

WELCOME

Welcome to the Home Fellowship ministry of Countryside Bible Church. We are delighted that, in the Lord's providence, you are participating in a crucial ministry in the life of our church (ultimately, our Lord's church!). It is midweek ministries like this one that enable the brothers and sisters of Countryside to further live out what Christ requires of His people in the New Testament.

We pray that this study of Genesis is written in a way that helps you better grasp a holistic understanding of the book but also the key details that contribute to the story—that God is sending a King to make everything right. We also pray that Genesis shapes your worldview, deepens your relationship with Christ, and informs your worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

May our Creator God bless you and your family and conform you to the image of our perfect Savior and coming King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sincerely,

Countryside Leadership

Teacher: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Meeting Day & Time: _____

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1	_____	24
2	_____	25
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4	_____	27
5	_____	28–29
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Genesis Pt. 2 (Chapters 24–50)
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GENESIS RESOURCES

- *The MacArthur Study Bible* by John MacArthur

A helpful resource that is useful to navigate through the book of Genesis at a 30,000-foot level. If you are needing to quickly grab ahold of a few insights about the text, this resource will enable you to meet that goal.

- *Creation & Blessing* by Allen P. Ross

Ross' one-volume commentary is a great entry point for an in-depth study of Genesis. Written for pastors, elders, and church leaders, Ross writes not only to explain the meaning of the text but how it applies today.

- *Genesis* by T. Desmond Alexander

Alexander is an Old Testament scholar who has written much about the Pentetuech, including works on Genesis and Exodus. His commentary on Genesis is available online for free and would be a worthy help to your study. He focuses on Genesis as narrative and offers remarkable insights into the book as a literary unit.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/genesis/>

- *Genesis* (2 Volumes; New American Commentary) by Kenneth A. Mathews

If you want to plunge into the depths of all that Genesis offers, Mathew's 2-volume commentary is the best on the market. He's faithful to the text and respectfully grapples with all the interpretive challenges and issues that normally accompany a study of Genesis. He writes in an accessible yet thorough fashion.

- *Beginning: Family Worship in Genesis* by Joel R. Beeke and Nick Thompson

A devotional commentary that is organized in bite-size pieces for personal study or family worship. To be clear, we would disagree on their teaching on the circumcision-baptism relationship, but overall, the commentary is helpful and insightful.

GENESIS SUMMARY

The book of Genesis is foundational to God’s great plan of redemption—and to the Christian life. Old Testament scholar Kenneth A. Mathews has rightly pointed out: “Just as we have no gospel without the cross, we would have no salvation story without the sacred events of Moses’ first book [Genesis].”¹ From the opening verses, Genesis establishes God as Supreme, the high and exalted One, the Creator by whom all things are spoken into existence. Genesis explains the origin of mankind, the pinnacle of God’s creation, created in His image, designed to fulfill the creation mandate for His glory (1:26–28).

However, the first couple, Adam and Eve, soon sinned against God in an act of cosmic treason and betrayal, plummeting their offspring, the entire human race, into sin and death (2:17, 5:5–31; Rom. 5:12–21). But amid such darkness, God gives a profound prophecy, describing a descendent, a seed, a royal deliverer who would come from a woman to crush the head of the serpent, Satan:

And I will put enmity Between you and the woman.
And between your seed and her seed [Jesus Christ];
He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel. (3:15)

These words are known as the *proto-evangelium* or the first gospel, giving the reader a glimpse of what is to come in later biblical revelation by way of the person and work of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The heart of Genesis, therefore, is bound up in the expectation that a King—the King of Kings (Rev. 19:16)—is coming to make all the wrong right. And Moses, the writer of Genesis, sets out to organize and narrate Genesis to show how the promised seed (3:15) passes from generation to generation.

Consider the structure of Genesis and the unique *tôledôt* formula that’s used eleven times: “These are the generations of...” (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 36:9; 37:2). The Hebrew

¹ K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 22.

word *tôledôt* is translated as “generations,” “histories,” or “descendents.” The word denotes the idea of “giving birth.” Thus, the *tôledôt* formula is an organizational mechanism designed to help the reader follow the progression of the Genesis 3:15 seed. Pastor and seminary professor Paul Twiss says that the *tôledôt* formula is “the main structuring tool within the narrative [of Genesis]. The announcement of a new *tôledôt* constitutes some kind of development in the search for the [seed].”² Old Testament scholar T. Desmond Alexander adds:

[The *tôledôt*] headings function like a zoom-lens on a camera. They focus the reader’s attention on a particular individual and his immediate children. This enables the author of Genesis to trace the fortunes of the main family line without having to follow in detail the lives of all other relatives.³

So with precision, Genesis records the seed passing from Adam–Seth–Noah–Shem–Terah–Abraham–Isaac–Jacob–Judah, culminating with Jacob’s blessing to Judah:

The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet,
Until Shiloh comes,
And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. (49:10)

The future royal deliverer, the promised 3:15 seed (“scepter,” (obedience of the peoples”), will continue through the line of Judah (see Ruth 4:18–22; 2 Sam. 7:8–17; Matt. 1:1–17). This is why the book of Revelation refers to Christ as the “Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (5:5).

Genesis, however, isn’t only about the coming seed. It is a riveting story about God, a marriage covenant, man’s sin and rebellion, cursings, family strife, depravity, a world-wide flood, salvation, cataclysmic

judgment, nations, a tower, lies, deceit, promises, covenants, circumcision, grace, the opening and closing of wombs, covenantal love, adultery, birthrights and blessings, betrayal, power, wisdom, a hope and a future, and more.

As you read and study Genesis, we pray you will be captivated by the truth of God’s Word. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we hope your heart burns within you as the Spirit illuminates the Scripture to you (cf. Luke 24:32). And we pray your mind will be renewed so as to energize you to live for and worship Christ (Rom. 12:1–2), to serve faithfully in His church, to love His people, and to do all things for God’s glory.

² Paul Twiss, “The Jacob *tôledôt* and Plot: An Exploration of Narrative Continuity in Genesis 37:2–50:26 According to Ricoeurian Mimesis,” 94, March 2021, accessed June 18, 2024, https://pureadmin.qub.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/246279963/Jacob_Toledot_and_Plot.pdf.

³ T. Desmond Alexander, “Genealogies, Seed and Compositional Unity of Genesis,” Tyndale Bulletin 44.2 (1993): 255–70, accessed June 20, 2024, https://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/tb/genealogies_alexander.pdf.

LESSON I | *Genesis 24*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in every way. ² Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he owned, “Please place your hand under my thigh, ³ and I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, ⁴ but you will go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac.” ⁵ The servant said to him, “Suppose the woman is not willing to follow me to this land; should I take your son back to the land from where you came?” ⁶ Then Abraham said to him, “Beware that you do not take my son back there! ⁷ The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and who swore to me, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give this land,’ He will send His angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from there. ⁸ But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this my oath; only do not take my son back there.” ⁹ So the servant placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

¹⁰ Then the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master, and set out with a variety of good things of his master’s in his hand; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. ¹¹ He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water. ¹² He said, “O Lord,

the God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today, and show lovingkindness to my master Abraham. ¹³ Behold, I am standing by the spring, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; ¹⁴ now may it be that the girl to whom I say, ‘Please let down your jar so that I may drink,’ and who answers, ‘Drink, and I will water your camels also’—may she be the one whom You have appointed for Your servant Isaac; and by this I will know that You have shown lovingkindness to my master.”

¹⁵ Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder. ¹⁶ The girl was very beautiful, a virgin, and no man had had relations with her; and she went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. ¹⁷ Then the servant ran to meet her, and said, “Please let me drink a little water from your jar.” ¹⁸ She said, “Drink, my lord”; and she quickly lowered her jar to her hand, and gave him a drink. ¹⁹ Now when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw also for your camels until they have finished drinking.” ²⁰ So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, and ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels. ²¹ Meanwhile, the man was gazing at her in silence, to know whether the Lord had made his journey successful or not.

²² When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels in gold, ²³ and said, “Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there room for us to lodge in your father’s house?” ²⁴ She said to

him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.” ²⁵ Again she said to him, “We have plenty of both straw and feed, and room to lodge in.” ²⁶ Then the man bowed low and worshiped the Lord. ²⁷ He said, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His lovingkindness and His truth toward my master; as for me, the Lord has guided me in the way to the house of my master’s brothers.”

²⁸ Then the girl ran and told her mother’s household about these things.

