleven

*Isaac Blesses Jacob | Genesis 27-28*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

Genesis 27-28 illustrates that God's will, accomplished through His ways, leads to His blessing. While on the flip side, human attempts to manipulate divine promises result in hardship and failure. Jacob and Rebekah's deception to secure Isaac's blessing for Jacob, though aligned with God's prior promise that "the elder will serve the younger," was pursued through sinful means and led to family strife. In contrast to Abraham's faith in God's provision, this passage reveals the consequences of forcing God's plan through human schemes, while still underscoring God's unwavering commitment to His promise.

### The Christological Focus

The narrative of Jacob's deception and God's reaffirmed promise in this Scripture points to Christ, the true heir of God's blessing. Unlike Jacob who sinned to grasp the blessing, Christ perfectly fulfills God's will through obedience, securing the ultimate blessing of salvation for all nations (Galatians 3:14). The family's sins (Isaac's favoritism, Rebekah's scheming, Jacob's deception, and Esau's murderous intent) reflect humanity's brokenness, yet God's grace prevails, as seen in the vision at Bethel ("How awesome is this place"). This foreshadows Christ, the true ladder connecting heaven and earth (John 1:51), through whom God's unwavering promise of redemption is fulfilled despite the depth of human failure.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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## Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. Considering the literary context, why did Rebekah help orchestrate Jacob's deception to gain the birthright? (see verses 26:34-35; 27:46)
2. What do we know about Esau in the verses leading up to these chapters?
3. What do you notice about the significance of birthright and blessing in this context and why are they so important in this story (v. 27:1-4, 27:30-33)?
4. What unhealthy family dynamics do you see in these chapters? How does sin multiply them?
5. How does the author use the transition from deception in Genesis 27 to God's revelation in Genesis 28 to advance the overall story of the covenant (v. 27:41; 28:10-22)?
6. What is the significance of stones in these chapters?
7. Why does God give Jacob a vision of the ladder in verses 28:10-22?
8. What would we be missing if this story were not in Scripture?

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## Reflection Questions

1. Before this story in Genesis 25:19-34, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew because he "despised it" (v. 34). In other words, Esau was far more concerned with temporary pleasure and immediate satisfaction than the long-term blessing God promised.
  - a. In our world today, what are some modern 'meals' (temptations, distractions, or conveniences) that someone might trade for long-term blessings God wants for us?
  - b. Where have you experienced the pull of these 'trade-offs' and how might you guard against trading something eternal for something temporary?

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2. Jacob did not need to deceive Isaac to receive God's covenant promises; Esau had already sold his birthright (v.25:29-34) and God's plan would have continued without the involvement of sin. However, Jacob still acted deceitfully to ensure that he obtained God's blessing.

- a. In your life, where have you felt the need to "take matters into your own hands," instead of trusting God with the outcome?

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3. Naturally, Jacob was afraid of his brother, as his deception led to an extreme fracture in their relationship and left Esau with the longing to kill his brother (v. 27:41). As Jacob fled in fear, a dream reassured him of God's promise and unwavering presence (vv. 14-15).

- a. What does this story teach about the consequences of sin for relationships?
- b. Have you ever been extremely afraid or anxious and then been reminded of God's presence?
- c. When fear overtakes us, how can we return to God and remember He is faithful?

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4. In Jacob's dream, he sees a ladder connecting heaven and earth with angels ascending and descending. Please read John 1:43-51.

- a. How does Jesus interpret Jacob's dream and the connection between the ladder and the Abrahamic covenant (v. 28:13-17)?
- b. How was Jacob meant to be encouraged by this vision as he stepped into God's covenantal blessing?
- c. How does Jesus' interpretation of the ladder offer encouragement and hope to His followers today under the New Covenant?

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# Week Twelve

*Jacob Wrestles with God | Genesis 32:22-32*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

Genesis 32:22-32 tells of Jacob's encounter with God as he faces the coming confrontation with his brother, Esau. Wrestling alone at night, Jacob's struggle with God becomes a metaphor for his lifelong striving and struggle. This wrestling culminates in a moment of humiliation and surrender where he cries out for God's blessing. This narrative reveals that God's blessings often come through the valley of brokenness and struggle, where His grace reshapes our identity and purpose, leaving us forever changed yet divinely blessed.

### The Christological Focus

Jacob's wrestling with God in Genesis 32 foreshadows the redemptive work of Christ, who brings ultimate blessing through the valley of His own suffering. Just as Jacob's struggle left him broken yet blessed with a new name, Israel, Christ's death on the cross secures a new identity for believers as God's children (Gal. 3:26). The grace shown to Jacob through transforming his name and limp points to Christ, who bears our wounds and grants us the blessing of reconciliation with God, turning our struggles into His eternal victory.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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### Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. Why is Jacob so afraid of meeting his brother, Esau? What has happened between them

leading up to this encounter?

