

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Beginnings Genesis 1: 1—25***In the beginning God...* Genesis 1:1**Day 1: Read Genesis 1:1–25.**

1. The first chapter of Genesis records the creation of the universe in time and space. God is present at this point, but how long had he existed prior to creation and how far into the future will he continue to exist? (Ps. 90:2; Rev. 10:6)
2. Look again at verses 1 and 2. What raw materials did God use to create the heavens and the earth? (Is. 48:13)
3. Clearly God was present at creation, but who else was involved in the process? (1:2; Jn. 1:1–3; Col. 1:16)
4. Creation brought order and purpose out of chaos. If God was able to create a whole cosmos by the word of his mouth, what is he able to do in your life? (2 Cor. 5:17)

Days 2 & 3: Read Genesis 1:3–13.

5. Israel was surrounded by nations that believed creation resulted from the struggle between competing gods or forces; how does this differ from the Genesis account? (Is. 45:6-7)
6. How many times in chapter one does it say, “God spoke” and/or “God said”? In what ways does God continue to speak? (Heb. 1:1–3)
7. The NIV translates the condition of the earth before creation as “formless and empty”, but it could also be translated “uninhabitable and uninhabited”. On the first three days of creation, God makes three separations to make the cosmos livable. What are they? (1:4; 1:7; 1:9–10)
8. What does God do after each separation he makes in his creation? (1:5; 1:8; 1:10) What significance do you think this might have (consider the relationship you have with the things you name)? (Gen. 2:19, 20)

9. How is the significance of naming reflected in the life of a Christian? (Is. 43:1)

10. What further preparation for habitation does God make in verses 11 and 12?

Day 4: Read Genesis 1:14–24.

11. Israel’s neighbors worshipped the sun and moon. How does the Genesis account portray the sun and moon? What purpose did they serve? Why would their true origin be important for the Israelites to know and understand?

12. In the first three days of creation, God gives the world form and makes it habitable; in the next three he fills it. Fill in the chart below to show what God did each day.

Day	Separating the Realms Making the Earth habitable	Day	Filling the Created Realms Inhabiting the Earth
1	Light and Darkness	4	(1:16–17)
2	Sky and Sea	5	(1:20–22)
3	Land /Vegetation and Seas	6	(1:24–25)

Day 5: Read Genesis 1:1–25.

13. How does God feel about the things he has created? (1:10b; 12b; 18b; 25b) What does this say about his emotional connection to his creation?

14. Take a minute to consider the power God has to “thicreate (out of nothing!), and then give the ability to live, breathe and reproduce to all creatures. How does this strengthen your faith and trust in the Lord? (Ps. 124:8)

15. What is the surprise about creation week that we learn only in the New Testament? (Jn. 1:1–5; Col. 1:15–17)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Man in God's Image Genesis 1:26-2:4a**

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image...'. " Genesis.1:26

Day 1: Read Genesis.1:26-28.

1. What do man and woman have in common with the birds and livestock and other creatures God made in days five through six? What do man and woman have in common with the Divinity that those other creatures do not? (Ps. 8:4-8)
2. In verses 26 and 28 how does God himself elaborate on what is meant by being made in his image? What role will the human play in God's creation?
3. Looking around you, what kind of report card do we get as rulers over creation since the Fall? In what ways have we gloriously imitated God? In what ways have we abused our role?
4. Who has come to restore integrity and righteousness to the role of man as ruler over creation? (1 Cor. 15:27,28; Heb. 2:6-10)

Day 2: Read Genesis 1:26, 27.

5. Notice the plural form of God's speech: "Let *us*," and "in *our* image." Whom do you think God is speaking to or conferring with? What hint about God's being do we glimpse here that will come to fuller expression in the New Testament? (Jn. 14:16,17; 17:5)
6. If God is a Trinity, and the Father and Son and Holy Spirit have been in loving relationship from all eternity, what else can we say is fundamental to being made in his image?

Day 3: Read Genesis 1:26, 27.

7. How awesome is it that every human being you will ever meet is stamped with God's image! You interact with many people during the day—bus driver, boss, co-worker, spouse, children-- how does knowing they are made in God's image impact how you treat them differently?
8. Are human beings still created in God's image after the Fall? (Gen. 9:6; James 3:9)

Day 4: Read Genesis 1:26- 28.

9. God clarifies in verse 27 that when he said “Let us make man in our image,” he meant what two kinds of people?

10. God affirms the same dignity and value of both men and women. How is this developed in the New Testament? (Gal. 3:28; 1 Pet. 3:7b)

11. What tasks are both men and women to do together? (v.28)

Day 5: Read Genesis 1:29- 2:4a

12. What does verse 29 say that God provided for man? (Ps 104:27, 28)

13. Since God considers the material world he made “good” (1:31), what should be our view of the material world? (Ps.104:24; 1 Tim.4:4)

14. The “rest” of God on the seventh day is the rest of completion, not exhaustion. Why does God rest on the seventh day? (v.1,2) What work has Jesus completed? (Jn.4:34)

15. What other work has God promised to complete? (Phil 1:6)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Creation of a Gardener Genesis 2:4–25**

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” Genesis 2:15

Day 1: Read Genesis 2:4–7.

1. Genesis 1 gave a broad account of the creation of the cosmos; Genesis 2 focuses on the creation of humanity. Describe the earth before God formed the man. (vv. 5, 6)
2. How does man become a living being? (vs. 7)
3. The Lord forms the man from the dust of the ground and breathes life into his nostrils. What does that show about our relationship to God and our ability to live apart from God? (Reflect on Job 34:14, 15; Ps. 104:29.)

Day 2: Read Genesis 2:8–15.

4. Describe the garden where the lord God puts the man he has formed. (vv. 8–10) How does this beautiful garden reflect God’s heart toward Adam and Eve?
5. What were man’s tasks in the garden? (vs. 15)
6. Scan this chapter and peek ahead to Genesis 3:8a. What did the relationship between Adam and Eve and God look like in the garden?

Day 3: Read Genesis 2:16–17.

7. In the midst of God’s lavish provision, what is the one prohibition? (vv. 16, 17)

8. What does God say the consequence will be if they disobey his command? (vs. 17)

9. What does God say the consequence for sin will be for us if we disobey his commands? (Rom. 6:23) What hope do we then have? (Acts 16:30, 31; Rom. 10:9, 10; 1 John 1:9)

Day 4: Read Genesis 2:18–22.

10. The statement “It is not good” (vs.18) means that something in God’s creation is not yet complete. Why is this problematic? (vv. 18, 20b; 1:28a)

11. Where does Adam look first to find a suitable helper? (vv. 19, 20)

12. Since he doesn’t find one among the animals, how is this helper provided? (vv. 21, 22)

13. Eve’s origin is different from Adam’s. How are they different? (vv. 7, 21, 22)

Day 5: Read Genesis 2:23–25.

14. How does Adam react when he sees Eve? (vs. 23)

15. What characterizes the relationship between Adam and Eve? (vv. 23–25)

16. Adam and Eve are called to be united as one flesh; how does this mirror God’s relationship with his people, then and now? (Deut. 13:4; Hos. 2:19; Eph. 5:31–33)

*IN THE BEGINNING GOD***The Fall****Genesis 3:1–15**

“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as He was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the lord God among the trees of the garden.” Genesis 3:8

Day 1: Read Genesis 3:1–5.

1. Before Eve’s encounter with the serpent, describe what Adam and Eve’s life was like in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. (Gen. 2:8–9; 15–20, 25)
2. What are the two special trees in the middle of the garden? (Gen 2:9). What is God’s command concerning one of them? (Gen. 2:16, 17)
3. The serpent is “crafty” (vs. 1). How do we see this in the way he speaks to Eve? What aspects of God’s character is he trying to make Eve doubt? (vv. 1, 4, 5)
4. The serpent is obviously the mouthpiece for some “dark power.” Who do you think this is? How do New Testament writers describe who this being is? (Jn. 8:44; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:9)

Day 2: Read Genesis 3:1–7.

5. What does Eve add to God’s command that he did not say? (Compare Gen. 2:16, 17 with 3:3.)
How is the serpent’s poison already starting to work?
6. Where is Adam when Eve takes her first bite of the fruit? (vs. 6)
7. What are the three things about the fruit that tempt Eve? (vs. 6) Of those three things, what is it that she really wants? (vs. 5)
8. What is the difference between temptation and sin? (1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 4: 15; James 1:14, 15)

Day 3: Read Genesis 3:6–13.

9. There are immediate consequences when Adam and Eve eat the fruit.
How does it affect their sense of self? (vs. 7)
How does it affect their relationship to God? (vv. 8, 10)
How does it affect their relationship to each other? (vv. 12, 13)

10. Look back at the four questions God asks Adam and Eve. (vv. 9, 11, 13) He obviously knows what has happened; why then is he asking these questions?
11. In which verses do you see:
 Guilty conscience_____Self-justification_____Blameshifting_____
- Deception_____Shame_____Fear_____Alienation_____
- How do you respond when you are caught in sin?
12. Adam and Eve do not immediately “drop dead,” but they do die. How? (Is. 59: 2; Eph. 2:1-3; Col. 1:21)
13. How does the work of Christ, the “second Adam,” reverse the effects of the “first Adam’s” sin? (1 Cor. 15:21–22, 45; Heb. 9:14; 10:19–22)

Day 4: Read Genesis 3:14–15.