²⁹ Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban; and Laban ran outside to the man at the spring. ³⁰ When he saw the ring and the bracelets on his sister’s wrists, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, “This is what the man said to me,” he went to the man; and behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. ³¹ And he said, “Come in, blessed of the Lord! Why do you stand outside since I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels?” ³² So the man entered the house. Then Laban unloaded the camels, and he gave straw and feed to the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. ³³ But when food was set before him to eat, he said, “I will not eat until I have told my business.” And he said, “Speak on.” ³⁴ So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant. ³⁵ The Lord has greatly blessed my master, so that he has become rich; and He has given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and servants and maids, and camels and donkeys. ³⁶ Now Sarah my master’s wife bore a son to my master in her old age, and he has given him all that he has. ³⁷ My master made me swear, saying, ‘You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live; ³⁸ but you shall go to

my father's house and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son.' ³⁹ I said to my master, 'Suppose the woman does not follow me.' ⁴⁰ He said to me, 'The Lord, before whom I have walked, will send His angel with you to make your journey successful, and you will take a wife for my son from my relatives and from my father's house; ⁴¹ then you will be free from my oath, when you come to my relatives; and if they do not give her to you, you will be free from my oath.'

⁴² "So I came today to the spring, and said, 'O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, if now You will make my journey on which I go successful; ⁴³ behold, I am standing by the spring, and may it be that the maiden who comes out to draw, and to whom I say, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar"; ⁴⁴ and she will say to me, "You drink, and I will draw for your camels also"; let her be the woman whom the Lord has appointed for my master's son.'

⁴⁵ "Before I had finished speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder, and went down to the spring and drew, and I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' ⁴⁶ She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder, and said, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also'; so I drank, and she watered the camels also. ⁴⁷ Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him'; and I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her wrists. ⁴⁸ And I bowed low and worshiped the Lord, and blessed the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had guided me in the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. ⁴⁹ So now if you are going to deal kindly and truly with my

master, tell me; and if not, let me know, that I may turn to the right hand or the left."

⁵⁰ Then Laban and Bethuel replied, "The matter comes from the Lord; so we cannot speak to you bad or good. ⁵¹ Here is Rebekah before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has spoken."

⁵² When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the ground before the Lord. ⁵³ The servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother. ⁵⁴ Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night. When they arose in the morning, he said, "Send me away to my master." ⁵⁵ But her brother and her mother said, "Let the girl stay with us a few days, say ten; afterward she may go." ⁵⁶ He said to them, "Do not delay me, since the Lord has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master." ⁵⁷ And they said, "We will call the girl and consult her wishes." ⁵⁸ Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go." ⁵⁹ Thus they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse with Abraham's servant and his men. ⁶⁰ They blessed Rebekah and said to her,

"May you, our sister,
Become thousands of ten thousands,
And may your descendants possess
The gate of those who hate them."

⁶¹ Then Rebekah arose with her maids, and they mounted the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.

⁶² Now Isaac had come from going to Beer-lahai-roi; for he was living in the Negev. ⁶³ Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, camels were coming.

⁶⁴ Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from the camel. ⁶⁵ She said to the servant, “Who is that man walking in the field to meet us?” And the servant said, “He is my master.” Then she took her veil and covered herself. ⁶⁶ The servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. ⁶⁷ Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her; thus Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

After Sarah’s passing and as Abraham grows old, the narrative shifts to record details about their son Isaac and how the Lord providentially orchestrates him finding a wife. As the promised son of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac is now presented in the likeness of Abraham—as the one through whom the Genesis 3:15 seed will come and as evidence of the continued outworking of the Abrahamic Covenant. Genesis 24 records the providential workings of God as, through a series of events, Isaac and Rebekah meet and soon marry—thus setting the stage for a seed to come from their line (Gen. 25). Narrative attention is overwhelmingly given to Isaac rather than Ishmael, once again demonstrating God’s choice in carrying out His redemptive plan.

QUESTIONS

1. Why does Abraham insist that Isaac not take a wife from the Canaanites but from Abraham’s own country (24:3–4)?
2. Considering the actions and words that verses 1–14 (see also v. 26) reveal about Abraham and his servant, how do they demonstrate confidence and trust in God that He will provide a wife?

3. How does the narrative portray Rebekah in verses 15–21? Before Isaac and she actually marry (v. 67), how does Genesis hint that she will be the one whom Isaac will wed (see Gen. 22:23)?

4. After the servant retells the providential events that transpired at the well, how does Laban respond (v. 50–51)?

5. Why does verse 60 sound familiar (Gen. 12:1–3)? Discuss.

PRAYING GENESIS 24

- *God is not only sovereign over all things but he providentially orchestrates all things for His purposes.*
- *God has established and defined marriage—between one man and one woman.*
- *God is worthy of worship and praise through prayer. And Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest, has given us access to Him.*
- *God is sovereign over life and death and we can trust Him as He begins and ends life.*

LESSON 2 | *Genesis 25*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. ² She bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. ³ Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim. ⁴ The sons of Midian were Ephah and Epher and Hanoah and Abida and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah. ⁵ Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac; ⁶ but to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the east.

⁷ These are all the years of Abraham's life that he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years. ⁸ Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people. ⁹ Then his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, facing Mamre, ¹⁰ the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth; there Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife. ¹¹ It came about after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac lived by Beer-lahai-roi.

¹² Now these are the records of the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham; ¹³ and these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael, and Kedar

and Adbeel and Mibsam ¹⁴ and Mishma and Dumah and Massa, ¹⁵ Hadad and Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. ¹⁶ These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages, and by their camps; twelve princes according to their tribes. ¹⁷ These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. ¹⁸ They settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria; he settled in defiance of all his relatives.

¹⁹ Now these are the records of the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac; ²⁰ and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. ²¹ Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived. ²² But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is so, why then am I this way?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. ²³ The Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb;
And two peoples will be separated from your body;
And one people shall be stronger than the other;
And the older shall serve the younger."

²⁴ When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵ Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau. ²⁶ Afterward his brother came

forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them.

²⁷ When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a peaceful man, living in tents. ²⁸ Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. ²⁹ When Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field and he was famished; ³⁰ and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom. ³¹ But Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." ³² Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?" ³³ And Jacob said, "First swear to me"; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

The narrative surrounding the life and times of Abraham comes to an end as he is described as remarrying and having more children—followed by his death at the age of 175. Notice how less attention is given to Abraham's remarriage and subsequent children in comparison to him and Sarah. The narrative then takes direct aim at describing the descendants of Ishmael (this section ties up his story) but transitions to a greater focus on Isaac and Rebekah's conception of twins—with the question being, through which of the twins will the Abrahamic Covenant and Genesis 3:15 seed continue? (A proper reading of Genesis makes note of every time the main characters produce another generation of image bearers.) This conception and birth narrative sets the stage for the chapters to come, which unfold the tension between the two sons (Esau and Jacob) and the consequences that follow.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is very little narrative space—in comparison to Abraham and Sarah—given to Abraham and his wife, Keturah?

2. What does it mean that Abraham was gathered to His people (v. 8)? What hope does this give believers today?

3. According to verse 21, Isaac and Rebekah faced infertility. Where else in Genesis have we seen this same challenge? Verse 21 also describes that they eventually got pregnant—what does that tell us about God as it relates to human life and death and His promises (Gen. 12:1–3)?

4. What do verses 22–28 tell us about Esau and Jacob and how God has determined to work out His plan of redemption?

5. Did Esau truly care about his birthright? How does his giving away his birthright bring to fruition what was promised in verse 23?

- *God is sovereign over death and brings people into His eternal presence in heaven.*
- *God is sovereign over conception—only He can grant life.*
- *God always fulfills what He has decreed and promised, and nothing can thwart His plan.*

LESSON 3 | *Genesis 26*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now there was a famine in the land, besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. ² The Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. ³ Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. ⁴ I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁵ because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.”

⁶ So Isaac lived in Gerar. ⁷ When the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, “She is my sister,” for he was afraid to say, “my wife,” thinking, “the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebekah, for she is beautiful.” ⁸ It came about, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out through a window, and saw, and behold, Isaac was caressing his wife Rebekah. ⁹ Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, “Behold, certainly she is your wife! How then did you say, ‘She is my sister’?” And Isaac said to him, “Because I said, ‘I might die on account of her.’” ¹⁰ Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.” ¹¹ So Abimelech charged all the people, saying, “He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

¹² Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. And the Lord blessed him, ¹³ and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy; ¹⁴ for he had possessions of flocks and herds and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him. ¹⁵ Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped up by filling them with earth. ¹⁶ Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us." ¹⁷ And Isaac departed from there and camped in the valley of Gerar, and settled there.

