

GENESIS

Small Group Studies
Maranatha Bible Church
Fall 2007-Spring 2008

GENESIS LESSON 1

CHAPTERS 1 & 2

Introduction to Genesis

Genesis, the “book of beginnings,” is one of the most important books of the entire Bible. This book, compiled, edited and written by Moses, presents the only true and reliable account of the origin of all the basic entities of the universe and of life. Think about the fact that the book of Genesis speaks about the following:

Origin of the universe, origin of the solar system, origin of life, origin of man, origin of marriage, origin of evil, origin of language, origin of government, origin of culture, origin of nations, origin of religion, and the origin of God’s chosen people. The book of Genesis then is in reality the foundation of all true history, true science and true philosophy.

No other book of the Bible is quoted or referred to as much in the entire Bible, as is Genesis.

As we begin this study of the “Book of Beginnings,” we need to have a fresh prospective of the power of the God presented. We need to step outside of our world and quietly reflect on the words presented by the Creator, our Redeemer. We need to come to see Him as He is and on His terms.

“Week after week we witness the same miracle: that God is so mighty he can stifle his own laughter...Does anyone have the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke.” Annie Dillard

“What kind of power do we so blithely invoke? He spoke the universe into existence. Nothingness obeys His voice. He controls time, space, matter, and light. He monitors the position of every elementary particle. He is sufficient unto Himself. He does not need anybody or anything to accomplish His purposes. He answers to no one. He obeys only His own counsel. He works on thousands of levels all at the same time. His scientific sophistication is unfathomable...” Richard A. Swenson, M.D. “More Than Meets the Eye.” NavPress 2000

Annie Dillard continues, “It is madness to wear ladies’ straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares; they should lash us to our pews!”

So we begin our study of Genesis!

Interesting Thought

Some believe that the book of Genesis was written by several different individuals, most likely the patriarchs, and that their writing were saved and passed from father to son, to each successive generation until they were compiled and edited by Moses who then recorded them into the book of Genesis.

The justification for this idea is found in the book of Genesis itself. These original documents can still be recognized by the key phrase, "These are the generations of..." The word "generations" in Hebrew is *toledoth*, and means "origins" or by extension, "records of the origins." Therefore, each patriarch recorded events in his life, "signed" it and passed it along.

There are nine main divisions in Genesis using this formula:

1. "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth..." Genesis 1:1-2:4
2. "This is the book of the generations of Adam..." Genesis 2:4b-5:1
3. "These are the generations of Noah..." Genesis 5:1b-6:9
4. "Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth..." Genesis 6:9b-10:1
5. "These are the generations of Shem..." Genesis 10:1b-11:10
6. "Now these are the generations of Terah..." Genesis 11:10b-11:27
7. "And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son..." Genesis 11:27b-25:19
8. "These are the generations of Jacob..." Genesis 25:19b-37:2
9. "These are the names (generations) of the sons of Jacob..." Genesis 37b-Exodus 1:1

The word "generations" is not used in Exodus 1:1, but the events of the last 13 chapters of Genesis were only known to Joseph and his brothers and were most likely passed down to Moses.

Genesis chapters 1-11 deal with the entire human race and extend over many hundreds of years. Chapters 12-50 give historical information for one extended family over a three hundred-year period of time.

Genesis can be simply outlined as follows:

I Four Great Events [Chapters 1-11]

- a. Creation
- b. Fall
- c. Flood
- d. Dispersion

II Four Great People [Chapters 12-50]

- a. Abraham
- b. Isaac
- c. Jacob
- d. Joseph

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. In Genesis 1:1 we read in a single, majestic verse how God began to create the universe. From this verse, write the thoughts that come to your mind regarding God, the great Creator.
2. The Hebrew word for God, Elohim, in 1:1 is a plural word form. How do the following verses shed light on this plural usage of God's name? John 1:1; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2-10; Genesis 1:2
3. In Genesis 1:2 the focus moves from the universe to planet earth. Read this verse and describe in your own words the scene presented. (Note: move in Hebrew is, "to hover, flutter, shake, or to tremble," the idea of variation)
4. What did God do on each day of creation? Write a brief sentence which summarizes what God did each day.

Day 1 (1:3-5)

Day 4 (1:14-19)

Day 2 (1:6-8)

Day 5 (1:20-23)

Day 3 (1:9-13)

Day 6 (1:24-27 and 2:7)

5. Several of the Psalms extol God's creation of the world. Read Psalm 33:1-11. What does the psalmist ask the reader to do? Why?