14. In what ways does God curse the serpent? How are these humiliating? (Consider Lev. 11:42; Micah 7:16, 17.)
15. The serpent makes his first attack on the woman. How will her offspring (seed) have the last word?
16. Jesus is the fulfillment of this prophecy. How will the serpent’s offspring strike Jesus’ heel? (Mk. 8:31; Jn. 19:16–18) How will Jesus crush Satan’s head? (Col. 2:13–15; Heb. 2:14, 15; 1 Jn. 3:8)

Day 5: Read Genesis 3:1–15.

17. When confronted with the serpent’s lies, Eve’s first inclination is to assume that God is not telling the truth; that He is holding back good things; that He is not trustworthy or good. When you catch yourself thinking this way, what should you do?
18. Read and meditate on Isaiah 40:21–31. What do you learn about God here that will help you when you are tempted to stop trusting Him?
19. Besides questioning God’s character, what do Eve’s disobedience and your own reveal? (Gen. 3:5; Ezek. 28:2)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Sin's Consequences Genesis 3:16–24**

*“Because you...ate from the tree about which I commanded you,
‘You must not eat of it,’...”* Genesis 3:17

Day 1: Review Genesis 3:1–15. Read Genesis 3:16–19.

1. In verses 16–19, God lays out the frustrations and difficulties women and men will experience as a result of the fall. What do you know about God’s character that helps you understand why he allows them? Do you think this is “fair”?
2. What are the consequences of sin for the woman? (vs. 16) In what sphere do they take place?
3. What reason does God give Adam for the curse he is bringing about?
4. What are the consequences of sin for the man? (vv. 16b–19) In what sphere do they take place?

Day 2: Read Genesis 3:17–20.

5. Taken alone, the statement that man was taken from dust and will return to dust could easily lead to a sense of futility. Even though this statement is true, what other information does Scripture provide that gives us hope and purpose in this life? (Is. 43:1; 2 Cor. 4:7, 16–18; Heb. 2:5–8a)
6. Why does Adam name his wife “Eve”? (vs. 20) Since Adam and Eve have not yet had children, how is Adam’s name for her an expression of faith that—in spite of the curse—they will still receive God’s blessing and retain the privilege of fulfilling the mandate he gave them in 1:28?
7. God gave Eve to Adam to be his helper in fulfilling the mandate to fill the earth and to rule over creation. His design was that this “work” would be characterized by harmony and cooperation in all realms of life (physical, emotional, sexual, and spiritual). (Gen 1:27–30; 2:18, 24–25)
 - a. How does the curse on the woman affect the outworking of this design? (vs. 16)
 - b. How does the curse on the man affect the outworking of this design? (vv. 17b–19)

Day 3: Read Genesis 3:16–20.

8. Although the woman’s work of bearing children is characterized by suffering as a result of the curse, how can God’s mercy and grace be seen in the outcome of her “labor”?

9. Although man's work of cultivating the earth is characterized by difficulty as a result of the curse, how can God's mercy and grace be seen in the results of his labor?
10. How do you see the ongoing consequences of the fall being played out in your home and close relationships?

Day 4: Read Genesis 3:21.

11. Earlier in Genesis, Adam and Eve had both been naked and felt no shame (Gen. 2:25). What causes them to realize they are naked? (Gen. 3:6–7a) What do they immediately try to do upon this realization? (Gen. 3:7) Why?
12. God's provision of animal skin garments shows that Adam's and Eve's fig leaves were not adequate coverings.
 - a. What does God have to do to provide "covering" for Adam and Eve?
 - b. How does God later make it possible for the Israelites' sins to be covered? (Ex. 29:36; Heb. 9:22)
 - c. What does God ultimately do to provide covering for our sin? (Heb. 9:11–14)
13. Since the blood of Jesus covers our sin, what should our response be when we see sin in our lives? (Ps. 32:5; 51:2; 1 Jn. 1:8–9)

Day 5: Read Genesis 3:22–24.

14. Now that Adam and Eve have gained the ability to know good and evil (Gen. 2:17; 3:4–7), why is it imperative that they be expelled from the garden and not be able to eat from the tree of life?
15. When God created humans, he had "high hopes" for them, which they promptly dashed by their failure to trust and obey God. It is fairly easy to see God's justice in bringing a curse upon his creation as a consequence for sin, but it is not as easy to recognize God's love, mercy, and grace. Reread this week's passage and find all the ways that God shows kindness to Adam and Eve.
16. God is characterized by love and kindness (e.g., Ps. 57:10; 145:17; 1 Jn. 4:16). How has God demonstrated this to you this past week? What is God's ultimate demonstration of his love and kindness toward you? (1 Jn. 4:9–10; Titus 3:4–7)

Cain and Abel Genesis 4:1–18

*“Then the LORD said... ‘...sin is crouching at your door;
It desires to have you, but you must master it.’”* Genesis 4:6, 7

Day 1: Read Genesis 4:1–5.

1. When Eve gives birth to her first son, Cain, she cries, “With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man” (vs.1). One commentator calls this the “cry of faith” that “lifts the situation out of the rut of the purely natural to its true level.” Pray that God will give you spiritual eyes to see everything that happens to you today as being from his hand.

2. Cain is into agriculture and Abel is into animal husbandry. Is one profession more godly than the other, or did God create both for good? (Col. 3:23)

3. “The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor” (vv.4, 5). What hint in verses 3 and 4 do you have of the sweet savor of Abel’s sacrifice, as contrasted to the lack of comment regarding Cain’s?

Days 2 &3: Genesis 4:1–9.

4. What kind of sacrifices does God reject? (Isa.1:11–17; Mal. 1:14)

5. The sacrifices of Cain and Abel are the first examples in history of dead and worthless religion versus true spiritual worship. What kind of worship do you render to God in your Sunday gatherings, in the words of your lips, in your deeds and attitudes?

6. What deeper insight does the New Testament give us into Cain? (1 Jn. 3:10–15) What is Cain’s sin — defective vegetables or a defective heart?

7. How can we know and reassure ourselves that we really love the LORD, as we say we do? (1 Jn. 3:14, 16; 4:19–21; 5:3)

8. What does Hebrews 11:4 say about why Abel’s sacrifice is pleasing to God?

9. Abel lived a short life and his death may seem tragic, but what is Scripture's evaluation of this short life? (Heb. 11:4)

Day 4: Genesis 4:6–10.

10. What hints do we have in verse 7 that there is a malevolent being lurking behind temptation and sin? Compare this description of sin “crouching” and “desiring” with 1 Pet.5:8.
11. How does God enable us to “master” sin when we are faced with temptation? (1 Cor. 10:13; Eph. 6:10–18; Heb. 4:15, 16, 7:25)
12. No sin is hidden from God. Abel's blood “cries out” to God from the ground.
- a. Whose blood alone cries out effectually to God on your behalf? (Heb. 12:22–24)
 - b. How do you think his blood speaks a “better word”?

Day 5: Read Genesis 4:10–18.

13. The work of Cain's hands will be cursed because he has refused to repent. How can you find “times of refreshing” from the LORD even after you have sinned greatly? (Acts 3:19)
14. How does God show his kindness to even wicked and unrepentant Cain? (vs.15) Why do even people who don't acknowledge God often seem to prosper? (Ps. 73:1–3,16,17, 27, 28; Mt. 5:45b)
15. What are God's mercies and kindnesses toward sinners meant to do? (Rom. 2:4)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**From Adam to Noah Genesis 4:19—6:8**

*“The LORD saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become...
and his heart was filled with pain.” Genesis 6:5, 6*

Day 1: Read Genesis 4:19–24.

1. Lamech was a descendant of one of Eve’s sons. Which one? (Gen. 4:17, 18)
2. What is the reason Lamech gives for committing murder? (vs. 23b) How do Lamech’s motivation and subsequent actions follow the example set by his ancestor? (Gen. 4:4–8)
3. Even before Lamech dishonors God by destroying another created in God’s image, he makes another choice that dishonors God’s design for marriage. What is it? (Gen. 2:24; 4:19; Mt. 19:5, 6)
4. If Lamech had had the New Testament and the indwelling Spirit, what kind of godly response could he have had to being wounded and offended? (Mt. 5:38–39; Rom. 12:18–21; 1 Pet. 2:21–23)

Day 2: Read Genesis 4:25—5:3.

5. How does Eve view the birth of Seth? (vs. 25)
6. As Abel’s replacement, Seth establishes a righteous line and eventually becomes the father of whom? (Luke 3:23–38) Note especially verse 38.
7. What similarities do you see in the language the Bible uses to describe the relationship between God and Adam (man) and between Adam and his son Seth? (Gen. 1:26, 27; 5:1–3)
8. Consider the ways children “image” their parents. How do they represent their “creators”? How do parents feel when their children make good choices? Bad ones? How can this help us understand our relationship with God?

Day 3: Read Genesis 5:3–32.

9. While the names and ages of the families included in the genealogy change, what phrases are repeated for almost every generation?

10. How does this pattern in the genealogy show the fulfillment of God's words found in Genesis 1:28 and 2:17?

How does this cycle demonstrate both God's mercy and his justice?

How do these seemingly contradictory attributes of God seamlessly meet perfectly in the cross? (Isa. 53:5; Rom. 5:8–9; 6:23)

11. Which descendant of Adam does not die? (vs. 24) What understanding can we gain from Enoch's life about what pleases God? (Heb 11:5, 6)

12. What other descendant of Seth is spoken of in a way that leads us to expect that he will be special? (vs. 29)

Day 4: Read Genesis 6:1–5.

13. While it is not clear *who* the "sons of God" are in this passage, it is clear what they see and what they do in response to what they see. What do they see? What do they then do?

14. The Hebrew words for "were beautiful" and "married" could be translated "looked good" and "took." What do God's response in verse 3 and the commentary in verse 5 reveal about God's take on the situation?