¹⁸ Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them the same names which his father had given them. ¹⁹ But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of flowing water, ²⁰ the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek, because they contended with him. ²¹ Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Sitnah. ²² He moved away from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it Rehoboth, for he said, "At last the Lord has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land."

²³ Then he went up from there to Beersheba. ²⁴ The Lord appeared to him the same night and said,

"I am the God of your father Abraham;
Do not fear, for I am with you.

I will bless you, and multiply your descendants,
For the sake of My servant Abraham."

²⁵ So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

²⁶ Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his adviser Ahuzzath and Phicol the commander of his army. ²⁷ Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?" ²⁸ They said, "We see plainly that the Lord has been with you; so we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, even between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, ²⁹ that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the Lord.'" ³⁰ Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. ³¹ In the morning they arose early and exchanged oaths; then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace. ³² Now it came about on the same day, that Isaac's servants came in and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water." ³³ So he called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

³⁴ When Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; ³⁵ and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

In this chapter, the primary focus of the Genesis narrative is given to Isaac (Jacob is the next main character!). In fact, chapter 26 labors to show that Isaac is the new Abraham through whom the covenant promises will continue as well as the perpetuation of the Genesis 3:15 seed. The narrator intentionally provides many striking similarities between Isaac and Abraham, suggesting that what has happened before in Genesis will continue in Isaac. But at the same time, the narrative strategically notes that Esau, the older brother, has taken wives outside the people of God. This striking contrast (a foil) between Jacob and Esau foreshadows that God will eventually bring about his plan of redemption through Jacob, not Esau.

QUESTIONS

1. In verses 1–6, what does God make clear to Isaac? Why is it crucial that God reiterate these truths to him?

2. Like Abraham (12:13; 20:2), Isaac also calls his wife his sister rather than trusting the Lord. Why does the Bible not shy away from showing the failures of important characters?

3. Why does verse 12 emphasize that the Lord blessed Isaac? Why is it important for the narrative to make this a focal point (see 25:23)?

4. Now that Isaac has been established as the new Abraham, why does the narrative shift to recording his interactions with Abimelech and the Philistines?

5. This chapter ends with a comment about Esau and his wives. How does this fit into the current narrative between Isaac and Rebekah and their twin sons?

6. How does God respond to the serpent's actions and Adam and Eve's sins (see v. 13–19)?

PRAYING GENESIS 26

- *God is immutable and omnipotent, always bringing to pass what He has promised.*
- *God has a desire to save both Jews and Gentiles.*
- *God delights in those who know and understand His Word and obey it.*

LESSON 4 | *Genesis 27*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now it came about, when Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called his older son Esau and said to him, “My son.” And he said to him, “Here I am.” ² Isaac said, “Behold now, I am old and I do not know the day of my death. ³ Now then, please take your gear, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me; ⁴ and prepare a savory dish for me such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die.”

⁵ Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game to bring home, ⁶ Rebekah said to her son Jacob, “Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying, ⁷ ‘Bring me some game and prepare a savory dish for me, that I may eat, and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.’ ⁸ Now therefore, my son, listen to me as I command you. ⁹ Go now to the flock and bring me two choice young goats from there, that I may prepare them as a savory dish for your father, such as he loves. ¹⁰ Then you shall bring it to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless you before his death.” ¹¹ Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, “Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth man. ¹² Perhaps my father will feel me, then I will be as a deceiver in his sight, and I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing.” ¹³ But his mother said to him, “Your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me.” ¹⁴ So he went and got them, and brought them to his mother; and his mother made savory food such as his father loved. ¹⁵ Then Rebekah took the best

garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. ¹⁶ And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. ¹⁷ She also gave the savory food and the bread, which she had made, to her son Jacob.

¹⁸ Then he came to his father and said, “My father.” And he said, “Here I am. Who are you, my son?” ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn; I have done as you told me. Get up, please, sit and eat of my game, that you may bless me.” ²⁰ Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have it so quickly, my son?” And he said, “Because the Lord your God caused it to happen to me.” ²¹ Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Please come close, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not.” ²² So Jacob came close to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” ²³ He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him. ²⁴ And he said, “Are you really my son Esau?” And he said, “I am.” ²⁵ So he said, “Bring it to me, and I will eat of my son’s game, that I may bless you.” And he brought it to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine and he drank. ²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, “Please come close and kiss me, my son.” ²⁷ So he came close and kissed him; and when he smelled the smell of his garments, he blessed him and said,

“See, the smell of my son

Is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed;

²⁸ Now may God give you of the dew of heaven,

And of the fatness of the earth,

And an abundance of grain and new wine;

²⁹ May peoples serve you,

And nations bow down to you;

Be master of your brothers,

And may your mother’s sons bow down to you.

Cursed be those who curse you,

And blessed be those who bless you.”

³⁰ Now it came about, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had hardly gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. ³¹ Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, “Let my father arise and eat of his son’s game, that you may bless me.” ³² Isaac his father said to him, “Who are you?” And he said, “I am your son, your firstborn, Esau.” ³³ Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, “Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed.” ³⁴ When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me, even me also, O my father!” ³⁵ And he said, “Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing.” ³⁶ Then he said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.” And he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?” ³⁷ But Isaac replied to Esau, “Behold, I have made him your master, and all his relatives I have given to him as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?” ³⁸ Esau said to his father, “Do you have only one blessing,

my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father.” So Esau lifted his voice and wept.

³⁹ Then Isaac his father answered and said to him,

“Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling,
And away from the dew of heaven from above.

⁴⁰ “By your sword you shall live,
And your brother you shall serve;
But it shall come about when you become restless,
That you will break his yoke from your neck.”

⁴¹ So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

⁴² Now when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent and called her younger son Jacob, and said to him, “Behold your brother Esau is consoling himself concerning you by planning to kill you. ⁴³ Now therefore, my son, obey my voice, and arise, flee to Haran, to my brother Laban! ⁴⁴ Stay with him a few days, until your brother’s fury subsides, ⁴⁵ until your brother’s anger against you subsides and he forgets what you did to him. Then I will send and get you from there. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?”

⁴⁶ Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?”

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

A crucial moment in the Genesis narrative, particularly in the life of Isaac, transpires in this chapter. As Isaac nears the end of his life, Esau and Jacob come forth to receive blessings from their father. In a unique turn of events (although hinted at in Gen. 25:23), Rebekah and Jacob plot to trick Isaac, thus stealing Esau’s blessing. In reality, the narrative has slowly been heading this direction, as God had already made clear that Jacob would be the blessed son. But what hasn’t been revealed to this point is how such a blessing would eventually be received by the second-born, not the first. This episode comes to an end with Isaac becoming aware of the trickery, both sons being blessed (Jacob first), and the scene being set for the future fulfillment of those blessings.

QUESTIONS

1. What important detail about Isaac is mentioned at the beginning of chapter 27 (v. 1)? Why is this detail made known?

2. Not only did Jacob scheme against his father, Isaac, but who else was involved in the plot? Why did she participate in such actions?

3. Rather than taking matters into their own hands, what should Jacob and Rebekah have done? Would God have easily worked all things out just as He decreed (25:23)?

4. Blessings in the book of Genesis have a prophetic nature, so Isaac's blessing of his sons has a future impact. What are the implications of the blessing Jacob receives (v. 27–29)? What are the implications of the blessing Esau receives (v. 39–40)?

5. As a result of the blessing fiasco, how did Esau and Jacob's situation end (v. 41–46)? Will there be a point of restoration?

- *God is able to use all things to bring to pass His good and perfect plan.*
- *God's sovereign and providential purposes extend over all things, even human trickery and deception.*
- *God uses imperfect people to accomplish His perfect plan.*

LESSON 5 | *Genesis 28–29*

SCRIPTURE READING

So Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and charged him, and said to him, “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. ² Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother’s father; and from there take to yourself a wife from the daughters of Laban your mother’s brother. ³ May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. ⁴ May He also give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendants with you, that you may possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham.” ⁵ Then Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

⁶ Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take to himself a wife from there, and that when he blessed him he charged him, saying, “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,” ⁷ and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Paddan-aram. ⁸ So Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased his father Isaac; ⁹ and Esau went to Ishmael, and married, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, the sister of Nebaioth.