For what does the writer praise God?

GENESIS LESSON 2

CHAPTERS 1 & 2

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” Genesis 1:1

Consider for a moment how profound these words are. In these ten words God refutes all of man’s false philosophies concerning the origins and meaning of the world! It refutes atheism, because God created; it refutes pantheism, for God is transcendent to that which He created; it refutes polytheism, for one God created all things; it refutes materialism, for matter had a beginning; it refutes dualism, because the one true God was alone when He created; it refutes humanism, because God, not man, is the ultimate reality; and it refutes evolution, because God created all things.

God, in this amazing statement introduces us to Himself and with an economy of words, informs us that He is supreme over all.

As we study chapter two, we see in greater detail certain events of the first six days of creation. God does not want us to miss these details. This chapter introduces a series of “firsts,” many of which have significance even for us today. Contemplate the words of this chapter for in it you will find your “roots.”

1. Look up the following passages. Write a brief observation for each passage.

Genesis 2:1-3 The First Sabbath

Genesis 1:27 and 2:7 The First Man

Genesis 2:16-17 The First Test of Obedience

Genesis 2:18-25 The First Marriage

2. What do you find most interesting about each of these “firsts?”

First Sabbath?

First Man?

First Test?

First Marriage?

3. From your study of Genesis chapters 1 and 2 write as many descriptive titles (using one word for each) as you can which describe the nature and character of God.
4. What facts, or concepts, did you discover in these two chapters that you had previously not known or fully appreciated? What personal applications, lessons or principles from these chapters have direct relevance to your life today?

As we have seen in the last study, God's six-day work of creation was complete. He looked it all over and pronounced all of it to be not just "good," but "very good." There was nothing out of order, no pain, no suffering, no disease, no struggle for existence, no disharmony, no sin, and no death. It was completely perfect. Adam and Eve were in paradise. Take a minute to reflect about how your world is different. We do not live in paradise! What has happened? Our study in chapter three will answer this question.

1. Read Genesis 3:1-5. What lies and deceptions are found in these five verses? (II Cor.11:3; I Tim.2:14)
2. From Genesis 3:6-7, describe the outcome? How is I John 2:16 similar to verse 6? What application can we make for today?
3. The narrative in Genesis 3:7-13 has profound theological, as well as practical, implications. This passage describes the entrance of sin into the human race. Read these verses and write a brief summary of the events in this passage. What excuses did Adam and Eve give to justify their disobedience? Have you ever done this? Want to share?
4. Genesis 3:14-21 "the Lord God" revealed the outcome of Adam and Eve's disobedience. Summarize this paragraph.

In what ways are allusions to God's redeeming grace given in this passage?

What aspects of God's character stood out to you in this section?

5. How is Genesis 3:19 and Romans 6:23 related with regard to the ultimate outcome of sin?
6. While Genesis 3:14-19 present God's judgment of sin, verses 20-24 demonstrate a wonderful picture of God's grace and renewal. God provided a new name (3:20), a new covering (3:21), and a new home (3:23-24). What form of covering is the believer to "put on" today according to Ephesians 4:24 and Colossians 3:10?

GENESIS LESSON 4

CHAPTER 4 - 5

“Now we see through a glass, darkly but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.” 1 Corinthians 13:12

1. Read Genesis 4:1-8. How did the family of Adam and Eve respond to God's grace and provision? What are the relevant lessons from this account of the two sons, Abel and Cain?
2. From Genesis 4:9-16 how is God's grace again manifested in the midst of sin and rebellion?
3. Read Genesis 1:27 and 5:1. What did Moses mean when he wrote that man was created in the "image," or "likeness," of God? How does this apply to or impact your life today.
4. Genesis chapter 5 describes the descendants of Adam and Eve. What facts did you see in Genesis 5:1-5 that were of interest? What other items were of interest to you from the rest of this chapter (5:6-32)?
5. Give one area of personal application from Genesis chapters 4 and 5 expressed in the form of a question. For example: "Could it be said of my life that I regularly call on the name of the Lord?" (4:26)

GENESIS LESSON 5

CHAPTERS 6 - 8

1. Genesis chapters 6 - 8 present the Biblical account of Noah and the great flood. Read the chapters listed below and write a brief summary of each.