15. How does the "look/took" translation repeat the pattern of original sin? (Gen 3:6)

Day 5: Read Genesis 6:5–8.

16. As God looks at man, what does he see in addition to his evil actions and behavior that would not be visible to you or me? (vs. 5b; 1 Sam. 16:7; Luke 6:45)

17. What emotions do man's wickedness and evil evoke in God?

18. What determination does God make in light of man's continual evil?

19. Is God's response to man's sin a surprise to you? Because our sin nature makes us terribly self-focused, it is easy to focus on how the consequences of our sin affect us, but it is more difficult to focus on how our sin hurts God and to realize that what we do really matters to him. How would shifting your focus aid in repenting of your sin?

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**God Sends a Flood Genesis 6:9—8:22**

“Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.” Genesis 7:23

Day 1: Read Genesis 6:9—8:22.

1. What is the condition of the world as this passage opens? (6:11–13; cf. 6:5) What does God resolve to do in response to this wretched state of affairs? (6:13; cf. 6:6, 7)
2. How is Noah described? (6:9; 7:1) What do you think his life looks like, in contrast to the lives of those around him?
3. Do you think Noah’s upright life entitled him to a spot on the ark? Consider the following verses: Rom. 3:10; 9:15, 16; Heb. 11:6, 7.
4. Hebrews 11:7 commends Noah for his faith. List some of the ways you see his faith in action.

Day 2: Read Genesis 6:11—8:19.

5. We get no details about how Noah actually builds the ark, or how long it takes (possibly many years of arduous work!), or what Noah and his family do during the long months of the Flood. In addition, no words of Noah are recorded in this passage. Nevertheless, what is one significant thing we see Noah doing throughout the story? (6:22; 7:5, 9, 16a; 8:15, 16, 18)
6. This passage does include details of God’s specifications for the ark (6:14–16) and more than once relates his instructions regarding which people and animals (and how many) are to go aboard it (6:18–21; 7:1–3). What do you think the writer wants us to learn about God from his inclusion of all these details?
7. What two statements frame the description of the fiercest period of the Flood? (7:16b; 8:1a) What do these statements tell us about the fate of the ark’s passengers?
8. The statement that “God remembered Noah” (8:1) does not describe a mental light bulb popping on. Look at some of the following passages to uncover the richer meaning of God’s “remembering”: 19:29; 30:22; Ex. 2: 24, 25; Ps. 136:1, 2, 23; cf. Lk. 1:46–48, 54, 55.
9. God actively and tenderly remembers his people. How can believing this be an encouragement to you, and to others around you?

Day 3: Read Genesis 7:13–24.

10. On whose account are Noah’s wife, sons, and daughters-in-law saved? (Gen. 7:1, 23b)
11. According to 1 Peter 3:20b–21, what are the floodwaters a picture of?
12. What does baptism in turn represent? (Rom. 6:3–5)

Day 4: Read Genesis 7:6—8:19.

13. The Flood can be seen as a kind of “un-creation” (cf. 6:6, 7) and “re-creation”. Compare the following verses:

Creation”		THE FLOOD – “Un-creation” and “Re-creation”	
1:6, 7		7:11	
1:2c		8:1b (<i>Note: Hebrew uses the same word for “wind” and “Spirit.”</i>)	
1:24, 25		7:14; 8:19	

14. The Flood is also a picture of what future event? (Mt. 24:37–39; 2 Pet. 3:5–7, 10)
- 15 We are told that the day of the LORD’s final judgment will come at an unknown time in the future. What does this mean for the way we live now? (Mt. 24:42; 25:31–36; 2 Pet. 3:11–14)

Day 5: Read Genesis 8:18–22.

16. How glad Noah and his family must have been to get off that ark! What does Noah do once he is back on dry ground?
17. What promise does the LORD then make to himself?
18. The Flood swept away untold numbers of people and animals—yet corruption and violence have persisted, because “every inclination of [man’s] heart is evil from childhood” (vs. 21). What is God going to do about the real problem of evil in our hearts? (Ezek. 36:24-26; Heb.10:22, 23)
19. Now, because of Jesus’ victory over sin, we can glimpse beyond the destruction of Judgment Day into the glorious new creation. Scan Revelation 21:1—22:5 and contemplate this vision of the future.

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Noah and his Descendants Genesis 9:1—11:32**

“I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature....” Genesis 9:8, 9a

Day 1: Read Genesis 9:1–7.

1. The charge God gives to Noah is similar to the charge he gave Adam, yet sin has brought about differences as well.
 - a. What mandate is humanity still being called to fulfill? (Gen. 1:22; 9:1, 7)
 - b. How has humanity’s relationship with the animals changed now that sin has entered the picture? (vv. 2, 3)
 - c. How is the way humans relate to one another different now that sin has entered the picture? (vv. 5, 6)
2. God gives the animals to man for food, but makes what stipulation concerning their consumption? What purpose does the blood of animals serve in the OT sacrificial system? (Lev. 17:11)
3. God permits people to kill animals, but forbids animals and people to kill people. What reason does God give for this prohibition? What penalty does God prescribe for those who break this law? (vv. 5, 6)

Day 2: Read Genesis 9:8–17.

4. With whom does God establish his covenant? (vv. 8–10, 15, 16b, 17)
5. What promise does God make to humans and all living creatures? For how long is God’s promise good? (vv. 11, 12)
6. What sign does God give of his covenant? Why is this a poignant reminder of God’s promise?
7. Try to put yourself in Noah’s place. What would it be like to live through the holocaust of the flood: to see everything you have and care about — your home, your town, your neighbors—your whole world destroyed right before your eyes? What insight does this give you into why God reiterates his promise numerous times to Noah? (vv. 8–17)
8. God commits to never again destroy the earth by flood. He does this knowing full well that humanity will continue to bring grief and pain to his heart. (Gen. 6:5, 6) What does this say about his love for his image-bearers?

Day 3: Read Genesis 9:18—10:32.

9. What does Ham do? Why would this make Noah so upset? What is the result?

10. How does this curse affect the relationships among the descendants of Shem, Japheth, and Canaan? (9:25–27)

11. As the Israelites hear these Genesis narratives for the first time, they stand poised to enter the land of Canaan and conquer its inhabitants (Canaan’s descendants). Why is it important for the Israelites to know this family history?

12. Nimrod, the builder of Nineveh (in Assyria) and of Babel (eventually Babylon), was a descendant of what son of Noah? (10:6–9) How does the enmity between the descendants of Noah eventually play out in the history of Israel? (2 Kings 17:5, 6; Dan. 1:1, 2a)

Day 4: Read Genesis 11:1–9.

13. What two purposes do the men who settled in Shinar give for building a tower that would reach to the heavens? (vs. 4) How were these men trying to achieve significance?

14. In what ways does the Tower of Babel stand in direct opposition to the mandate God gave Noah and his descendants (9:1)? (Ezek. 28:2)

15. Why does God intervene and what does he do? What are the results of his intervention?

Day 5: Read Genesis 11:4–32.

16. In verses 10–32 we are introduced to the descendants of Shem. What descendant of Shem will play a very significant role in the future of God’s people? (vs. 26) (Also, peek ahead to 12:1-3.)

17. Who is Abram’s father? Who are Abram’s brothers? Who is Abram’s wife? (vv. 27–29)

18. In contrast to those who were trying to make a name for themselves, who makes a “name” for Abram? (12:2) Why does he do this? (12:3)

19. In what ways do you seek to “make a name” for yourself? What is our calling instead? (Is. 24:15; 26:8)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Abram Called Out By God****Genesis 12:1—14:24**

"The Lord had said to Abram. 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.'" Genesis 12:1

Day 1: Read Genesis 12:1–5

1. God is on the move. What promise is he now beginning to put into action in his call to a man named Abram to leave his country? (Gen. 12:1, 2; Rom. 16:20)
2. At one point in the genealogy, the righteous "seed" narrows dangerously to one man on an ark. Starting from Noah, trace Abram's ancestry. Which of Noah's three sons does he spring from? (Gen. 9:18; 11:10–26)
3. List the things God promises this middle-aged, pagan merchant for leaving everything to follow. (vv. 2, 3)
4. God commands; Abram obeys. What is Abram (Abraham) more than once called in Scripture? (2 Chr. 20:7; Isa. 41:8; Jas. 2:23)
5. What is the greatest historical fulfillment of the promise that Abram would be a "blessing" (12:2) to all families of the earth? (Rom. 9:5) And who exactly will be blessed? (Gal. 3:9)

Day 2: Read Genesis 12: 6–9.

6. When Abram gets as far as Shechem, God appears to him and promises to give his descendants the land. (v.7) Why do you think he does this at this point? Share a particularly hard time when God gave you a "wink" to confirm his enduring love.
7. What is Abram's only real estate in the Promised Land at the time of his death? (Gen. 23:17–20) What does Abram keep his eye on in his sojourning on earth, and what is his attitude? (Heb. 11:10, 13, 16)

Day 3: Read Genesis 12:10–20.

8. Abram passes his wife off as his sister to protect himself. This moment of weakness gives occasion for God to display his own faithfulness as Protector of the promise. (It's all about God!) How has Abram's little scheme endangered the promise of an heir? What part of God's promise is he ready to deploy if need be? (Gen.12:3)

9. Can you recall a time when you were unfaithful to God but He remained faithful to you and rescued you?

Day 4: Read Genesis 13:1–18.

10. When prosperity renders the land too crowded for Abram and Lot to live together, Abram suggests a separation and gives his nephew first pick. How do Abram's offer and Lot's choices (vv. 10, 11) illustrate the difference between the hearts of the two men?