¹⁰ Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹ He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place. ¹² He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on

the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. ¹⁴ Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. ¹⁵ Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." ¹⁷ He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

¹⁸ So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top. ¹⁹ He called the name of that place Bethel; however, previously the name of the city had been Luz. ²⁰ Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, ²¹ and I return to my father's house in safety, then the Lord will be my God. ²² This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the sons of the east. ² He looked, and saw a well in the field, and behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there beside it, for from that well they watered the

flocks. Now the stone on the mouth of the well was large. ³ When all the flocks were gathered there, they would then roll the stone from the mouth of the well and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well.

⁴ Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where are you from?" And they said, "We are from Haran." ⁵ He said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" And they said, "We know him." ⁶ And he said to them, "Is it well with him?" And they said, "It is well, and here is Rachel his daughter coming with the sheep." ⁷ He said, "Behold, it is still high day; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them." ⁸ But they said, "We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep."

⁹ While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. ¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. ¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted his voice and wept. ¹² Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father.

¹³ So when Laban heard the news of Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. Then he related to Laban all these things. ¹⁴ Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him a month.

¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?” ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ And Leah’s eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful of form and face. ¹⁸ Now Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.” ¹⁹ Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you than to give her to another man; stay with me.” ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife, for my time is completed, that I may go in to her.” ²² Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast. ²³ Now in the evening he took his daughter Leah, and brought her to him; and Jacob went in to her. ²⁴ Laban also gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. ²⁵ So it came about in the morning that, behold, it was Leah! And he said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served with you? Why then have you deceived me?” ²⁶ But Laban said, “It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also for the service which you shall serve with me for another seven years.” ²⁸ Jacob did so and completed her week, and he gave him his daughter Rachel as his wife. ²⁹ Laban also gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maid. ³⁰ So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and indeed he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served with Laban for another seven years.

³¹ Now the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, and He opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. ³² Leah conceived and bore a son and named

him Reuben, for she said, “Because the Lord has seen my affliction; surely now my husband will love me.” ³³ Then she conceived again and bore a son and said, “Because the Lord has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also.” So she named him Simeon. ³⁴ She conceived again and bore a son and said, “Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” Therefore he was named Levi. ³⁵ And she conceived again and bore a son and said, “This time I will praise the Lord.” Therefore she named him Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

As a result of the blessing scandal involving Isaac, Esau, and Jacob, Jacob and Rebekah are sent to Padan Aram. Subsequent chapters of Genesis record the details of their time there, including the growth of Jacob’s family (12 sons of Israel). At the same time, the narrator records Esau taking to himself more wives, thus demonstrating his opposition to the plan of God. But now that Esau and Jacob have gone their separate ways for the time being, the narrative gives attention to an important encounter between God and Jacob. There, Jacob is reassured of the Abrahamic blessings and God’s unique choice of him. Chapter 29 records the expansion of Jacob’s family through several women, leading to the birth of his first four sons. Again, Genesis highlights the birth of sons, anticipating that the Genesis 3:15 seed will pass through one of them.

QUESTIONS

1. Why does Isaac also warn Jacob that he should not take a wife from the Canaanites?

2. At this point in the narrative, why does God personally appear to Jacob and reiterate some of the main points of the Abrahamic Covenant? What does this reveal about Jacob's role in God's plan of redemption?

3. In chapter 29, Laban tricks Jacob into being intimate with another woman (v. 25). Why is such trickery laced with irony?

4. Was it morally right in God's eyes for Jacob to be sexually involved with many women?

5. What is the significance of Jacob's fourth-born son, Judah (see 49:10)?

PRAYING GENESIS 28–29

- *God is worthy to be praised for carrying out His plan according to His wisdom.*
- *God uses evil and deception—although He Himself isn’t evil nor deceives—to bring about His predetermined purposes in this world.*
- *God’s redemptive plan is always on His timetable, moving at His providential pace.*

LESSON 6 | *Genesis 30–31*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she became jealous of her sister; and she said to Jacob, “Give me children, or else I die.” ² Then Jacob’s anger burned against Rachel, and he said, “Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?” ³ She said, “Here is my maid Bilhah, go in to her that she may bear on my knees, that through her I too may have children.” ⁴ So she gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went in to her. ⁵ Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. ⁶ Then Rachel said, “God has vindicated me, and has indeed heard my voice and has given me a son.” Therefore she named him Dan. ⁷ Rachel’s maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸ So Rachel said, “With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and I have indeed prevailed.” And she named him Naphtali.

⁹ When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. ¹⁰ Leah’s maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. ¹¹ Then Leah said, “How fortunate!” So she named him Gad. ¹² Leah’s maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. ¹³ Then Leah said, “Happy am I! For women will call me happy.” So she named him Asher.

¹⁴ Now in the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, “Please give me some of your son’s mandrakes.” ¹⁵ But she said to her, “Is it a small matter for you to take my husband? And would you take my son’s mandrakes also?” So Rachel said, “Therefore he may lie

with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes." ¹⁶ When Jacob came in from the field in the evening, then Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. ¹⁷ God gave heed to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. ¹⁸ Then Leah said, "God has given me my wages because I gave my maid to my husband." So she named him Issachar. ¹⁹ Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob. ²⁰ Then Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good gift; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she named him Zebulun. ²¹ Afterward she bore a daughter and named her Dinah.

²² Then God remembered Rachel, and God gave heed to her and opened her womb. ²³ So she conceived and bore a son and said, "God has taken away my reproach." ²⁴ She named him Joseph, saying, "May the Lord give me another son."

²⁵ Now it came about when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my own country. ²⁶ Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me depart; for you yourself know my service which I have rendered you." ²⁷ But Laban said to him, "If now it pleases you, stay with me; I have divined that the Lord has blessed me on your account." ²⁸ He continued, "Name me your wages, and I will give it." ²⁹ But he said to him, "You yourself know how I have served you and how your cattle have fared with me. ³⁰ For you had little before I came and it has increased to a multitude, and the Lord has blessed you wherever I turned. But now,

when shall I provide for my own household also?" ³¹ So he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this one thing for me, I will again pasture and keep your flock: ³² let me pass through your entire flock today, removing from there every speckled and spotted sheep and every black one among the lambs and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and such shall be my wages. ³³ So my honesty will answer for me later, when you come concerning my wages. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found with me, will be considered stolen." ³⁴ Laban said, "Good, let it be according to your word." ³⁵ So he removed on that day the striped and spotted male goats and all the speckled and spotted female goats, every one with white in it, and all the black ones among the sheep, and gave them into the care of his sons. ³⁶ And he put a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

³⁷ Then Jacob took fresh rods of poplar and almond and plane trees, and peeled white stripes in them, exposing the white which was in the rods. ³⁸ He set the rods which he had peeled in front of the flocks in the gutters, even in the watering troughs, where the flocks came to drink; and they mated when they came to drink. ³⁹ So the flocks mated by the rods, and the flocks brought forth striped, speckled, and spotted. ⁴⁰ Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the striped and all the black in the flock of Laban; and he put his own herds apart, and did not put them with Laban's flock. ⁴¹ Moreover, whenever the stronger of the flock were mating, Jacob would place the rods in the sight of the flock in the gutters, so that they might mate by the rods; ⁴² but when the flock

was feeble, he did not put them in; so the feeblers were Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. ⁴³ So the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks and female and male servants and camels and donkeys.

Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what belonged to our father he has made all this wealth." ² Jacob saw the attitude of Laban, and behold, it was not friendly toward him as formerly. ³ Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you." ⁴ So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to his flock in the field, ⁵ and said to them, "I see your father's attitude, that it is not friendly toward me as formerly, but the God of my father has been with me. ⁶ You know that I have served your father with all my strength. ⁷ Yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times; however, God did not allow him to hurt me. ⁸ If he spoke thus, 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flock brought forth speckled; and if he spoke thus, 'The striped shall be your wages,' then all the flock brought forth striped. ⁹ Thus God has taken away your father's livestock and given them to me. ¹⁰ And it came about at the time when the flock were mating that I lifted up my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the male goats which were mating were striped, speckled, and mottled. ¹¹ Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am.' ¹² He said, 'Lift up now your eyes and see that all the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you. ¹³ I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.'"

¹⁴ Rachel and Leah said to him, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance

in our father's house? ¹⁵ Are we not reckoned by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and has also entirely consumed our purchase price. ¹⁶ Surely all the wealth which God has taken away from our father belongs to us and our children; now then, do whatever God has said to you."

¹⁷ Then Jacob arose and put his children and his wives upon camels; ¹⁸ and he drove away all his livestock and all his property which he had gathered, his acquired livestock which he had gathered in Paddan-aram, to go to the land of Canaan to his father Isaac. ¹⁹ When Laban had gone to shear his flock, then Rachel stole the household idols that were her father's. ²⁰ And Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him that he was fleeing. ²¹ So he fled with all that he had; and he arose and crossed the Euphrates River, and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.