Genesis chapter 6:

Genesis chapter 7:

Genesis chapter 8:

2. From chapter 6 describe what “grieved” God (see 6:5-7, 11-12)? Describe the man whom God chose in the midst of worldwide “corruption” to deal with this problem. What does 2 Peter 2:5 say about Noah? What did God reveal to Noah in Genesis 6:12-21?
3. Read Genesis 7:11-24 and write a brief description of the great, worldwide flood. Where did the floodwaters originate? How long did the flood last? How long did Noah and his family remain on the ark?
4. What did Noah do as soon as he came out of the ark? How did God respond?
5. What are principles or applications from chapters 7 and 8 that would be relevant to your life today?

1. One author wrote, “When anxious believers are searching the Bible for something encouraging to read, they’re more likely to turn to Romans 8 than to Genesis 8. But the next time you find yourself facing significant life problems that seem hopeless, read Genesis 8 for the hope and encouragement of new life that was provided by the gracious God of hope and creation.” Using the following outline, describe the main point of each passage from the flood narrative.

God Remembers the Family (8:1):

God Renews the Floodplains (8:2-14):

God Rewards Faithfulness (8:15-19):

2. Read Genesis 9:1-17 and describe each passage using the outline below.

The Provision of New Life (9:1, 7):

The Provision of Sustaining Life (9:2-4):

The Provision for Protecting Life (9:5-6):

3. In Genesis 9:18 through 10:32, the history of Noah’s family moves from rainbows to shadows. Describe briefly this shameful story of disgrace and indecency in 9:18-24.
4. In chapter 9:25-28, Noah responded by giving a revealing and accurate prophecy regarding his three sons. What were his predictions?

1. Read Genesis chapter 11 and write a brief description of each passage.

God Stops a Revolt (11:1-9):

God Sustains a Family (11:10-26):

God Starts a Nation (11:27-32):

2. A recurring theme in the book of Genesis is: "When mankind disobeys God, He judges sin, and then, in His grace, makes a new beginning." From chapter 11:1-9, what are examples of this truth?
3. What was Noah's prophecy regarding his son, Shem, in 9:26? In 11:10-26 (also in 10:21-29) the genealogy of Shem is recorded. One offspring is Terah, son of Nahor (11:26). From 11:26-32, describe what is known about Terah. Why was it important for Moses to "link" Terah to the family line of Shem? What does this teach you about God?

1. Genesis chapter 12 is the beginning of Part 2 of the book of Genesis. This section extends from chapter 12 to chapter 50 and is entitled “The Patriarchs.” Chapter 12 begins with the dramatic call of Abram (later to be renamed Abraham). Once more, God is preparing to rebuild and restore His people and to bless them. Where is “Ur of the Chaldeans” mentioned in 11:31, and where would you go if you were to visit there today? From 12:1, how would you have responded if you were Abram? In what ways might God give a “call” today to serve Him?
2. Read Genesis 12:1-3. This paragraph records God’s own words to Abram, including His directive to “leave” and “go.” What are the seven “blessings” or “promises” God revealed in 12:2-3 regarding Abraham?
3. Find a map of the “Bible Lands in the Time of the Patriarchs” (some Bibles have maps in the back). Trace Abram’s journey as detailed in 12:1-9. (You may also draw your own map below.)
4. From 12:6-7, what additional affirmation did Abram receive from God? How did he respond? What did Abram do in 12:8? From Genesis 12:1-9, how would you describe Abram in terms of his character and his relationship with God?
5. Read Genesis 12:10-20 and describe the story. Now what is your opinion of Abram? Do you think he would ever make this mistake again? (Genesis 20:1-2).
6. From your reading of chapter 12, write two principles that you could apply personally to your life today. Express them in the form of a question. For example:

“Is my heart and spirit sensitive to the leading and direction of God in my life today?” (12:1)
7. What single point, event or idea most impacted or influenced you from Genesis chapters 11 and 12?

1. How did Abram respond in 12:7 and 13:18? What would be a comparable response to God in your life today? 1. In Genesis chapters 13 and 14, Abram's saga continues after his expulsion from Egypt and his return to Israel. What had God taught Abram in Egypt in chapter 12? Read 13:1-4 and write a brief summary of these four verses, using a single sentence.

2. In 13:5, the spotlight moves from Abram to Lot, his nephew, who had accompanied him to Egypt (12:4). Read 13:5-12 and describe the problem, the proposed solution, and the final outcome. If you were Abram, how would you have solved this issue? What character qualities can you discern in the lives of both Abram and Lot? What lessons or principles from this incident apply to you personally?

3. In chapter 13, two men "looked up." (13:10 and 13:14) What did each of them see? What happened in the immediate future to the two men described in this narrative (see Genesis 13:12-13 and 13:18)?