11. Lot makes a choice on the basis of what looks good. Who else did that? (Gen.13:6) This week, be conscious of making choices based not on appearances but on faith in God's promises. (Heb. 11:1)

12. Lot chooses the best of the land; Abram has friendship with God. What does Abram immediately receive from God after his gesture of faith and generosity? (vv. 14–17) Consider yourself; what would you rather have — “the best of the land” or friendship with God?

13. Peek ahead to see where self-seeking and choosing by appearances will land Lot. (Gen. 19:12ff)

Day 5: Read Genesis 14:1–24

14. In the wars of Genesis 14, Abram is a general, and victory is attributed to him. Just then, a mysterious priest-king rides up and reminds Abram that this victory is nothing less than God's advancing his promise again (v. 20). Show how everything that has happened in Genesis 12–14 has been God's moving the “seed promise” along. (Consider this "sampler" of the continuing seed promise: Gen. 3:15; 13:14, 15; 2 Sam. 7:12, 13, 16; Acts 2:29, 30; Gal. 3:16.)

15. Whoever this Melchizedek is, Abram recognizes him as his spiritual superior and gives him a tithe and condescends to be blessed by him (14:19, 20; Heb. 7:1-4). Melchizedek is a priest- king without genealogy and without beginning or end; how does he pre-figure Christ? (Heb. 6:20; 7:15–17).

16. What has Jesus done for you that the whole line of priests and kings preceding Him could not? (Heb. 7:25).

17. Praise Him!

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**An Everlasting Covenant Genesis 15:1 —18:15**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers." Genesis 17:1, 2

Day 1: Read Genesis 15: 1–7.

1. What is Abram's big concern at the beginning of this chapter? (vv. 1–3) Why is this a problem? (Gen. 12:2, 7; 13:15)
2. Verse six says, "Abram believed the LORD". What amazing thing does he believe? (v. 5; Rom. 4:18–21).
3. Abram is declared to be "right" with God because of his faith. We are made "right" with God because of our faith. What amazing thing do we have to believe? (Rom. 4: 23–25)

Day 2: Read Genesis 15: 8–21.

4. What is Abram's other big concern? (vv. 7, 8; 18–21)
5. God reassures Abram by making a formal covenant with him, which is ratified by a ceremony.

What does Abram have to do? (vv. 9–10)

What appears and passes down the row, between the carcasses? (v. 17)

Who is this? (Ex. 13:21; 19:18)

6. In a modern court of law people make an oath by placing their hand on the Bible and swearing to "...tell the truth, the whole truth..." In Abram's culture people made an oath by cutting up animals and walking between them. What does this ceremony imply will happen to God if he doesn't keep His promise to Abram?

Day 3: Read Genesis 16:1–16.

7. How long has it been now since God made his promise to Abram? (v. 3) How old is Abram? (Gen. 12:4)
8. What is Sarai's problem? How does she take things into her own hands? (vv. 1–4)
9. Hagar is 'used' by Abram and 'abused' by Sarai. She runs away from her difficulties but there she meets the LORD and experiences his unexpected kindness. What does she learn about God?

Day 4: Read Genesis 17: 1–15.

10. How old is Abram now? (v. 1) How old is Ishmael? (v. 25)
11. Abraham's side of the covenant is to circumcise all the males in the community. If the foreskin of every male is not 'cut off,' what will happen to them? (v. 14)
What do you think that would mean? (Think about the two promises of the Covenant: seed and land.)
12. Isaiah 53 speaks of God's suffering servant. What will one day happen to this servant? (Isa. 53:8)
How is this fulfilled in Jesus, the promised seed? (Acts 3:13–15)
13. Circumcision was a constant physical reminder of what? (vv. 7, 11; Lev. 26:11–12)
14. Abraham's descendants fail to remain committed to their relationship to God. Throughout the Old Testament they broke the Covenant by worshipping idols and being evil and disobedient. What did they really need? (Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 36:25–27)
15. Jesus, the Son of God, is "torn apart" and "cut off." He is treated like a covenant breaker even though he isn't. So why does he die? (Isa. 53:5–6; I Pet. 2:22–24.)

Day 5: Read Genesis 17:15–27 and 18:1–15.

16. Put yourselves in Abraham's shoes, what is the huge surprise in 17:16? What has Abraham been assuming all this time? (vv. 18, 21) Why does he laugh? (v. 17)
17. God chooses Isaac instead of Ishmael to be the seed-bearer. How does Paul describe the difference between these two sons? (Gal. 4:22–26)
18. What is Sarah's reaction to what she overhears? (Gen. 18:11, 12, 15) What's the danger in persisting in unbelief? (Heb. 3:12–15) What should our constant prayer be? (Mk. 9:24)
19. What lesson is Sarah about to learn? (Gen. 18:14)
How does God prove this throughout history? (Jer. 32:17; Is. 50:2; Lk. 1:34–37; Acts 2:22–24)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Judgment and Mercy Genesis 18:16—19:38**

“Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Genesis 18:25c

Day 1: Read Genesis 18:16–33.

1. Abraham has just shared a meal with the LORD and is now invited into his confidence. What privileged status does Abraham have? (Isa. 41:8; see also Gen. 20:7a and Amos 3:7) How did Abraham (then Abram) attain that status? (Gen. 12:1–3; 17:5–7)
2. What privileged status do followers of Jesus have? (Jn. 15:14–15) How did we attain that status? (Eph. 1:4–9)
3. What aspects of Abraham’s character do we see displayed in this conversation or “prayer” with God? What does the fact that this conversation is even taking place say about God’s character?
4. On what basis does Abraham intercede for Sodom? (vv. 23, 25)

Day 2: Read Genesis 19:1–29.

5. Of what sins are Sodom and Gomorrah guilty? (Ezek. 16:49–50; Isa. 3:9; Jude 7) What is the result of any and all sin? (Rom. 6:23)
6. Though guilty of many sins, Sodom has come to be equated with homosexuality. What is God’s view of homosexual practice? (Lev. 20:13; Rom. 1:26–27)
7. The sinfulness of Sodom and Gomorrah is the result of the downward spiral of humanity trying to live apart from God. Look at the charges against all of fallen humanity in Romans 1:18–32, and trace this slide into degradation.
8. In contrast, what has God done for all who believe in Jesus? (Eph. 2:1–10)

Day 3: Read Genesis 19:1–38.

9. What do the men of the town want? (vv. 4, 5) What is Lot’s jarring response? (vv. 6–8)
10. How is Lot saved? (v. 16) What does the way he is rescued show us about God? How is it a picture of our salvation?

11. Abraham, though imperfect, is an example of a person of great faith. The picture we get of Lot is a bit murkier. What emotions seem to be driving Lot in his escape to safety? (vv. 18–20; 30)
12. How do Lot’s sons-in-law respond to his warning about the impending destruction? What happens to Lot’s wife? Why?
13. How does 19:29 summarize this fateful day?
14. Lot’s daughters make it to safety with their father, but what do they then do? What will the fruit of their sin—the Moabite and Ammonite peoples—mean for the Israelites, the descendants of Abraham? (Lev. 18:21—note that Molech is an Ammonite god; Num. 25:1–3; 1 Sam. 14:47; 2 Chr. 20:1)

Days 4 and 5: Review Genesis 18:16—19:29.

15. Genesis was written when the Israelites were preparing to enter the land promised to Abraham’s descendants. In his exhortation in Deuteronomy 29, Moses uses the example of Sodom and Gomorrah to warn the Israelites about what would happen if they “abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers” (Deut. 29:25). Later Jesus uses Sodom and Gomorrah in a warning to the people about the final, universal Day of Judgment. What does Jesus say about his coming in Luke 17:28–35? How does Revelation describe that day? (Rev. 6:15–17; 20:11–15)
16. What does Jesus’ coming mean for those who have trusted him to remove their sins? (Lk. 21:27, 28; Rev. 21:1–7)
17. The Day of Judgment is not a very popular topic, yet Jesus speaks of it frequently, and Revelation offers vivid pictures of what it will be like. Do you ever find yourself uncomfortable with the idea of divine punishment? If so, where do you think this discomfort comes from?
18. How do you think your life would be different if you had a firmer grasp on the reality of judgment and thought about it more often?
19. Consider again the story of Abraham’s “prayer” for Sodom, and the Lord’s destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Pray that you would trust that “the Judge of all the earth [will] do right” (18:25).

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**The Promise-keeping God****Genesis 20:1—23:20**

*“...through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed,
because you have obeyed me.” Genesis 22:18*

Day 1: Read Genesis 20:1–18.

1. What very specific thing did God promise Abraham and Sarah? (Gen. 18:10, 14)
2. How does Abraham put the “seed” and the fulfillment of God’s promise in jeopardy right after he receives this promise from God?
3. How does God keep the “seed” safe? (vv. 3, 6, 7, 17, 18)
4. Abraham and Sarah lied about their relationship once before. What motivated them the last time? (12:13) How does Abraham justify the lie this time? (vv. 11–13)
5. Abraham seems to be spiritually adrift in this passage, but God uses him to bring healing to Abimelech’s household anyway. (vv. 7, 17) What does this say about God? (Ps. 103:8–14; 2 Tim. 2:13)

Day 2: Read Genesis 21:1–20.