²² When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, ²³ then he took his kinsmen with him and pursued him a distance of seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the hill country of Gilead. ²⁴ God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream of the night and said to him, "Be careful that you do not speak to Jacob either good or bad."

²⁵ Laban caught up with Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen camped in the hill country of Gilead.

²⁶ Then Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done by deceiving me and carrying away my daughters like captives of the sword? ²⁷ Why did you flee secretly and deceive me, and did not tell me so that I might have sent you away with joy and with songs, with timbrel and with lyre; ²⁸ and did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters? Now you have done foolishly.

²⁹ It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, ‘Be careful not to speak either good or bad to Jacob.’ ³⁰ Now you have indeed gone away because you longed greatly for your father’s house; but why did you steal my gods?” ³¹ Then Jacob replied to Laban, “Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force. ³² The one with whom you find your gods shall not live; in the presence of our kinsmen point out what is yours among my belongings and take it for yourself.” For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

³³ So Laban went into Jacob’s tent and into Leah’s tent and into the tent of the two maids, but he did not find them. Then he went out of Leah’s tent and entered Rachel’s tent. ³⁴ Now Rachel had taken the household idols and put them in the camel’s saddle, and she sat on them. And Laban felt through all the tent but did not find them. ³⁵ She said to her father, “Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is upon me.” So he searched but did not find the household idols.

³⁶ Then Jacob became angry and contended with Laban; and Jacob said to Laban, “What is my transgression? What is my sin that you have hotly pursued me? ³⁷ Though you have felt through all my goods, what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two. ³⁸ These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten the rams of your flocks. ³⁹ That which was torn of beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it myself. You required it of my hand whether stolen by day or stolen by night. ⁴⁰ Thus I was: by day the heat consumed me and the frost by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. ⁴¹ These twenty years

I have been in your house; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock, and you changed my wages ten times. ⁴² If the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had not been for me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the toil of my hands, so He rendered judgment last night.”

⁴³ Then Laban replied to Jacob, “The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? ⁴⁴ So now come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me.” ⁴⁵ Then Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. ⁴⁶ Jacob said to his kinsmen, “Gather stones.” So they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. ⁴⁷ Now Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. ⁴⁸ Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me this day.” Therefore it was named Galeed, ⁴⁹ and Mizpah, for he said, “May the Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from the other. ⁵⁰ If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no man is with us, see, God is witness between you and me.” ⁵¹ Laban said to Jacob, “Behold this heap and behold the pillar which I have set between you and me. ⁵² This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass by this heap to you for harm, and you will not pass by this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. ⁵³ The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us.” So Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. ⁵⁴ Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his kinsmen to the meal; and they ate the meal and spent the night on the mountain. ⁵⁵ Early in the morning Laban

arose, and kissed his sons and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned to his place.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

Jacob, his wives, and his maidservants all play a role in the growth of his family, ultimately conceiving 12 sons—the 12 tribes of Israel. However, as one can assume, this didn't happen without its challenges and difficulties, particularly for Leah and Rachel (29:31–30:24). But while Jacob's family continued to grow, his wealth experienced a similar growth. His substantial rise in financial assets also came with challenges—Jacob and his uncle, Laban, faced off in a battle over breeding livestock (much attention is given to the Jacob/Laban cycle). Ultimately, Jacob and Laban agree to part ways, resulting in Jacob and his family's journey back to the land of Canaan (Gen. 31:13).

QUESTIONS

1. What does 30:2 teach us about Jacob's understanding of God's role in the conception of children?

2. Genesis tells us that Jacob also had daughters (see 30:21). Why is very little narrative attention given to his daughters?

3. What rich theological truths can be drawn from 30:22–24? Why do these verses compel believers to go before the throne of grace in prayer?

4. Why does the narrative give great depth to Jacob's financial prosperity? Should his financial success be the pattern and desire for every Christian? In other words, is this part of the narrative descriptive or prescriptive (narrative or normative)?

5. What is the significance of Jacob being told to go back to the land of his family (31:13)?

PRAYING GENESIS 30–31

- *God is sovereign over all human life.*
- *God is sovereign over your resources, whether you have few or plenty.*
- *God is faithful to keep His promises and will ensure all things come to pass according to His will.*

LESSON 7 | *Genesis 32–33*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now as Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him. ² Jacob said when he saw them, “This is God’s camp.” So he named that place Mahanaim.

³ Then Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. ⁴ He also commanded them saying, “Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: ‘Thus says your servant Jacob, “I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed until now; ⁵ I have oxen and donkeys and flocks and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight.”’”

⁶ The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and furthermore he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.” ⁷ Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and the herds and the camels, into two companies; ⁸ for he said, “If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the company which is left will escape.”

⁹ Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord, who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your relatives, and I will prosper you,’ ¹⁰ I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant; for with my staff only I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two companies. ¹¹ Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau;

for I fear him, that he will come and attack me and the mothers with the children. ¹² For You said, ‘I will surely prosper you and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which is too great to be numbered.’”

¹³ So he spent the night there. Then he selected from what he had with him a present for his brother Esau: ¹⁴ two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, ¹⁵ thirty milking camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. ¹⁶ He delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, “Pass on before me, and put a space between droves.” ¹⁷ He commanded the one in front, saying, “When my brother Esau meets you and asks you, saying, ‘To whom do you belong, and where are you going, and to whom do these animals in front of you belong?’” ¹⁸ then you shall say, ‘These belong to your servant Jacob; it is a present sent to my lord Esau. And behold, he also is behind us.’” ¹⁹ Then he commanded also the second and the third, and all those who followed the droves, saying, “After this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; ²⁰ and you shall say, ‘Behold, your servant Jacob also is behind us.’” For he said, “I will appease him with the present that goes before me. Then afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me.” ²¹ So the present passed on before him, while he himself spent that night in the camp.

²² Now he arose that same night and took his two wives and his two maids and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ He took them and sent them across the stream. And he sent across whatever he had.

²⁴ Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. ²⁵ When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob’s thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. ²⁶ Then he said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking.” But he said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” ²⁷ So he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.” ²⁸ He said, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed.” ²⁹ Then Jacob asked him and said, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” And he blessed him there. ³⁰ So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, “I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved.” ³¹ Now the sun rose upon him just as he crossed over Penuel, and he was limping on his thigh. ³² Therefore, to this day the sons of Israel do not eat the sinew of the hip which is on the socket of the thigh, because he touched the socket of Jacob’s thigh in the sinew of the hip.

Then Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. ² He put the maids and their children in front, and Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last. ³ But he himself passed on ahead of them and bowed down to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

⁴ Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. ⁵ He lifted his eyes and saw the women and the children, and said, “Who are these with you?” So he said, “The

children whom God has graciously given your servant.” ⁶ Then the maids came near with their children, and they bowed down. ⁷ Leah likewise came near with her children, and they bowed down; and afterward Joseph came near with Rachel, and they bowed down. ⁸ And he said, “What do you mean by all this company which I have met?” And he said, “To find favor in the sight of my lord.” ⁹ But Esau said, “I have plenty, my brother; let what you have be your own.” ¹⁰ Jacob said, “No, please, if now I have found favor in your sight, then take my present from my hand, for I see your face as one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably. ¹¹ Please take my gift which has been brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have plenty.” Thus he urged him and he took it.

¹² Then Esau said, “Let us take our journey and go, and I will go before you.” ¹³ But he said to him, “My lord knows that the children are frail and that the flocks and herds which are nursing are a care to me. And if they are driven hard one day, all the flocks will die. ¹⁴ Please let my lord pass on before his servant, and I will proceed at my leisure, according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord at Seir.”

¹⁵ Esau said, “Please let me leave with you some of the people who are with me.” But he said, “What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord.” ¹⁶ So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. ¹⁷ Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built for himself a house and made booths for his livestock; therefore the place is named Succoth.

¹⁸ Now Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-aram, and camped before the city. ¹⁹ He bought the piece of land where he had pitched his tent from the hand of the sons of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for one hundred pieces of money. ²⁰ Then he erected there an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

At this point in the Genesis narrative, Jacob has been portrayed as one who doesn’t shy from deceiving others and manipulating situations to obtain what he wants—particularly the birthright and blessing. But in a powerful episode in Genesis 32–33, Jacob’s character takes on a dramatic transformation, where he is shown to be a new man determined to walk in the ways of the Lord. Gone forever is the old trickster—and born is a new man in pursuit of righteousness. This crucial transformation becomes apparent in two ways: First, in the way Jacob behaves when reuniting with his brother, Esau. And second, when Jacob encounters God and is given a new name—Israel.