4. In the words of a famous radio broadcaster, "Now you know the rest of the story." What is the "rest of the story" in 13:14-18? What promises did God give to Abram and what was Abram to do?

5. The progressive nature of God's dialogue with Abram is seen in the following verses:

12:1 "Leave and I will show you the land."

12:7--"I will give you this land."

13:15-16--"This land is yours forever."

1. The relationship between Lot and his uncle Abram is further described in chapter 14. For twelve years, five cities (actually, “city-states”), on the plain of Jordan had been subject to the kings of four other cities to the east (also “city-states” in Mesopotamia). Fearing rebellion, these Mesopotamian kings staged a successful invasion of this area south of the Dead Sea, ultimately taking Lot as a prisoner. Read 14:1-12 and list the names of the participants of this conflict. Write a brief summary of the conflict described in 14:1-12.

2. Read 14:13-16. This passage describes the response of Abram to this situation. Write your own observation of Abram from these verses, commenting on his motives and character. In what ways could Abram’s response be an example to you personally?

3. After Abram returned with Lot, he encountered two “kings”—the King of Sodom (14:17) and the King of Salem (14:18). Read this entire account in 14:17-24. Which king most encouraged Abram? What was the apparent motive of each king? In what ways did Abram respond to each of them?

4. From this chapter, write a list of those principles or lessons that could have application to your life today. For example:

“Am I willing to put selfishness aside and extend myself, in love, to a friend or member of my family?” (14:14)

GENESIS LESSON 11

CHAPTERS 15 - 16

1. Read Genesis chapter 15:1-21. This passage records a dialogue between “the Lord and Abram.” Write a simple outline of this passage and give each section a brief title. For example:

God reassures Abram in a vision. (16:1)

2. One Bible commentator wrote that “Genesis 15 is one of the greatest chapters in the entire Bible.” He based his opinion on Genesis 15:6 and the events of 15:9-21. Write your own explanation of 15:6 and define each term. (In the New Testament, this verse is quoted in Galatians 3:6, Romans 4:3, and James 2:23 in the context of salvation.)
3. In Genesis 15:9-21, God “condescended” to participate in a known custom of that day by “passing” or “walking” between dead animals that had been cut in half, as a symbol of confirmation of an agreement or contract. This act, while foreign to our culture, dramatized the following intent: “May this be done to me (i.e., the cutting in half!) if I fail to uphold my part of the covenant (contract or agreement).” What did Abraham need to do during this ritual (15:17-20) to make it valid? In what ways might this action by God have application to you? What was of most interest to you personally in this passage?
4. Genesis chapter 16 can be outlined as indicated below. Read this chapter and, next to each section, write a complete sentence that clearly states the content of those verses.

16:1-4:

16:5-6:

16:7-12:

16:13-16:
5. From the text of Genesis 16, create your own list of those principles, applications or convictions that could serve as lessons to you personally, based upon this narrative. Write at least two of these that would challenge you in your own personal walk with God.

GENESIS LESSON 12

CHAPTERS 17 - 18

1. The theme of Genesis chapter 17 is that of “covenant” (*berith* in Hebrew) and is used nine times in this chapter. What is a “covenant?”
2. Read 17:1-16 and give a summary portrayal of what this divine arrangement or agreement was all about.
3. In chapter 17:5, God changed the name Abram to Abraham (“father of many”). From 17:19-22, what other promises did God reveal to Abraham at that time? How did Abraham respond in 17:23-27?
4. What would be a lesson or point of interest for you personally from Genesis chapter 17?
5. Read Genesis 18:1-15 and indicate which passage was of most significance or interest to you ... and why. Does any personal application come to mind?

GENESIS LESSON 13

CHAPTERS 18:16 - CHAPTER 19

1. In our study of Genesis this week, we will continue to learn about the patriarch, Abraham. One author wrote, "In Genesis chapter 18, there is much to be learned about the Christian life. In the first half of the chapter, Abraham is running (18:7), busy with family and friends (18:1-15). In the second half of the chapter (18:16-33), he is standing before God (18:22), interceding in prayer for others." Which of these two activities most characterizes your life today? Write the names of two people for whom you are currently interceding in prayer.
2. Read Genesis 18:22-32. From this passage, what principles can you identify regarding prayer? What steps do you need to take this week to become "a person of prayer?"
3. Read the following verses (Genesis 13:12, 14:12, 19:1) and write a brief summary of the life of Abraham's nephew, Lot. How might this same "regression" occur today, and what steps can one take to prevent this?
4. Read the dramatic account in Genesis 19:1-29 and write a brief description of the three or four events in this passage, using your own words. Also, list the verses for each section.
5. In chapter 19, how did God answer Abraham's prayer of 18:22-32? (Hint: see 19:29.) Relate to your small group a specific answer to prayer that you have recently experienced.
6. What aspects of God's character are portrayed in Genesis chapter 19?
7. In his comments on Genesis 19:30-38, one author noted that, "the writers of God's Word made no attempt to hide the sins of God's people." Read this passage and write the names of the two sons fathered by Lot. Of what significance are the two families described in 19:37-38?