6. Finally, at the age of ninety, Sarah gives birth to a son. How is this birth a supernatural event? (vv. 1, 2, 5, 7) Compare this with Rom. 4:18, 19.
7. Abraham calls his son Isaac, which means “he laughs.” Both Abraham and Sarah laughed when God first promised them they would have son (Gen. 17:17; 18:11–15). How is their laughter different now? (vv. 6, 7; Ps. 126:2, 3)
8. This blended family is headed for some major difficulties.
 - a. What is it about Ishmael that concerns Sarah? (vv. 9, 10; 16:12; Gal. 4:28, 29)
 - b. What is her concern about Abraham’s loyalties? (vv. 10–13; 17:18)
9. Hagar and Ishmael are sent away and wander in the desert. How does God continue to care for and bless the “natural” son of Abraham? (vv. 15–21)

Day 3: Read Genesis 21:22–34.

10. Abraham has now been living in the Promised Land for about forty years. He has settled in the south and Abimelech, his neighbor, feels the need to enter into a peace treaty.
 - a. What does this show about Abraham’s status, power and, reputation? (Gen. 13:2; 14:14–16; 20:7, 14–16)
 - b. What is the secret of his success? (v. 22)

11. Over these last forty years God has gradually been revealing himself and his character, which is reflected in the following five different Hebrew names of God. What do they mean and what do they reveal about God's character?

- a) El Elyon (Gen. 14:18, 19, 20, 22)
- b) Adonai Yahweh (Gen. 15:2, 8):
- c) El Roi (Gen. 16:13, 14):
- d) El Shaddai (Gen. 17:1):
- e) El Olam (Gen. 21:33):

What name would you give God that reflects how he has revealed his character to you?

Day 4: Read Genesis 22:1–19.

12. What is the shocking command that God gives Abraham? (vv. 1, 2) How does this command completely conflict with God's promises? (Gen. 21:12)

13. How does Abraham respond? (vv. 1–3)

14. During that seemingly endless three-day journey to Mt. Moriah, Abraham has time to work through every possible scenario in his mind. What is one thing that he's sure of? (v. 5)

15. The only way to get through this crisis is for Abraham to cling to what he knows of the character of God. What is one of the attributes that he is depending on? (Isa. 42:5; Ezek. 37:5, 6; Heb. 11:17–19)

16. In verses 8 and 14, God's character is revealed in yet another one of his Hebrew names: Jehovah Jireh. What does this mean for Abraham in the middle of this crisis?

Day 5: Read Genesis 22:9–24; 23:1–20.

17. Abraham is brought face to face with the wrenching agony of the possible death of his son. God steps in and provides a substitute. Many centuries later God would provide another "lamb" (John 1:29), who would die on this same mountain (See 2 Chr. 3:1.). What did Jesus' death accomplish for us? (Isa. 25:7, 8; 2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14–15; 1 Cor. 15:54–57)

18. What belief about God is at the very bedrock of both Abraham's and our faith? (Gen. 15:18; 17:7; Deut. 7:9; Ps. 145:13; Heb. 6:13, 14, 17–19a; 11:11)

19. Abraham passes this final test and so sets the standard for what true faith looks like for the Israelites and for us.

a. After having studied the life of Abraham and this climactic chapter, how would you define what faith looks like?

b. Compare your answer to the definition James gives. (Jas. 2:21–24)

20. Abraham has been a constant nomad and has never bought land. How does he honor his life partner in her death? (23:1–4; 17–20)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**How Isaac Got a Bride Genesis 24:1—25:18**

“Praise be to the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness to my master.” Genesis 24:27a

Day 1: Read Genesis 24:1–9.

1. Abraham is now old, and the Lord has “blessed him in every way” (v.1). Recount the ways. While Abraham was going through all the events narrated in Genesis, did they always immediately appear to be blessings? How is it with the events in your life? (Rom. 8:28)
2. Thinking he will die soon, Abraham makes his servant swear an oath that he will not take a wife for his son Isaac from among the Canaanites. Why? What’s the harm in marrying a Canaanite? (Deut. 7:3, 4)
3. Nor does Abraham want Isaac to go back and settle in the land Abraham came from (vv. 5, 6). Why? What vision drives the Patriarch? (v.7; Heb. 11:11–16).

Day 2: Read Genesis 24:5–49.

4. Why does Abraham readily agree to release his servant from his oath (v.8) even if the woman that the angel leads the servant to should refuse to come? Isn’t that a bit risky? (v. 40; Consider Prov. 3:5, 6)
5. We don’t even learn the servant’s name. But what do you make of his character? (vv.12, 33, 48)
6. When we ask for guidance, what do we have to be sure of? (1 Jn. 5:1,15) Why do we sometimes forfeit the guidance we could have? (James 1:5–8; 4:2b, 3)
7. Notice the way the servant makes his petitions to God, not in bland generalities but creatively and specifically. Do you talk to God like that? Try to have a real conversation with the Lord today, and ask for something specific from his Word and promises.(vv. 12-14)

Day 3: Read Genesis 24:12–60.

8. Verse 15 says that before the servant has even finished praying, Rebekah comes out. Is that just a coincidence? Do you think the servant is watching closely and with expectation for the answer to his prayer? Colossians 4:2 tells us to be “watchful” in prayer. What does that mean to you?
9. What does the servant do when he realizes that God has brought him to the right woman? (vv. 26, 27) Who is the servant glad for? (v.27) Read Romans 12:15 and talk about the kind of heart God loves.
10. At every turn, Abraham’s servant’s single-minded desire has been to please his master (vv. 31–34, 55, 56). How is that like Jesus? (Jn. 4:32–34; 5:30b) What is our calling? (2 Cor. 5:9; Col. 3:23, 24)

Day 4: Read Genesis 24:15–67.

11. What do Laban and Bethuel, Abraham’s relatives, recognize in the events that have transpired? (v.50) Share with the group some event in your own life that clearly came from the Lord.
12. Describe Rebekah’s demeanor when the servant asks for water, as well as her attitude upon leaving her family to serve her husband-to-be. (vv. 17–21, 57, 58, 64, 65)
13. What kind of woman is beautiful in God’s eyes? (Prov. 31:30; 1 Pet. 3:3–6)
14. How are the responses of Abraham and Rebekah alike? (12:1,4a; 24:58)

Day 5: Read Genesis 25:1–18.

15. The Genesis narrator wants to tie up loose ends before launching into the story of Isaac’s son Jacob. How does he show that God is removing every obstacle to the clear line of descent of the seed of promise? (v. 5, 6; 17:18, 19)
16. How does the brief treatment of Ishmael’s descendants (25:13–16) serve to demonstrate the fulfillment of God’s promise to a distraught servant woman named Hagar back in Genesis 21:18?
17. The narrator has in a few verses dispensed with the story of Ishmael’s line before moving on to what is more interesting to him—the line of Jacob. Why is Jacob’s line more important? (Matt.1:1–16)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Jacob and Esau Genesis 25:19—27:40**

“The LORD said to [Rebekah], ‘Two nations are in your womb...one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.’” Genesis 25:23

Day 1: Read Genesis 25:19–28.

1. What “condition” does both Abraham’s wife, Sarah, and Isaac’s wife, Rebekah, have that threatens the fulfillment of God’s covenant promises (Gen. 15:1–5)? Why would God include this “condition” in His sovereign plan of redemption? (Gen. 18:14)
2. What does Rebekah do when she experiences problems in her pregnancy?

What is your first response to concerns in your life? Is it the response that God desires? (Phil. 4:6, 7; 1 Pet. 5:7)
3. What kind of relationship does the Lord say will exist between the twins and their descendants? How is this played out even in their birth?
4. Although Jacob and Esau are twins they are not identical in their appearance or their lifestyles. Describe the differences. (27:11)

Day 2: Read Genesis 25:29–34.

5. What irrational reason does Esau give for selling his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew? (v. 32)
6. The birthright was the oldest son’s share of the material estate of the family and was typically a double share of the inheritance (which for two sons meant the younger received nothing). In Jacob and Esau’s case it is also the inheritance of the promises of God.

What does this say about the value that Esau places on his birthright, and the promises of God?
7. Our culture encourages us to: “Have it your way!”; “If it feels good, do it!”; “Live for the moment!” How do Esau’s reasoning and choices reveal him to be a man whose mind is on things below, not on things above (Phil. 3:19)? (See Heb. 12:16, 17.)
8. Esau’s sin occupies the spotlight in this passage, but for what sinful attitudes and actions is Jacob responsible?

Day 3: Read Genesis 26:1–35.

9. How does Isaac demonstrate both faith (vv. 3–6) and unbelief (v. 7) while in Gerar?
10. How does God use Abimelech, a pagan king, to protect the seed, especially in light of Isaac's lie about Rebekah?
11. God directly and indirectly reveals himself numerous times in this passage. List all the ways you can see God at work.
12. How did Esau show contempt for the Lord and his family's values by his marriage to the Hittites Judith and Basemath (vv. 34, 35)? (Gen. 2:23, 24; 24:3, 4)

Days 4 & 5: Read Genesis 27:1–40.

13. Reread Genesis 25:28. How does the parents' favoritism come to a head in this scene? (vv. 1–10)
14. The giving of the blessing should have been a joyous and public occasion, celebrated with a big feast. Why do you think Isaac is trying to do this on the sly?
15. None of the characters in this drama is willing to trust the sovereign God to bring about his good plan. How is each character in this drama committed to his (her) own agenda? To what methods is each willing to stoop, to bring this about?
 - Isaac
 - Rebekah
 - Jacob
 - Esau
16. Rebekah loves her home-body son, but how does all her scheming rob her of what she loves the most? (vv. 42–45)
17. Think about a difficult relationship in your life. Have you been stubbornly clinging to your own agenda when reconciliation is possible? Pray that God would help you let go of that.
18. In spite of the sinful attitudes and actions of the characters on stage in this drama, God's plan is accomplished. How? (Gen. 25:23; 26:2–5; 27:27–29)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**God Blesses Jacob Genesis 27:41—30:24**

“I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” Genesis 28:15

Day 1: Read Genesis 27:41—28:22.