QUESTIONS

1. Jacob seems eager to reunite with Esau. How do his actions in verses 1–12 prove this reality?

2. Why does the narrator labor for us to understand that Jacob has now undergone a much-needed character transformation? (Think in terms of the Genesis 3:15 seed and whom God uses for the seed to continue.)

3. What is the significance of God changing Jacob's name to Israel? Why is the narrator careful to record this name change between the time of Jacob's planning to meet Esau (32:1–21) and him actually reuniting with Esau (33:1–17)?

4. What is Esau's reaction to seeing Jacob and his family? How does Esau show that their relationship has been restored and that he truly cares for Jacob (33:12–17)?

5. When Jacob returned to Canaan, what did he do (v. 20)? Why is this the capstone on his character transformation?

- *God is aware of and actively engaged in the affairs of this world.*
- *God isn't impartial as it relates to sin, but will judge it in righteousness.*
- *God is patient with sinners, desiring that they come to repentance and faith.*

LESSON 8 | *Genesis 34–36*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the daughters of the land. ² When Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he took her and lay with her by force. ³ He was deeply attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke tenderly to her. ⁴ So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, “Get me this young girl for a wife.” ⁵ Now Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; but his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob kept silent until they came in. ⁶ Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. ⁷ Now the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved, and they were very angry because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob’s daughter, for such a thing ought not to be done.

⁸ But Hamor spoke with them, saying, “The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage. ⁹ Intermarry with us; give your daughters to us and take our daughters for yourselves. ¹⁰ Thus you shall live with us, and the land shall be open before you; live and trade in it and acquire property in it.” ¹¹ Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, “If I find favor in your sight, then I will give whatever you say to me. ¹² Ask me ever so much bridal payment and gift, and I will give according as you say to me; but give me the girl in marriage.”

¹³ But Jacob’s sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor with deceit,

because he had defiled Dinah their sister. ¹⁴ They said to them, “We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us. ¹⁵ Only on this condition will we consent to you: if you will become like us, in that every male of you be circumcised, ¹⁶ then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters for ourselves, and we will live with you and become one people. ¹⁷ But if you will not listen to us to be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and go.”

¹⁸ Now their words seemed reasonable to Hamor and Shechem, Hamor’s son. ¹⁹ The young man did not delay to do the thing, because he was delighted with Jacob’s daughter. Now he was more respected than all the household of his father. ²⁰ So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying, ²¹ “These men are friendly with us; therefore let them live in the land and trade in it, for behold, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters in marriage, and give our daughters to them. ²² Only on this condition will the men consent to us to live with us, to become one people: that every male among us be circumcised as they are circumcised. ²³ Will not their livestock and their property and all their animals be ours? Only let us consent to them, and they will live with us.” ²⁴ All who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and to his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

²⁵ Now it came about on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of Jacob’s sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, each took his sword and came upon the city unawares, and killed every male. ²⁶ They killed

Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem’s house, and went forth. ²⁷ Jacob’s sons came upon the slain and looted the city, because they had defiled their sister. ²⁸ They took their flocks and their herds and their donkeys, and that which was in the city and that which was in the field; ²⁹ and they captured and looted all their wealth and all their little ones and their wives, even all that was in the houses. ³⁰ Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, “You have brought trouble on me by making me odious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and my men being few in number, they will gather together against me and attack me and I will be destroyed, I and my household.” ³¹ But they said, “Should he treat our sister as a harlot?”

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Then God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to Bethel and live there, and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau.” ² So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Put away the foreign gods which are among you, and purify yourselves and change your garments; ³ and let us arise and go up to Bethel, and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone.” ⁴ So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods which they had and the rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was near Shechem.

⁵ As they journeyed, there was a great terror upon the cities which were around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. ⁶ So Jacob came

to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. ⁷ He built an altar there, and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed Himself to him when he fled from his brother. ⁸ Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the oak; it was named Allon-bacuth.

⁹ Then God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and He blessed him. ¹⁰ God said to him,

“Your name is Jacob;
You shall no longer be called Jacob,
But Israel shall be your name.”

Thus He called him Israel. ¹¹ God also said to him,

“I am God Almighty;
Be fruitful and multiply;
A nation and a company of nations shall come from you,
And kings shall come forth from you.
¹² “The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac,
I will give it to you,
And I will give the land to your descendants after you.”

¹³ Then God went up from him in the place where He had spoken with him. ¹⁴ Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone, and he poured out a drink offering on it; he also poured oil

on it. ¹⁵ So Jacob named the place where God had spoken with him, Bethel.

¹⁶ Then they journeyed from Bethel; and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and she suffered severe labor. ¹⁷ When she was in severe labor the midwife said to her, “Do not fear, for now you have another son.” ¹⁸ It came about as her soul was departing (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹ So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). ²⁰ Jacob set up a pillar over her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day. ²¹ Then Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder.

²² It came about while Israel was dwelling in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine, and Israel heard of it.

Now there were twelve sons of Jacob— ²³ the sons of Leah: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, then Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Zebulun; ²⁴ the sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin; ²⁵ and the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid: Dan and Naphtali; ²⁶ and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid: Gad and Asher. These are the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

²⁷ Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre of Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned.

²⁸ Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years. ²⁹ Isaac breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, an old man of ripe age; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Now these are the records of the generations of Esau (that is, Edom).

² Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite; ³ also Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, the sister of Nebaioth. ⁴ Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel, ⁵ and Oholibamah bore Jeush and Jalam and Korah. These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Then Esau took his wives and his sons and his daughters and all his household, and his livestock and all his cattle and all his goods which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to another land away from his brother Jacob. ⁷ For their property had become too great for them to live together, and the land where they sojourned could not sustain them because of their livestock. ⁸ So Esau lived in the hill country of Seir; Esau is Edom.

⁹ These then are the records of the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir. ¹⁰ These are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Esau's wife Adah, Reuel the son of Esau's wife Basemath. ¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho and Gatam and Kenaz. ¹² Timna was a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These are the sons of Esau's wife Adah. ¹³ These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath and Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah. These were the sons of Esau's wife Basemath. ¹⁴ These were the sons of Esau's wife

Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon: she bore to Esau, Jeush and Jalam and Korah.

¹⁵ These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn of Esau, are chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz, ¹⁶ chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek. These are the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Adah. ¹⁷ These are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah. These are the chiefs descended from Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Esau's wife Basemath. ¹⁸ These are the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah. These are the chiefs descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah. ¹⁹ These are the sons of Esau (that is, Edom), and these are their chiefs.

²⁰ These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan and Shobal and Zibeon and Anah, ²¹ and Dishon and Ezer and Dishan. These are the chiefs descended from the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom. ²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna. ²³ These are the sons of Shobal: Alvan and Manahath and Ebal, Shepho and Onam. ²⁴ These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah—he is the Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness when he was pasturing the donkeys of his father Zibeon. ²⁵ These are the children of Anah: Dishon, and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah. ²⁶ These are the sons of Dishon: Hemdan and Eshban and Ithran and Cheran. ²⁷ These are the sons of Ezer: Bilhan and Zaavan and Akan. ²⁸ These are the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran. ²⁹ These are the chiefs descended from

the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Zibeon, chief Anah, ³⁰ chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan. These are the chiefs descended from the Horites, according to their various chiefs in the land of Seir.

³¹ Now these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the sons of Israel. ³² Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah. ³³ Then Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah became king in his place. ³⁴ Then Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites became king in his place. ³⁵ Then Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the field of Moab, became king in his place; and the name of his city was Avith. ³⁶ Then Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah became king in his place. ³⁷ Then Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the Euphrates River became king in his place. ³⁸ Then Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor became king in his place. ³⁹ Then Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar became king in his place; and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, daughter of Mezahab.

⁴⁰ Now these are the names of the chiefs descended from Esau, according to their families and their localities, by their names: chief Timna, chief Alvah, chief Jetheth, ⁴¹ chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon, ⁴² chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar, ⁴³ chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These are the chiefs of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of the Edomites), according to their habitations in the land of their possession.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

The story of the slaughter of the Shechemites is a well-known but often misunderstood episode in Genesis. The brutality expressed by Simeon and Levi upon the Shechemites (34) in response to the rape of their sister, Dinah, is ungodly and unwarranted. Yet the whole scene plays an intricate role in narrowing down which of the twelve sons of Jacob the 3:15 seed will continue through (this is tension that runs throughout the rest of the book). In other words, this story unfolds the exact human reason why Simeon (son #2) and Levi (son #3) will not perpetuate the promised seed described in Genesis 3:15. In addition, Reuben (son #1) is discredited as well because of sexual immorality (35:22). But in light of these realities, God's plan will continue to move forward through Jacob (35:9–15) and one of his sons (37–50).