1. What are your thoughts after reading Genesis 20:1-3? How did God intervene in 20:3-7? Why was it of importance to “protect” Sarah?
2. Read 20:8-13. What most impressed you regarding this meeting with Abimelech, and, also, regarding Abraham’s comments?
3. Describe, in your own words, the conclusion of this account in 20:14-18.
4. Chapter 21 begins with, “The Lord was gracious to Sarah as He had said and He did for Sarah what He had promised”. The next verse (21:2) declares that these events occurred “at the very time God had promised Abraham.” Describe the aspects of God’s character that are on display here. In what ways are these attributes of God important to you today?
5. The events described in chapter 21 illustrate a number of lessons for believers today. The outline given below features several contrasts found in this chapter. Using this outline, read these verses from Genesis chapter 21 and summarize each section.

Abraham and Sarah—“faith and promise” (21:1-7):

Isaac and Ishmael—“spirit and flesh” (21:8-11):

Sarah and Hagar—“grace and law” (21:9-13):

God and Hagar—“promise and provision” (21:12-21):

6. From this same passage (21:1-21), write one application, or principle, for your life today.
7. Read the brief story in Genesis 21:22-34. (Beersheba means “the well of the oath” and is also mentioned in 22:19.) What was of most interest to you in this narrative?

1. Genesis chapter 22 records the greatest test faced by Abraham during his long life. The central theme is “obedient faith in the trials of life.” Several personal applications are listed below, along with the corresponding verses from chapter 22. Read each passage and write your own summary of the events as they unfold in this chapter.

Expect tests from God (22:1-2):

Focus on promises, not explanations (22:3-5):

Depend on God’s provision (22:6-14):

Look forward to what God has for you (22:15-24):

2. What events are described in chapter 23, and what were the points of interest to you in this chapter?
3. Genesis chapter 24 is a “love story” and, also, the longest chapter in the book of Genesis. In this chapter, Moses wrote the beautiful account of how a man (Isaac) met and married his wife (Rebekah). Read this great story, and, using the outline below, write a brief summary of each passage.

The Will of the Father (24:1-9): “Abraham’s Example of Determination”

The Witness of the Servant (24:10-49): “The Servant’s Example of Dedication”

The Willingness of the Bride (24:50-60): “Rebekah’s Example of Decision”

The Welcome of the Bridegroom (24:61-67): “Isaac’s Example of Devotion”

1. "Isaac was the son of a famous father (Abraham) and the father of a famous son (Jacob), and because of this, he is sometimes considered a 'lightweight' among the patriarchs of Genesis. Compared to the recorded exploits of both Abraham and Jacob, Isaac's life does seem quite conventional and commonplace. He was a quiet, meditative man (24:63) who didn't travel far from home. In chapters 25 and 26 we read of his close ties to his parents, Abraham and Sarah." Write a brief description of the life of Isaac by summarizing each passage.

Isaac received his father's inheritance. (25:1-18)

Isaac prayed to his father's God. (25:19-21)

Isaac's home was divided. (25:24-34)

Isaac faced a temptation similar to that of his father. (26:1-11)

Isaac dug his father's wells. (26:12-22)

Isaac listened to the God of his father. (26:23-33)

2. One commentator wrote, "Isaac was a dedicated man who trusted God for a wife and who prayed and sought the will of God (25:21). However, in spite of these advantages, the family self-destructed rather quickly when Isaac grew old because the members of the family substituted scheming so that each could have his own way." Read the following passages and describe how each family member contributed to the problem.

Isaac (Decline). 27:1-4

Rebekah (Devious). 27:5-17

Jacob (Deception). 27:18-29

Esau (Despair). 27:30-40

3. What attitude of sin do you see emerging in Genesis 27:41? How did Rebekah respond in 27:42-45? What did Isaac do (28:1-4)? What additional pattern of sin comes out in 28:6-9, and what could be a personal application of this entire passage (27:41-28:9)?
4. Did you discern any tendencies in your own life which are illustrated in this account (27:41-28:9)? What are the steps one takes daily in order to overcome these patterns?