1. Earlier in Chapter 27 we see Rebekah scheming to advance the cause of her favorite son. What is the consequence of her scheming?
2. In verses 3 and 4 of chapter 28, Isaac blesses Jacob for a second time. How are the circumstances of this blessing different from those of the first blessing (27:1–29)? In what important way do the actual blessings conferred here differ from those in 27:27–29?
3. Scan back over Jacob’s life so far (25:24–34; 27). Can you detect any spark of faith in him? How does he refer to God? (27:20)
4. Describe what Jacob sees in his dream (28:12ff).
5. The stairway Jacob sees is like the ziggurats built by the ancient Mesopotamians to represent the way to the realm of the gods, a kind of link between heaven and earth (cf. 11:4). Who, many generations later, will call up this image and apply it to himself as the true link between God and humanity? (Jn. 1:50, 51; 1 Tim. 2:5)

Day 2: Read Genesis 28:10–22.

6. In this passage, God reveals himself directly to Jacob for the first time. Much of what God promises here echoes his earlier promises to Abraham (17:1–8) and Isaac (26:2–5). What element is given new emphasis for the fugitive Jacob? (v. 15)
7. What is Jacob’s first reaction upon waking? (vv. 16, 17) What does he then do? (vv. 18, 19)
8. Write down the two parts of Jacob’s vow:
If...
Then...
9. Jacob doesn’t commit himself to the Lord on the spot; instead, he hangs back to see whether God will follow through. What does Jacob’s faith look like later in his life? (33:18, 20; 48:11, 15, 16—note that “Israel” is Jacob; cf. Heb. 11:21)
10. God promises Jacob land (v. 13) and his presence and activity in his life (v. 15). Look at the following verses and note God’s promises to believers in Christ.
“Land”: Jn. 14:2, 3; 2 Cor. 5:1; 2 Pet. 3:13

Presence and activity in our lives: Mt. 28:18–20; Phil. 1:6; Heb. 13:5

Day 3: Read Genesis 29:1–30.

11. What does Jacob, the family heir, *not* have as he arrives at his uncle’s home? (Gen. 13:2; 24:34, 35; 26:12–14) What *does* he have? (28:15)
12. How is wily Jacob, who deftly relieved his elder brother of the family birthright and blessing, outfoxed by Laban?
13. After discovering Leah, the older daughter, in his bed, Jacob confronts Laban. According to John H. Walton, Laban’s response in verse 26 is literally, “It is not done in our place to set the younger before the elder.” How are the way Jacob is deceived and the response Laban gives him a kind of ironic comeuppance?

Day 4: Read Genesis 29:31—30:24.

14. Jacob’s family is Exhibit A for why polygamy is a bad idea. Why is Leah jealous of Rachel? Why is Rachel jealous of Leah?

15. List each woman’s children.

Leah:

Zilpah:

Rachel:

Bilhah:

- Why does God bless Leah with so many children? (29:31, 33) What aspect of God’s character does this reflect? (Lk. 1:46–55)

16. What special role is given to the descendants of Leah’s son Levi? (Num. 8:15–19; Deut. 18:1, 2) Who is descended from Leah’s son Judah? (Mt. 1:1–16)
17. We read in verse 22 that “God remembered Rachel,” just as he remembered Noah (8:1) and Abraham (19:29). What does God’s remembering look like? (Ps. 25:6; Ps. 136:23)
18. In Jacob’s family we see women caught up in rivalry and striving to make things happen on their own, and we see Jacob passively going with the flow. What sinful patterns do you detect in your own relationships with family members? Pray that God would give you eyes to see such patterns and a willingness to let him change you.

Day 5: Read Genesis 29:31—30:24.

19. In this week’s passage, we have seen the Lord reveal himself to Jacob, protect him in his long journey, and bless him with many children—all before Jacob ever owns him as his God. What does this say about God?
20. God’s covenant blessing passed from Abraham to Isaac (not Ishmael) to Jacob (not Esau). Now, as promised, “All peoples on earth [have been] blessed” (24:18b) through their descendant, Jesus Christ. How has this come about? (Gal. 3:26–29; Eph. 1:3–8, 13, 14)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Jacob Heads for Home. Genesis 30:25—31: 55**

“I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land.” Genesis 31:13

Day 1: Read Genesis 30:25–43.

1. Jacob has worked for Laban for 14 years without wages. He has 2 wives, 11 sons, and 1 daughter. What does he want to do now, and why? (vv. 25, 26, 30)
2. Why does Laban want Jacob to stay? (vv. 27, 29, 30) Why is this not surprising? (28:13–15)
3. How would you describe Laban’s business practices? (vv. 28, 32–36; Gen. 31:6, 7; 14, 15)
4. What does Laban do to sabotage Jacob’s plans for financial security? (vv. 34–36) How does Jacob get the better of him? (vv. 37–43)
5. How has Jacob gotten a “good dose of his own medicine” while living with his Uncle Laban? (Review chapter 27.)

Day 2: Read Genesis 31:1–16.

6. Why does Jacob suddenly feel uneasy and ready to head for home in a hurry? (vv. 1, 2; 9)
7. Jacob used “innovative” breeding methods, but just how much credit can he take for his success? (vv. 5–9) Why is this not surprising? (Gen. 12:2–3; 27:27–29; 28:14, 15)
8. Jacob takes his wives into his confidence. What are the arguments he uses to convince them to leave their father’s house and go all the way to Canaan with him? (vv. 5–13)
9. List the number of times Jacob refers to God or to “angel of God” in this speech. (vv. 4–13) How do you think Jacob has grown in his relationship with God over the last 14 years?

Day 3: Read Genesis 31:1–21.

10. God comes to Jacob in a dream and reminds him that he is the “God of Bethel.” (31:13) What should this name remind Jacob of? (Gen. 28:13–15, 19)

11. God's promise to be with us should bring us great comfort. What does that comfort look like? (Ps. 23; Ps. 46; Ps. 91:11–15)
12. God's presence is a source of courage. What does God's presence give us the courage to do? (28:14, 15; Jos. 1:9; Mt. 28:18–20; Rom. 1:16)
13. In what ways have you experienced his comfort or his courage this week?

Day 4: Read Genesis 31:17–42.

14. What do you think Laban's intention is when he chases Jacob and the family all the way down to Gilead? Who intervenes and how? (vv. 24, 29, 42)
15. Rachel steals the "household gods." These were small idols and were thought to bring the family protection and blessing. They were symbols of the gods' presence, handed down as an heirloom from one generation to the next. Why would this theft, coming at the same time as Jacob's departure, make Laban feel very afraid and vulnerable?
16. What does Rachel's behavior reveal about her attitude towards her father? (vv. 14–16, 19, 33b–35)
17. Jacob finally gets his day in court (vv. 25, 37). After twenty years of being treated as an indentured servant and being exploited and manipulated, Jacob gets to tell his side of the story (vv. 36–42). How has God been Jacob's only friend and ally?
18. When you are going through hard times, how does knowing that God is on your side change your perspective? (Gen. 50:20; Is. 38:17; Jer. 29:11; Rom. 8:28)

Day 5: Read Genesis 31:43–55.

19. Laban and Jacob agree to disagree and draw up a covenant that simply sets a boundary between them. What is missing here? (Mt. 18:35; Lk. 17:3–4; Jas. 5:16)
20. At each stage of Jacob's personal journey he sets up a pillar of stones to commemorate significant events (28:10–22; 31:45–46). Think back over the last twenty years of your life and write a journal entry. What have you learned about God and yourself through the significant events in your life?

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**The Reunion Genesis 32:1-33:20**

“ Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept.” Genesis 33:4

Day 1: Read Genesis 32:1–8.

1. The passage opens with Jacob returning to the land of Caanan. How long has Jacob been living with Laban? (27:42, 43) Why does he decide to go back to his own country? (Gen. 31:3; 32:9)
2. After Jacob stole Esau’s blessing, Rebekah told him to flee to Laban’s house. How was Jacob to know when Esau’s fury had subsided? (27:42–45) Since Jacob had not heard from his mother, what did he assume about Esau’s desire to kill him?
3. Jacob’s departure from and return to Canaan were marked by what similar encounter? (28:10–15; 32:1–2) Why do you think God would do this for Jacob at these times?
4. Jacob receives new information that Esau is coming to meet him with 400 men. How does this make Jacob feel? What does he expect will happen?

Day 2: Read Genesis 32:9–21.

5. Jacob’s fear for his life is not a new one (Gen. 27:41–43), but what is at stake now besides just Jacob’s life? (31:17; 32:4, 5, 11)
6. Jacob has two responses to his fear.
 - a. How does he try to take care of the situation himself?
 - b. How does he look to God to take care of the situation?
7. Although turning to God in prayer is not Jacob’s first response, when he does pray he prays well. What elements can you find in this prayer that make it a pattern worth emulating?

Days 3 & 4: Read Genesis 32:22–32.