2. In verse 24, Jacob wrestles with “a man” until daybreak. What clues does the text give about the identity of this figure, and how do these clues develop as the passage progresses (v. 27-30)?
3. In verses 27-28, Jacob’s name is changed to Israel. What is the reason for this change and what might the new name signify about his relationship with God and his people?
4. How does Jacob prepare to meet his brother, Esau?
5. What would we be missing if this story were not included in Scripture?

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## Reflection Questions

1. As Jacob approached his reunion, he was overtaken by fear and devised a plan to appease his brother. Instead of trusting in God’s promise to bless and protect him, Jacob leaned on his own strategies to “hedge his bets” and control the outcome.
  - a. Share a time in your life when you faced uncertainty or conflict and felt the urge to take control rather than trust God.
  - b. What did you learn from that experience and how has it impacted you since?

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2. In this story, Jacob wrestles with a mysterious man whom he later recognizes as God Himself (v. 30).
  - a. What does this interaction reveal about God’s character and His relationship with His people?
  - b. Have you ever experienced a time when you felt you were “wrestling with God”?
  - c. What was that struggle like and how did it shape your relationship with Him?
  - d. How does it encourage you to know that God, in His boundless grace, chooses to stoop into our struggles and engage with us personally, even when He doesn’t have to?

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3. Jacob's encounter with God was meant to lead to reconciliation. Just as God's mercy was shown to Jacob, Jacob was called to pursue peace with his brother. Similarly, our reconciliation with God through the Gospel calls us to seek peace in our challenging relationships.
  - a. Reflect on a time when God's forgiveness in your life moved you to restore a strained relationship with someone else. How did that experience reflect God's work in you?
  - b. Are there any relationships in your life right now that feel broken or hostile, where God might be inviting you to extend grace and pursue peace?

*\*Note: Reconciliation is ultimately God's work, but as followers of Christ, we are called to extend grace and pursue peace in ALL our relationships, as far as it depends on us (Rom. 12:18). Even when reconciliation isn't fully realized due to the choices of others, our role is to extend forgiveness and make intentional efforts toward peace, because of the mercy and reconciliation God has shown us.*

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4. By the end of this story, Jacob comes out of his wrestling match with a blessing and a limp.
  - a. Why do you think God left Jacob blessed, yet permanently wounded?
  - b. Have you ever experienced a season where God's work in your life came with a scare?
  - c. How do these reminders call us to remember God and His relationship with us?

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# Week Thirteen

*Joseph's Sorrows | Genesis 37:12-41*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

Genesis 37:12-41 tells of Joseph's incredible sorrows marked by familial betrayal, enslavement, false accusation, and imprisonment. Yet woven throughout all these trials is God's sovereign hand, preserving and positioning Joseph for a greater purpose. Despite human injustice, stemming from his brothers' jealousy and Potiphar's wife's deceit, Joseph's integrity and God's faithfulness remain steadfast. Together, this demonstrates that even in the darkness of terrible human suffering, divine providence can turn evil intentions toward ultimate good. Joseph's story reminds us that even our trials are not meaningless but part of God's redemptive story.

### The Christological Focus

Joseph's journey in Genesis 37:12-41 powerfully foreshadows Christ, the ultimate suffering servant who endures betrayal and injustice for the sake of the world's salvation. Just as Joseph, the favored son, was betrayed by his brothers for pieces of silver and stripped of his robe, Christ was betrayed by Judas for thirty pieces of silver and stripped before His crucifixion (Matt. 27:28). Joseph's innocent suffering in prison, where he interprets dreams and brings hope, mirrors Christ's descent into death where He conquers sin and offers eternal life. Ultimately, Joseph's rise from slavery to prominence points to Christ's resurrection and exaltation (Phil. 2:9-11).

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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## Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. Why do Joseph's brothers hate him?
2. In this story, Joseph is not entirely innocent. How do his actions contribute to the fractured relationship between him and his brothers?
3. How does Jacob's favoritism for Joseph contribute to the fractured relationships between the brothers? Where else in Genesis have you seen favoritism lead to familial conflict?
4. What do we know historically about the Ishmaelites (v.25)?
5. What motivated Reuben and why was he distraught when he realized Joseph was missing from the pit (v.29-30)?
6. Verse 36 notes Joseph's sale to Potiphar. How does this low point in the text set the stage for God's purpose in Joseph's life?
7. Throughout Genesis so far, how has the theme of broken relationships between brothers shown up? Why is this a recurring motif and what does it signify?
8. What would we be missing if this story were not included in Scripture?

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## Reflection Questions

1. The brothers hated Joseph because they were jealous of their father's favoritism and love for him (vv. 3-4, 11).
  - a. How does jealousy show up in your life and why is it so destructive?
  - b. How do you identify and confront jealousy when you feel it swelling up?
  
2. In Genesis 37:12-36, Jacob's favoritism toward Joseph (v. 3) is a leading cause of the wickedness in this chapter.
  - a. Have you ever felt the pain of favoritism or partiality in your life?