GENESIS LESSON 17

CHAPTERS 28:10 - 28; CHAPTER 29; CHAPTER 30:1 - 24

1. Genesis 28:10-22. Jacob leaves his home and an angry brother on a five hundred mile trek to Haran. God now meets him in a dramatic way at Bethel (28:13-16). Describe how Jacob experienced:

A Significant Dream (28:11-12):

A Significant Declaration (28:13-15):

A Significant Decision (28:16-22):

2. Read Genesis 29:1-12 and write a brief summary of the opening “scene” of this dramatic narrative. If you have a husband or a wife describe to your small group the first time you met your spouse.
3. From 29:18, what was Jacob’s reaction to this initial encounter with Rachel? Read and explain the rest of this love story in 29:13-30.
4. Jacob who deceived his father, Isaac, was himself deceived by his father-in-law Laban. Jacob receives Laban’s firstborn daughter, Leah, by deceit to be his wife! We eventually reap what we sow. What character qualities did you note regarding Jacob in 29:18-27? What qualities did you find in Laban?
5. Read Genesis 29:31 through 30:24 and write a brief description of Jacob’s “family tree.” What most interested you in this passage?

GENESIS LESSON 18

CHAPTER 30:25-43; CHAPTER 31

1. Read Genesis 30:25-43 and 31:10-12. By this time, Jacob had been away from home for over twenty years and had fathered eleven sons and one daughter. He had also earned the right to his freedom. How did Jacob expand his inventory of livestock, and what do think of his motives and his methodology?
2. Chapter 31 records Jacob's departure and his "flight" from Laban. This chapter also describes God's protection of Jacob. Why did Jacob decide to leave (31:1-3)? How did his family assist in this planned departure (31:4-21)?
3. The rest of chapter 31 (31:22-55) records Laban's pursuit of Jacob and their confrontation in the "hill country of Gilead". From each passage below, describe how God's intervention is woven into the fabric of this story.

31:24:

31:29:

31:42:

31:51-54:

4. How did this story of Jacob and Laban conclude? What personal applications do you see in this week's study of Genesis 30:25-31?

1. One commentator wrote, “After two decades, Jacob’s past was catching up with him, and he was afraid. What Jacob did to his father and brother was forgiven by God, but neither time, nor geography, could change the consequences of those acts.” Genesis chapter 32 vividly demonstrates the conflict between faith and fear, trusting and scheming, asking for help and acting on one’s own strength. We can all identify with these tensions. Read Genesis 32:1-21. What was the three-part plan that Jacob developed when preparing to meet his brother Esau?

2. What principles are found in this passage that help us, personally, to practice “living by faith and not by fear?”

3. In Genesis 32:9-12, we read a great prayer from a man who was struggling with his faith. Read this passage and list the components of this prayer that you could use as a pattern for your own prayers.

4. Read Genesis 32:22-32 and write a brief description of this narrative. Who was the “man” mentioned in 32:24, 25, 26 and 27? Why was Jacob’s name changed to Israel (which means “God fights” or “God strides”)? What is the significance of this story (32:22-32)?

1. Jacob had seen angels (32:1-2) and God (32:30), but when he saw Esau (33:1), along with his four hundred men, he seemed to lose everything he had gained in his struggles with himself and with the Lord. It is one thing to experience God's blessing on the "mountaintop" and quite something else to carry that blessing down into the "valley." Read Genesis 33:4 and explain how this verse represents an answer to the prayer of 32:11. From 33:9, 12, and 15, describe Esau's attitude. What did Jacob ultimately do in 33:18-20?

2. Chapter 34 contains a violent story of rape, deception, murder, and revenge. However, underlying this narrative is a theme of warning for purity of the nation of Israel and God's chosen line. Summarize the events of this chapter by writing a brief outline below.

3. Genesis chapter 35 stands in marked contrast to chapter 34. This chapter deals with faith, obedience, cleansing, and renewal. God is mentioned ten times. However, Jacob's new step of faith did not prevent him from continuing to experience problems and trials. We notice several new situations that were experienced by Jacob. Describe these, using the outline given below:

A New Start (35:1-15):

A New Son (35:16-20):

A New Sorrow (35:21-22):

A New Succession (35:23-29):

4. What was of most interest to you in this week's study (chapters 33-36)? What personal applications can you identify and put into practice from these chapters?