8. Consider what it would be like for Jacob to be alone and have an unknown “wrestler” attack him in the darkness. Who is this mysterious attacker? (28, 30; Hosea 12:4, 5)
9. In what ways does this all-night struggle mirror Jacob’s life?
10. Jacob wrestles valiantly (at 97 years old!) all night, but what happens to Jacob’s natural strength when the angel touches his hip socket?
11. Why would God want to leave Jacob physically and spiritually “undone”—especially at the time when he was about to enter the Promised Land and claim God’s covenant promises? (Ps. 20:6, 7; John 15:5; 2 Cor. 12:9, 10)
12. Jacob fights in his own strength for his own way, but once his strength is broken, his adversary becomes his hope, and the very one he was fighting off he now clings to. Can you think of a time when you were resisting the Lord, and it seemed like he was against you, yet once you submitted, you realized he was your only hope and had been “for” you all along? (Heb. 12: 9–11)
13. “Jacob” means “heel grasper,” “cheat,” or “supplanter.” What is the new name that God gives Jacob? What does it mean? (v. 28)

Day 5: Read Genesis 33:1–20

14. Clearly Esau has had a change of heart as well as Jacob. How does Esau respond when he meets Jacob that demonstrates this? (vv. 4, 8, 9)
15. To whom does Jacob give the credit for his family and possessions (5b, 11a)?
16. In the past, Jacob was only out for himself, but now he is different.
 - a. How do we see this in his demeanor toward Esau?
 - b. How do we see this in the way he treats the others who are with him?
17. In verses 33:8–15 Jacob and Esau have some disagreements. In contrast to their interactions in the past, what is the content and tenor of their “argument”?
18. Jacob builds an altar in verse 20. Why is this a fitting end to the passage?

IN THE BEGINNING GOD

Which Way Should He (we) Go? Genesis 34:1—36:43

“Then God said to Jacob, ‘Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau.’” Genesis 35:1

Day 1: Read Genesis 34:1–29.

1. Where has Jacob chosen to pitch his tents? (Gen. 33:18) Is this where God had directed him to go? (Gen. 31:3; 32:9; 35:27)
2. From reading Genesis we’ve learned that Canaanite cities were dangerous places, so Jacob puts his family at risk by settling at Shechem. What happens to Dinah there? (v. 2)
3. What does this tell you about Jacob’s decision and the consequences of it?

Day 2: Read Genesis 34:1–31.

4. A person’s action’s are a reflection of what is going on in his or her heart (Titus 1:15, 16). Fill in this chart to explore what might be going on in these people’s hearts.

	Actions	Possible Motivations
Shechem		
Hamor		
Jacob		
Simeon/Levi		
Men of Shechem		

Day 3: Read Genesis 34:1–31.

5. There are two father/son relationships portrayed in this passage. Compare the ways that Jacob and Hamor interact with their sons. How are the fathers partially responsible for what happens?
6. Our desire to make our kids/family/friends happy and to keep them out of trouble is so strong that we can be tempted to cross the line into unethical behavior. Have you found yourself being tempted in this way?

7. Does the violation of the city of Shechem fit the crime?
8. Count the number of times God is mentioned in Chapter 34. What's the significance?

Day 4: Read Genesis 35:1–29.

9. In Chapter 35 God directs Jacob to continue on his way. What does God command Jacob to do now? (35:1) What does Jacob direct his household to do so they can meet with God? (v. 2)
10. What do we need to do before we meet with God? (Ps. 24:3–4; 1 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 10:19–22)
11. God reaffirms the covenant with Jacob, yet again, despite all that's happened (Gen. 1:22; 9:1, 17:6; 28:3). What does this reveal about God's character? (Deut. 7:6,–8; Eph. 2:1–4)
12. What are the three deaths that occur in Chapter 35? Where is each buried?
 - a. v. 8
 - b. v. 19
 - c. v. 29
13. Death is a part of life for us also; how does God comfort believers who have lost a loved one? (Ps. 23:4, 1 Thess. 4: 13–18)
14. Who is present at Isaac's burial and why is this significant?

Day 5: Read Genesis 36:1–40.

15. The writer of Genesis dedicates a whole chapter to the descendants of Esau (who become the Edomites). How is the formation of the nation of Edom a partial fulfillment of God's promises? (Gen. 17:6, 16)
16. Esau and the Edomites are a great nation but are not part of the covenant. What hope do those outside of the covenant have? (Eph. 2:19-20; Gal 3: 26-27)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**The Transformations of Joseph and Judah****Genesis 37:1—39:23***“... the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.”* **Genesis 39:23****Day 1: Read Genesis 37:1–11.**

1. God is about to work salvation through Jacob’s dysfunctional family. Each member brings something to the mix. What character flaws do we see in:
 - Joseph?
 - Jacob?
 - The brothers?
2. Even though your family may be dysfunctional at times, how have you seen God at work in it?
3. God-given dreams in those times, especially those repeated twice, confirmed God’s firm and settled purpose in a matter. What does God here reveal of his plan through Joseph’s double dream?
4. Both the brothers and Jacob are disturbed by these dreams—the idea that Joseph will rule over his father and brothers.
 - a. How do Jacob’s and the brothers’ reactions differ? (37:11)
 - b. How are we to respond to the ways of God in our lives, particularly when they are baffling?

Day 2: Read Genesis 37:12–36.

5. As in the case of Cain’s hatred for Abel, what plan does the brothers’ hatred for Joseph lead to? What would more godly men have done? (Eph.4:26, 27, 31, 32; 1 Pet. 3:8–12)
6. What is the elder brother Reuben’s plan? (vv. 21, 22) How does it fare? (vv. 29, 30) Who hatches another plan? (vv. 26–28)
7. Discuss how in this passage one sin leads to another. (vv. 30–36)

Day 3: Read Genesis 38.

8. The narrative of Joseph is interrupted to shift the focus to Judah. How has Judah shown contempt for his father's and grandfather's earnestness to secure godly spouses, offspring, and company? (vv. 1–10)

9. How has Judah done his daughter-in-law Tamar wrong and shirked his responsibility before God? (Deut. 25:5, 6)

10. If Judah is able to call Tamar more righteous than himself even as she plays the part of a prostitute, what does this say about the state of his heart?

11. To us Tamar's behavior seems scandalous; nevertheless, what part does God give her in redemptive history? (Mt.1:3).

Day 4: Read Genesis 39.

12. Why does Joseph repeatedly prosper despite serious setbacks and persecution? (vv. 2, 5, 21–23)

13. Describe a time when you experienced God's presence and blessing in the midst of adversity.

14. What are Joseph's reasons for refusing the advances of Potiphar's wife? (vv. 8, 9) What helps you to resist temptation?

Day 5: Read Genesis 39.

15. God allows Joseph to suffer. What do these verses teach us about God's purposes in suffering? (Rom. 5:3–5; 2 Cor. 1:3–7; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7, 9; 5:10)

16. Verse 21 says that God was with Joseph and showed him kindness (literally "covenant loyalty"). What a strong cable that is to God's love! Do you and I enjoy the same? (Heb. 7:22; 13:5b–6)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD

Dreams and Interpretations Genesis 40:1—41:57

*“We both had dreams, ... but there is no one to interpret them.’ Then Joseph said...
‘Do not interpretations belong to God?’” Genesis 40:8*

Day 1: Read Genesis 40:1–19.

1. Both the cupbearer and the baker held prominent positions in Pharaoh’s court. How does this passage show the uncertainty of earthly position and recognition?

2. What do the baker and cupbearer dream? (vv. 9–11; 16, 17) Why are they dejected in the morning? (vv. 6–8)

Day 2: Read Genesis 40:9–41:1.

3. Joseph is trusting God for his welfare, and also seeks help from the cupbearer. What is the relationship between trusting in God, and asking for human help?

4. The cupbearer and baker are released from prison, but Joseph is not. How much time passes between the end of chapter 40 and the beginning of chapter 41? What might Joseph have been tempted to think during this time?

5. Is there a situation in your life where you have felt forgotten by a person or even God? What do you need to remember when you feel this way? (Ps. 77:1–15)

Day 3: Read Genesis 41:1–16.

6. Pharaoh has two dreams. How is his response the next morning similar to that of the cupbearer and baker? (Gen. 40:6–8a; 41:8) Why is Joseph not troubled? (Gen. 40:8b)

7. In the Joseph story we have seen three sets of dreams: to Joseph (Gen. 37:5–11), to the cupbearer and baker, and now to Pharaoh. What does God’s sending of these dreams show us about him?

8. Describe the events that result in Joseph's release from prison and his audience with Pharaoh. (vv. 9–14)

Day 4: Read Genesis 41:15–43

9. Joseph could easily have taken pride in his interpretation of the dreams. What does he say that shows this is not the case? (Gen. 40:8b; 41:16)

10. What interpretation does Joseph give Pharaoh concerning his dream? (vv. 25–30)

11. What is Joseph's plan for alleviating the devastating effects of the seven-year famine? (vv. 33–36)

Day 5: Read Genesis 41:41–57.

12. Joseph's life is a study in humiliation and exaltation. Recall the events of Joseph's life up to this point that illustrate this pattern.

13. This pattern of humiliation and exaltation is found throughout the Bible. Look at Philippians 2:5–11. How is Christ the perfect fulfillment of this pattern? How are we called to embody this pattern as well? (Mt. 23:12; Jas. 4:10)

14. While Joseph implements his plan to bless Egypt, his life is blessed as well. What blessings come into his life at this time? (vv. 45, 50–52)

15. When the famine does arrive, it affects not only Egypt, but also the rest of the known world. How is Joseph's preparedness a partial fulfillment of God's covenant promise to Abraham? (v. 57; Gen. 22:17, 18)

*IN THE BEGINNING GOD***The Brothers and Joseph Meet****Genesis 42:1—45:28**

“But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.” Genesis 45:7

Day 1: Read Genesis 42—45.