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- b. What does this text reveal about the harm of partiality? How does it bring significance to the fact that God is impartial (Deut 10:17; Acts 10:34-35; Rom 2:11)?

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3. After the brothers strip Joseph of his colorful coat, throw him into a pit without water, and leave him for dead, they show no remorse and casually “sat down to eat” (v. 25).
- a. Reflect on what this detail reveals about their hearts and their indifference toward their sin.
  - b. Where in your life have you caught yourself showing indifference to your sin?
  - c. How did the Lord call you out of that indifference and toward repentance?

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4. Though God is not mentioned in this chapter, Joseph’s sale to Egypt (v. 36) marks the beginning of God’s redemptive plan for the whole nation of Israel.
- a. Reflect on a moment when God worked through a painful situation in your life, even when His presence wasn’t immediately apparent.
  - b. How does this text encourage you to trust His unseen purposes in your struggles?

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# Week Fourteen

*Joseph Forgives His Brothers | Genesis 42-50*

## Leader's Notes

### The Big Idea

In Genesis 42-50, we see the culmination of Joseph's story. Famine drives his brothers to Egypt leading to tests of their character, Joseph's emotional revelation of his identity, and forgiveness towards his brothers. Joseph eventually recognizes that through his life, God's sovereign providence transforms evil into salvation for Jacob's family, preserving the line of promise. Joseph's famous statement, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Gen. 50:20), furthers the theme that divine providence redeems human sin.

### The Christological Focus

The story of Joseph foreshadows Christ, the exalted Savior who forgives and reconciles His people despite their betrayal. Just as Joseph, once rejected and sold by his brothers, rises to power in Egypt and extends mercy to save them from famine, Christ, rejected by His own, is exalted at God's right hand and offers forgiveness to sinners (Rom. 5:8). Joseph's reunion and provision for his family mirror Christ's reconciliation of humanity to God through the cross, where He absorbs our wrongs, declares peace, and secures our future inheritance. This demonstrates that God's redemptive plan prevails over even the darkest expression of human sin.

### Context Questions

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

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### Textual Questions

*Before using the questions, have the group simply observe the text. Listen to what they discover as the Holy Spirit leads them. You may naturally cover some of the questions provided below in that discussion.*

1. What circumstances have led to Joseph's brothers coming to Egypt?
2. What parallels do you notice about how Jacob treats Benjamin (v.42:4) and how Jacob treated Joseph (v. 37:3)? What does this reveal about the family dynamics in Jacob's household? (Also see Gen 44:24-34).
3. In Genesis 44, what do you notice about the brothers' protection of Benjamin compared to how they treated Joseph in Genesis 37?
4. Why does Joseph react the way he does in Gen 45:1-15? How do the brothers react?
5. How do the brothers react to Joseph's mercy? Do you think they trust him by the end of Genesis 50?
6. What does Genesis 50:20-21 reveal about God's plan to work through humanity's mess?
7. What would we be missing if this story were not in Scripture?

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## Reflection Questions

1. During his time in Potiphar's house, Joseph faced intense temptation but chose to flee rather than compromise his integrity (Gen. 39:7-12).
  - a. What does Joseph's example teach us about resisting temptation and how can we practically "flee" from sin today?
  - b. Have you ever walked away from a situation or temptation only to face unexpected consequences, similar to how Joseph's flight led him to prison?

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2. Joseph's tests mirror the sins his brothers once committed against him - jealousy toward the favored brother (Gen. 43:34), greed (Gen. 42:26-28), and loyalty to family (Gen. 44:2). Through these moments, Joseph discerns if their hearts have truly changed.
  - a. In what ways might God use circumstances in our lives to expose whether genuine repentance has taken place?
  - b. Can you think of a time when God tested you in an area where you used to fall short? How did you respond differently?

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3. Throughout this story, Joseph forgives his brothers even though they never ask for it. Even after their father's death, they still fear Joseph might take revenge. However he reassures them again of his forgiveness (Gen. 50:15–21). Remarkably, Joseph offers mercy freely, without their gratitude, repentance, or reciprocation.

- a. Have you ever had to extend forgiveness to someone who neither deserved it nor acknowledged it?
- b. Is there someone you're holding this kind of forgiveness back from?
- c. What does Joseph's response reveal about the nature of genuine forgiveness?
- d. How does his example point us toward the kind of forgiveness God offers us in Christ?

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4. Joseph waited nearly 22 years before he finally saw how God was using his suffering for good! As Christians, we often experience pain and suffering without any clear purpose or reason why.

- a. Have you ever gone through a time of suffering that seemed to have no clear purpose?
- b. Have you ever had a moment when, like Joseph, you began to see how God was working through your pain?
- c. Whether you've seen God's purposes or not, how does Joseph's story encourage you to trust Him in the waiting?

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5. Look back over the whole story of Genesis from creation and fall, through the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. What lessons or truths about God, humanity, or His promises have stood out to you the most?

- a. How has this time in Genesis shaped the way you understand God's character, His faithfulness, and your own life in light of His story?

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