QUESTIONS

1. How does the writer describe the sons of Jacob's reaction to the news about the rape of their sister, Dinah (34:7)? What key comment does the narrator make in 34:13 that clues us into the fact that something tragic is going to happen?

2. Discuss the depth in which the Schememites and their town were destroyed (34:25–31).

3. Verse 30 finally reveals that Simeon and Levi were the two sons responsible for this entire event. Why does the narrator wait so long to reveal their identity?

4. Why does Jacob's name change happen twice (35:9–15)? Does this contradict or complement the first name change in Genesis 32?

5. After Rachel's death scene and the birth of Benjamin, why does the narrator include a small detail about Reuben's sexual immorality (35:21–22)?

PRAYING GENESIS 34–36

- *God is a just and holy Judge who will punish all iniquity, transgression, and sin.*
- *God, although not performing the evil, can use it to bring to pass His decrees, plans, and purposes.*
- *God’s ways are perfect and His character is always trustworthy.*
- *God is sovereign over nations.*

LESSON 9 | *Genesis 37–38*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan. ² These are the records of the generations of Jacob.

Joseph, when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was still a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father’s wives. And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father. ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic. ⁴ His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms.

⁵ Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. ⁶ He said to them, “Please listen to this dream which I have had; ⁷ for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect; and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf.” ⁸ Then his brothers said to him, “Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

⁹ Now he had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, “Lo, I have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.” ¹⁰ He related it to his father and to his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is

this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?”¹¹ His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.

¹² Then his brothers went to pasture their father’s flock in Shechem.

¹³ Israel said to Joseph, “Are not your brothers pasturing the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them.” And he said to him, “I will go.”¹⁴ Then he said to him, “Go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock, and bring word back to me.” So he sent him from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

¹⁵ A man found him, and behold, he was wandering in the field; and the man asked him, “What are you looking for?”¹⁶ He said, “I am looking for my brothers; please tell me where they are pasturing the flock.”¹⁷ Then the man said, “They have moved from here; for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

¹⁸ When they saw him from a distance and before he came close to them, they plotted against him to put him to death.¹⁹ They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer!²⁰ Now then, come and let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; and we will say, ‘A wild beast devoured him.’ Then let us see what will become of his dreams!”²¹ But Reuben heard this and rescued him out of their hands and said, “Let us not take his life.”²² Reuben further said to them, “Shed no blood. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but do not lay hands on him”—that he might rescue him out of their hands, to restore him to his father.²³ So it

came about, when Joseph reached his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the varicolored tunic that was on him;²⁴ and they took him and threw him into the pit. Now the pit was empty, without any water in it.

²⁵ Then they sat down to eat a meal. And as they raised their eyes and looked, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing aromatic gum and balm and myrrh, on their way to bring them down to Egypt.²⁶ Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it for us to kill our brother and cover up his blood?”²⁷ Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” And his brothers listened to him.²⁸ Then some Midianite traders passed by, so they pulled him up and lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt.

²⁹ Now Reuben returned to the pit, and behold, Joseph was not in the pit; so he tore his garments.³⁰ He returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is not there; as for me, where am I to go?”³¹ So they took Joseph’s tunic, and slaughtered a male goat and dipped the tunic in the blood;³² and they sent the varicolored tunic and brought it to their father and said, “We found this; please examine it to see whether it is your son’s tunic or not.”³³ Then he examined it and said, “It is my son’s tunic. A wild beast has devoured him; Joseph has surely been torn to pieces!”³⁴ So Jacob tore his clothes, and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days.³⁵ Then all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, “Surely I will go down to Sheol

in mourning for my son.” So his father wept for him.³⁶ Meanwhile, the Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, Pharaoh’s officer, the captain of the bodyguard.

And it came about at that time, that Judah departed from his brothers and visited a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.² Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua; and he took her and went in to her.³ So she conceived and bore a son and he named him Er.⁴ Then she conceived again and bore a son and named him Onan.⁵ She bore still another son and named him Shelah; and it was at Chezib that she bore him.

⁶ Now Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar.
⁷ But Er, Judah’s firstborn, was evil in the sight of the Lord, so the Lord took his life.⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, “Go in to your brother’s wife, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother.”⁹ Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so when he went in to his brother’s wife, he wasted his seed on the ground in order not to give offspring to his brother.¹⁰ But what he did was displeasing in the sight of the Lord; so He took his life also.¹¹ Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, “Remain a widow in your father’s house until my son Shelah grows up”; for he thought, “I am afraid that he too may die like his brothers.” So Tamar went and lived in her father’s house.

¹² Now after a considerable time Shua’s daughter, the wife of Judah, died; and when the time of mourning was ended, Judah went up to his

sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.¹³ It was told to Tamar, “Behold, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep.”¹⁴ So she removed her widow’s garments and covered herself with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in the gateway of Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah had grown up, and she had not been given to him as a wife.¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, for she had covered her face.¹⁶ So he turned aside to her by the road, and said, “Here now, let me come in to you”; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. And she said, “What will you give me, that you may come in to me?”¹⁷ He said, therefore, “I will send you a young goat from the flock.” She said, moreover, “Will you give a pledge until you send it?”¹⁸ He said, “What pledge shall I give you?” And she said, “Your seal and your cord, and your staff that is in your hand.” So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him.¹⁹ Then she arose and departed, and removed her veil and put on her widow’s garments.

²⁰ When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite, to receive the pledge from the woman’s hand, he did not find her.²¹ He asked the men of her place, saying, “Where is the temple prostitute who was by the road at Enaim?” But they said, “There has been no temple prostitute here.”²² So he returned to Judah, and said, “I did not find her; and furthermore, the men of the place said, ‘There has been no temple prostitute here.’”²³ Then Judah said, “Let her keep them, otherwise we will become a laughingstock. After all, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her.”

²⁴ Now it was about three months later that Judah was informed, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot, and behold, she is also with child by harlotry.” Then Judah said, “Bring her out and let her be burned!”

²⁵ It was while she was being brought out that she sent to her father-in-law, saying, “I am with child by the man to whom these things belong.” And she said, “Please examine and see, whose signet ring and cords and staff are these?” ²⁶ Judah recognized them, and said, “She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah.” And he did not have relations with her again.

²⁷ It came about at the time she was giving birth, that behold, there were twins in her womb. ²⁸ Moreover, it took place while she was giving birth, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, “This one came out first.” ²⁹ But it came about as he drew back his hand, that behold, his brother came out. Then she said, “What a breach you have made for yourself!” So he was named Perez. ³⁰ Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand; and he was named Zerah.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

Chapter 37 begins the final *tôledôt* section of the book of Genesis (37–50), which signals to us as readers to be looking for whom the Genesis 3:15 seed will pass to. Thus far, the seed has been passed from Adam, Seth, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But throughout the final *tôledôt* of Genesis, which of the twelve brothers will the seed go through? Reuben, Simeon, and Levi have been disqualified (see previous chapters). So the narrative now gives preference to two brothers: Joseph

(son #11) and Judah (son #4). Chapter 37 describes Joseph being rejected by his brothers and sold into slavery. Then chapter 38 leaves the story of Joseph to describe the character transformation of Judah and his conception of children. Both chapters are crucial to understanding the remainder of the book.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the factors that contributed to the brothers conspiring against Joseph (37:1–11).

2. Which brothers offered a plan that didn’t include killing Joseph (37:18–28)? Which brother did everyone ultimately listen to (v. 27)? Why is it crucial that the narrator highlights their listening to Judah, not Reuben?

3. Discuss Jacob's reaction to the news about Joseph (37:29–36). Why did he respond this way?

4. How does the narrative portray Judah's sons (38:7, 10)?

5. How does the narrative initially portray Judah (38:15–16)? What key details does the narrator give about Judah's knowledge of Tamar (38:15–16)?