1. Two story lines are beginning to converge in this passage—the story of Joseph in Egypt and the story of Jacob and his sons in Canaan. What is the catalyst that will bring these two “lines” together? (41:56, 57)
2. Take a moment to reflect on God’s breathtaking weave of events in your own life. Jot down some reflections.

Day 2: Review Genesis 42—45.

3. What are the signs that Joseph’s brothers have had a guilty conscience for thirteen years about selling their younger brother to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt? (42:21, 28; 44:16)
4. How has God provided a way for us to deal with our guilt? (Ps. 32:1–7; 51:1–12; Heb. 9:14; 1 Jn. 1:9)
5. Jacob still doesn’t know of his ten sons’ evil crime but continues to believe Joseph was killed by some wild beast. What is the evidence that his grief makes him protective? (42:4, 36–38)
6. Now the tables are turned, and it is Joseph who has the upper hand. Describe how Joseph “plays” his brothers. (Scan chapters 42–44.) Why do you think Joseph is doing this?

Day 3: Review Genesis 42—45.

7. Look back at Joseph’s boyhood dreams (37:5–11). How are these dreams being fulfilled? (42:6; 43:28; 44:14)

8. How is Joseph feeling about this encounter with his family after so many years? (43:30, 31; 45:1–3)
9. How is Judah a different man than he was over a decade earlier? (44:18–34; cf. chapter 38)
10. In what may be the key passage in this week’s chapters, what does Joseph say to his miserable and guilt-ridden brothers to allay their fears, and to offer them a better interpretation of events than they have been wallowing in? (45:4–8)

Day 4: Review Genesis 42—45.

11. It’s hard to see the “big picture” of our lives when we are bogged down in our daily trials. Read Psalm 105 (esp. vv. 16–24) to get a bird’s eye view of the drama of Joseph and his brothers in context.
12. Now bring it home: What perspective on the trials in your life will help you to persevere today? (Rom. 8:28; Heb.12:1–3; 1 Pet.1:3–7)

Day 5: Review Genesis 42—45.

13. In the chain of events of Genesis 42—45, God was doing something on several parallel levels. Let’s consider two.
 - a. What was he accomplishing in the lives and relationships of Jacob and Joseph and Joseph’s brothers?
 - b. How was he advancing the history of Israel in fulfillment of his promises made to Abraham? (Gen. 12:2, 3)
14. The Joseph narrative is a beautiful picture of reconciliation.
 - a. How are we reconciled to God? (Col. 1:21–23a)
 - b. What are we now called to do? (2 Cor. 5:17–21; Mt. 5:23, 24; 18:21, 22)

IN THE BEGINNING GOD

God Leads Jacob from Canaan to Egypt to Heaven Genesis 46:1—48:22

“Then Israel said to Joseph, ‘I am about to die, but God will be with you and take you back to the land of your fathers.’” Genesis 48:21

Day 1: Read Genesis 46:1–7.

1. Two famines cause two men, Abraham and Jacob, to seek food for their families in Egypt. What does Jacob do that his ancestor Abraham neglected to do? (46:1b; Gen. 12:10–20)

2. In verse 3, God tells Jacob not to be afraid to go down to Egypt. Try to put yourself in Jacob’s place and imagine how the following facts (brought out in a sermon by Charles Spurgeon) might have made him fearful:
 - a. Jacob is an old man.

 - b. Egypt is a very pagan country.

 - c. Egypt holds bad memories for Jacob. (Gen. 12:10–20)

 - d. Jacob has been warned of future hardships. (Gen. 15:13)

3. How does God reassure Jacob that his move to Egypt is part of his plan? (2–4)

Day 2: Read Genesis 46:7—47:6.

4. Describe the emotions Jacob might feel as he is reunited with Joseph, especially in light of what he had been led to believe about Joseph’s fate? (37:31–35)

5. How does Pharaoh treat Joseph’s family? (Gen. 46:29; 47:5, 6)

6. Because Jacob’s family are shepherds (46:32–34), they are kept separate from the Egyptians in Goshen. Why is this separation a good thing?

Day 3: Read Genesis 47:7–27.

7. Jacob describes himself as a pilgrim (in a long line of pilgrims). (9–11 In what way are we to consider ourselves as pilgrims and how does this affect the way we live?). What can be gleaned from Jacob’s perspective and the New Testament about how to view and live in this present world? (Mt. 6: 19–21; 2 Cor. 4:16–5:1; Heb. 11:8–10, 13–16)

8. In his role as ruler of Egypt Joseph saves and blesses the nations (12:2, 3). How does this prefigure Christ’s work? (Gal. 3:6–9; Rev. 5:9, 10)

9. During the famine how does the fate of the Egyptians (vv. 13–26) differ from the fate of the Israelites? (vv. 5–12, 27)

Days 4 & 5: Read Genesis 47:28—48:22.

10. Where do both Jacob and Joseph want to be buried? (47:29b, 30; 50:24, 25)
How is this an expression of what they believe? (Gen. 46:3; Heb. 11:22)

11. In Genesis 47:31, Israel (Jacob) worships. Why is this significant? (Heb. 11:21)

12. What information does Jacob consider vital to pass on before he dies? (48:3–4)
How does this demonstrate the growth in his relationship with God?

13. Despite all the hardship suffering and losses that Jacob has experienced in his life he is not bitter, but full of gratitude. Why?

14. As we have studied the life of Jacob, we have watched his faith in God go from non-existent to vital.
 - a. What do the blessings Israel gives to Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh reveal about what would characterize the relationship God would continue to have with future generations? (48:15–16)

 - b. How would these blessings and last words be a source of hope and comfort to Joseph and his sons after Israel’s death?

IN THE BEGINNING GOD**Looking Ahead Genesis 49:1—50:26**

“But Joseph said to them, ‘Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish...the saving of many lives.’” Genesis 50:19, 20

Day 1: Read Genesis 49:1–28.

1. In this passage, Jacob blesses his sons and prophesies about the tribes of Israel that will come from them. As firstborn, Reuben would ordinarily have been entitled to leadership of the extended family and a double portion of the inheritance. What presumptuous action of his caused him to lose this position of favor? (v. 4; Gen. 35:22)

2. Simeon and Levi come next in the birth order, but they too lose out on the privileges of the firstborn.
 - a. Why? (Gen. 34:25ff)
 - b. What does Jacob say will be the result for their descendants? (v. 7b)
 - c. How does God turn this prophecy around in a merciful and surprising way? (Ex. 32:25–29; Num. 18:21–24; Deut. 18:1, 2)
 - d. Can you think of a time when a discipline you received for sin resulted in a blessing after you repented and sought the Lord?

Day 2: Read Genesis 49:1–28.

3. The blessings of Judah and Joseph stand out for their length and lavishness. These brothers—the fourth son and the favorite son, the firstborn of the beloved Rachel—each receive part of the privileges of the firstborn.
 - a. Which son’s tribe will assume the leadership role? (vv. 8–12)
 - b. Which son will receive the double portion through his sons? (Gen. 48:1, 5; 1 Chr. 5:1)

4. The prophecy of a ruler from Judah (v. 10) is initially fulfilled in whom? (2 Sam. 2:4a) In what descendant of Judah does it find complete and permanent fulfillment? (Mt. 1:1–3, 6, 16; Mt. 21:4–11; Acts 2: 29–36)

5. At this point, the Canaanites, Egyptians, and other peoples are excluded from the covenant promises. But the prophecy concerning Judah’s royal descendant reveals that “the obedience of the nations is his” (v. 10). How does the work of King Jesus throw wide the doors of blessing? (Mt. 28:18–20; Acts 9:11, 15; Rom. 1:16, 17; Rev. 5:9, 10)

Day 3: Read Genesis 49:29—50:21.

6. Earlier Jacob made Joseph swear to bury him back in Canaan (47:29–31). Now he repeats his request in painstaking detail. Why do you think it is so important to him to be buried in Canaan? (Gen. 17:8; 28:13–15; 46:2–4)
7. Now that their father has died, what do Joseph’s brothers fear? What do they do? How does Joseph respond?
8. How is Joseph’s question, “Am I in the place of God?” (v. 19b) evidence of the character he has shown in both happy and hard circumstances? (Pr. 9:10; 15:33)
9. Throughout Joseph’s adult life, his words and actions consistently demonstrate an awareness that life is lived before the face of God. (See for example, 39:9; 40:8b; 41:16, 50–52; 45:5–9.)
Pray that God would enable you to have more of this perspective in your life.

Day 4: Read Genesis 50:22–26.

10. For what act of faith does the writer of Hebrews praise Joseph? (Heb. 11:22)
11. How would the accounts of Jacob’s and Joseph’s burial instructions have encouraged the Israelites in the desert, who were the original audience of Genesis?
12. How was Joseph’s request fulfilled? (Ex. 13:19; Jos. 24:32)

Day 5: Read Genesis 50:15–26.

13. Some commentators see 50:20 as a key verse for the whole book of Genesis: “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” There have been many occasions in Genesis when human sin seemed to threaten God’s plan to preserve a seed and create a people. God has always used those circumstances to further his plan. Is there one instance that has really stood out for you?
14. How does Genesis 50:20 fit the events at the heart of God’s plan of redemption? (Acts 2:22–24, 36–39)
15. Our reading of Genesis has provided us with many examples of painful situations, grief, violence, discord, deceit, fear.... Is there any situation in the lives of individuals or nations that God cannot redeem for good? Is there any situation in your life where you have trouble believing that?
16. Genesis is the book of beginnings. Read some of the end of the story and be encouraged: Revelation 1:12–18; 5:5–13; 20:10, 14; 21:1–8; 22:1–5.