1. The story of “Joseph in Egypt” (Genesis chapters 37-50) forms a unique literary unit in the book of Genesis. There are elements in this narrative similar to the story of Jacob. In both cases the father was deceived by treacherous sons, and in each story a 20-year period of separation in a foreign land was described, concluding with reconciliation. The central theme of the Joseph story is “suffering as a test of character” and despite difficult and unforeseen events Genesis 50:20 records, “God intended it for good.” Chapter 37 reveals the destructive dynamics of a family living in sin rather than by faith. The characteristics of this family are given below. Next to each title, write a brief summary of the passage.

Hatred (37:1-4):

Envy (37:5-11):

Conspiracy (37:12-18):

Violence (37:19-28):

Deception (37:29-36):

2. Which aspects of chapter 37 did you find most interesting? What personal applications can you make from chapter 37?
3. Chapter 38 records a bizarre event that at first glance seems to interrupt the narrative of the life of Joseph. This chapter describes a family scandal in graphic detail and demonstrates the need for a separation of Joseph from his immoral family. Read chapter 38 and write a brief paragraph that summarizes the story.
4. Compare Genesis 38:27-30 with the genealogy of Jesus given in Matthew 1:2-3. What is the significance of these two passages?

1. In Genesis chapter 39, the story of Joseph resumes in Egypt, the “land of pharaohs and pyramids.” This chapter describes Joseph as an honest and faithful worker who trusted God while impacting those around him. Read 39:1-6 and describe those aspects of Joseph’s character and behavior that most impressed you.

2. From Genesis 39:8-18, describe the things that Joseph did to deal with temptation. Write a list of the principles in this passage, which you could apply to your life today when facing temptation.

3. Read Genesis 39:19-23 and write a one-sentence description of this passage. What does this narrative teach you about God, and what are personal applications from these verses (39:19-23)?

4. In this week’s study (Genesis chapter 39), we read of Joseph going from “serving Potiphar to serving time” or from “being supervisor to being in the slammer.” Joseph was single-hearted in his devotion to God and demonstrated “dignity during servitude and modesty during exaltation.” Some understand Joseph to be a “type” (an Old Testament illustration) of Jesus. From your study of Genesis chapter 39, write a list of the character qualities displayed by Joseph that you would like to see developed in your own life. Which verses in these three chapters were of most interest to you personally?

1. This week's lesson begins "some time later. . ." (40:1) Joseph had been in Egypt for approximately ten years and at this point in the narrative, he was in prison. While there, he met other imprisoned government officials ("the royal butler" and "the chief baker"), each of whom "...had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own." (40:5) Chapter 40 is based upon these dreams and their interpretations. Read the following paragraphs, each of which refers to a dream, and write a brief summary of each section.

40:1-8:

40:9-15:

40:16-19:

40:20-23:

2. From 40:6-8, what character traits do you see in Joseph? Write a personal application from these verses for yourself.
3. What request did Joseph make in 40:14-15 and what was the result in 40:23? What lessons might God have been teaching Joseph at this point?
4. What do you part of this chapter do you find most interesting? Why?

1. Read Genesis 41:1-7 where two of the Pharaoh's dreams are described. Draw a sketch or a picture of each of these dreams and give each a brief title.
2. Read the narrative in 41:8-16 and write a brief summary of this passage. What most impressed you with Joseph's response? What personal applications do you find in these verses?
3. Describe the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams given by Joseph in 41:16-32. Which verses make reference to the role of God in these dreams and in their interpretations?
4. In 41:33-40, Joseph went even a step further in his conversation with Pharaoh and added his own analysis and solution. Read this passage and describe Joseph's suggestions. How did Pharaoh respond (41:37-40)?
5. Read verses 41-57 and write a brief outline of this passage, giving each division a title. Which verse or verses was of most interest to you?
6. From your study so far of the life of Joseph, describe the various ways in which God had prepared him for this high-level, government position. What personal applications did you make for yourself in chapter 41?

1. This week's lesson presents a wonderful story of repentance, confession, and reconciliation. Read Genesis 42:1-2 and in your own words restate Jacob's comments to his sons. What was their response (42:3-5)?

2. In Genesis 42:6-17, the ten brothers arrived in Egypt and appeared before Joseph, "the governor of the land, the one who sold grain to all its people." Joseph accused them of being spies (42:9, 12, 14, 16). Despite reaffirming their innocence, Joseph "put them all in custody for three days." Put yourself in their place and describe what would you be thinking?

3. What was Joseph trying to accomplish in 42:6-17? What was his purpose in the plan given in 42:18-20? What was the response of the brothers (42:21-23)?

4. True reconciliation requires sincere repentance and humble confession of sin. Joseph dealt with his brothers in a patient, loving, and wise way. God had to bring Joseph's brothers to the place where they admitted that they were wrong. Shallow repentance does not lead to true reconciliation but only to a fragile truce. Describe some of the tensions that you see developing in 42:21-38.

5. Joseph's tests were important in God's plan to bless Abraham's offspring. God planned to bring the family to Egypt, but it was important that those who came were faithful to the Lord. Therefore, it was necessary that the brothers be tested before they could participate in God's blessing. They must perceive the hand of God moving against them, so that they would acknowledge their crime against Joseph. Read 43:1-14 and describe how the deadlock between Jacob and his sons was broken. What did you think of Jacob's comments in 43:14?

6. In chapter 43:15-34, the brothers were concerned with three problems: (1) the hidden money, (2) Simeon's release and (3) protecting Benjamin. How did Joseph address each of these concerns?

1. There are a number of different “scenes” presented in chapter 44 and 45. Read each of the sections below and summarize the key events of each passage:

Confrontation: False Confidence Destroyed (44:1-13)

Confession: Brotherly Concern Displayed (44:14-34)

Compassion: Gracious Forgiveness Demonstrated (45:1-15)

Celebration: Good News Declared (45:16-28)

2. What are some personal applications, lessons, or principles from chapters 44-45 that could impact your life today? (Possible topics to consider include forgiveness, bitterness, reconciliation, relationships, loyalty, patience, grace, joy, and fear.)
3. The story we have studied last week and this week in Genesis chapters 42-45 has been described by some as “one of the most beautiful stories in all of literature” and “one of the great stories of antiquity.” What single verse, section, or passage of this drama (chapters 42-45) most impressed you? Why?

1. From your reading and our study of Joseph's life in Genesis chapters 37 to 45, which aspects of his character have been of most interest to you and why?
2. In Genesis 46:1-4, God revealed His plans for Jacob, instructing him to go "down to Egypt." Even though he was 130 years old and had lived in Hebron for many decades, it was time for him, as well as his entire family, to move. Change is often necessary, but it is difficult. What recent changes have you experienced in your life? Have any been difficult? Have you seen God at work in your life during these times of transition?
3. Genesis chapter 46:8-27 identifies sixty-six men, women and children who actually moved to Egypt. From this extended family the nation of Israel would eventually emerge and grow. Read Genesis 46:28-30 and describe the reunion of Joseph and his father Jacob (Israel) after being separated for over twenty years. What do the following verses have in common: 42:24, 43:30, 45:2, 14-15, and 46:29?
4. From Genesis chapter 47, write a brief description of the relationships between:

Pharaoh and Joseph's Brothers (47:1-6):

Pharaoh and Joseph's Father (47:7-10):

Pharaoh and Joseph's People (47:11-27):
5. Jacob had lived with Joseph for 17 years in Hebron (37:2) and then another 17 years in Egypt (47:28). Read Genesis 47:27-31 and write a brief description of this passage.

1. Genesis chapter 48 describes the blessings Jacob gave to Joseph and his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. The writer of Hebrews selected this event as evidence of a great act of faith (Hebrews 11:21). Here, an elderly and ailing Jacob mustered up enough strength to sit up and talk to his family about God. Read Genesis chapter 48 and describe (from 48:3, 11, 15-16, 20-21) how this patriarch acknowledged the hand of God in his life.
2. Genesis chapter 49 records a fascinating account of Jacob's prophecies regarding his twelve sons. As Jacob neared the end of his long life, he looked forward in time to the eventual settlement of the nation of Israel and gave the traditional patriarchal blessing. Read Genesis 49:8-12 and summarize Jacob's comments to his son, Judah.
3. What were the different aspects of the Joseph blessing in 48:22-26? In what ways can you pass on a spiritual blessing to members of your own family?
4. Genesis chapter 50 describes three "burials," one of which is figurative. Write a brief summary of each passage below:

A Coffin for a Beloved Father (50:1-14):

A Coffin for a Painful Past (50:15-21):

A Coffin for a Special Brother (50:22-26):
5. From the three chapters of this week's lesson (Genesis chapters 48-50), which passage most impacted or interested you personally?

"There is no attribute more comforting to His children than God's sovereignty"

Charles Spurgeon