6. How do we know that Judah's character underwent a massive transformation (38:26)?

7. Judah and Tamar conceived twins, one of whom was named Perez. Why is this significant (Ruth 4:18–22; Matt. 1:3)?

PRAYING GENESIS 37–38

- *God is sovereign over all human history, including the minor details of a person's life.*
- *God uses the trials and tribulations of this life to bring about His good purposes.*
- *God is able to redeem the worst of sinners for His glory and their good.*

LESSON 10 | *Genesis 39–41*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there. ² The Lord was with Joseph, so he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. ³ Now his master saw that the Lord was with him and how the Lord caused all that he did to prosper in his hand. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight and became his personal servant; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge. ⁵ It came about that from the time he made him overseer in his house and over all that he owned, the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph; thus the Lord's blessing was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field. ⁶ So he left everything he owned in Joseph's charge; and with him there he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. ⁷ It came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." ⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. ⁹ There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" ¹⁰ As she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her or be with her. ¹¹ Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household

was there inside. ¹² She caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me!” And he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside. ¹³ When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, ¹⁴ she called to the men of her household and said to them, “See, he has brought in a Hebrew to us to make sport of us; he came in to me to lie with me, and I screamed. ¹⁵ When he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled and went outside.” ¹⁶ So she left his garment beside her until his master came home. ¹⁷ Then she spoke to him with these words, “The Hebrew slave, whom you brought to us, came in to me to make sport of me; ¹⁸ and as I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled outside.”

¹⁹ Now when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying, “This is what your slave did to me,” his anger burned. ²⁰ So Joseph’s master took him and put him into the jail, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined; and he was there in the jail. ²¹ But the Lord was with Joseph and extended kindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. ²² The chief jailer committed to Joseph’s charge all the prisoners who were in the jail; so that whatever was done there, he was responsible for it. ²³ The chief jailer did not supervise anything under Joseph’s charge because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made to prosper.

Then it came about after these things, the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. ² Pharaoh was furious with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. ³ So

he put them in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, in the jail, the same place where Joseph was imprisoned. ⁴ The captain of the bodyguard put Joseph in charge of them, and he took care of them; and they were in confinement for some time. ⁵ Then the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt, who were confined in jail, both had a dream the same night, each man with his own dream and each dream with its own interpretation. ⁶ When Joseph came to them in the morning and observed them, behold, they were dejected. ⁷ He asked Pharaoh’s officials who were with him in confinement in his master’s house, “Why are your faces so sad today?” ⁸ Then they said to him, “We have had a dream and there is no one to interpret it.” Then Joseph said to them, “Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell it to me, please.”

⁹ So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, “In my dream, behold, there was a vine in front of me; ¹⁰ and on the vine were three branches. And as it was budding, its blossoms came out, and its clusters produced ripe grapes. ¹¹ Now Pharaoh’s cup was in my hand; so I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh’s cup, and I put the cup into Pharaoh’s hand.” ¹² Then Joseph said to him, “This is the interpretation of it: the three branches are three days; ¹³ within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office; and you will put Pharaoh’s cup into his hand according to your former custom when you were his cupbearer. ¹⁴ Only keep me in mind when it goes well with you, and please do me a kindness by mentioning me to Pharaoh and get me out of this house. ¹⁵ For I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon.”

¹⁶ When the chief baker saw that he had interpreted favorably, he said to Joseph, “I also saw in my dream, and behold, there were three baskets of white bread on my head; ¹⁷ and in the top basket there were some of all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, and the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head.” ¹⁸ Then Joseph answered and said, “This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days; ¹⁹ within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and will hang you on a tree, and the birds will eat your flesh off you.”

²⁰ Thus it came about on the third day, which was Pharaoh’s birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants.

²¹ He restored the chief cupbearer to his office, and he put the cup into Pharaoh’s hand; ²² but he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. ²³ Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile. ² And lo, from the Nile there came up seven cows, sleek and fat; and they grazed in the marsh grass. ³

Then behold, seven other cows came up after them from the Nile, ugly and gaunt, and they stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile.

⁴ The ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. Then Pharaoh awoke. ⁵ He fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good. ⁶ Then behold, seven ears, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after

them. ⁷ The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream. ⁸ Now in the morning his spirit was troubled, so he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

⁹ Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh, saying, “I would make mention today of my own offenses. ¹⁰ Pharaoh was furious with his servants, and he put me in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, both me and the chief baker. ¹¹ We had a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. ¹² Now a Hebrew youth was with us there, a servant of the captain of the bodyguard, and we related them to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us. To each one he interpreted according to his own dream. ¹³ And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him.”

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh. ¹⁵ Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” ¹⁶ Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.” ¹⁷ So Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, “In my dream, behold, I was standing on the bank of the Nile; ¹⁸ and behold, seven cows, fat and sleek came up out of the Nile, and they grazed in the marsh grass. ¹⁹ Lo, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such as I

had never seen for ugliness in all the land of Egypt; ²⁰ and the lean and ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows. ²¹ Yet when they had devoured them, it could not be detected that they had devoured them, for they were just as ugly as before. Then I awoke. ²² I saw also in my dream, and behold, seven ears, full and good, came up on a single stalk; ²³ and lo, seven ears, withered, thin, and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them; ²⁴ and the thin ears swallowed the seven good ears. Then I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me.”

²⁵ Now Joseph said to Pharaoh, “Pharaoh’s dreams are one and the same; God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do. ²⁶ The seven good cows are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one and the same. ²⁷ The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven thin ears scorched by the east wind will be seven years of famine. ²⁸ It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh: God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do. ²⁹ Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt; ³⁰ and after them seven years of famine will come, and all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will ravage the land. ³¹ So the abundance will be unknown in the land because of that subsequent famine; for it will be very severe. ³² Now as for the repeating of the dream to Pharaoh twice, it means that the matter is determined by God, and God will quickly bring it about. ³³ Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. ³⁴ Let Pharaoh take action to appoint overseers in charge of the land, and let him exact a fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance. ³⁵ Then let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and store

up the grain for food in the cities under Pharaoh’s authority, and let them guard it. ³⁶ Let the food become as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which will occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land will not perish during the famine.”

³⁷ Now the proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants.

³⁸ Then Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find a man like this, in whom is a divine spirit?” ³⁹ So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are. ⁴⁰ You shall be over my house, and according to your command all my people shall do homage; only in the throne I will be greater than you.” ⁴¹ Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.” ⁴² Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph’s hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put the gold necklace around his neck. ⁴³ He had him ride in his second chariot; and they proclaimed before him, “Bow the knee!” And he set him over all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁴ Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Though I am Pharaoh, yet without your permission no one shall raise his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” ⁴⁵ Then Pharaoh named Joseph Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as his wife. And Joseph went forth over the land of Egypt.

⁴⁶ Now Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁷ During the seven years of plenty the land brought forth abundantly. ⁴⁸ So he gathered all the food of these seven

years which occurred in the land of Egypt and placed the food in the cities; he placed in every city the food from its own surrounding fields. ⁴⁹ Thus Joseph stored up grain in great abundance like the sand of the sea, until he stopped measuring it, for it was beyond measure.

⁵⁰ Now before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore to him. ⁵¹ Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, “For,” he said, “God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father’s household.” ⁵² He named the second Ephraim, “For,” he said, “God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.”

⁵³ When the seven years of plenty which had been in the land of Egypt came to an end, ⁵⁴ and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Joseph had said, then there was famine in all the lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. ⁵⁵ So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried out to Pharaoh for bread; and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, you shall do.” ⁵⁶ When the famine was spread over all the face of the earth, then Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold to the Egyptians; and the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. ⁵⁷ The people of all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the earth.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

The narrative returns to Joseph and describes his arrival as a slave in Egypt, followed by being taken to Potiphar’s house (an officer in Egypt). While there, Potiphar’s wife tries to seduce Joseph, yet the narrator makes clear that Joseph denies her requests and remains sexually pure. As a result, Potiphar’s wife fabricates a story that results in Joseph being thrown in prison. But while there, it becomes known that Joseph is able to interpret dreams, which, in the Lord’s providence, takes him into Pharaoh’s courts, where he is appointed ruler over Egypt. In a remarkable series of events, Joseph is catapulted from the bottom of a pit to the office of a king.

QUESTIONS

1. In chapter 39, why is so much emphasis given to the fact that the Lord was with Joseph (v. 2–3; 21, 23)? How does this shape our understanding of what happened to Joseph in this chapter?

2. What unique skill does Joseph perform in chapter 40? What does verse 8 teach us about Joseph's dream-interpreting abilities?

3. In chapter 41, what did Pharaoh learn to be true about Joseph (v. 37–39)? In response, what does he do to Joseph (v. 40–46)?

4. Ultimately, why did God send Joseph to Egypt? And how does this connect to the Genesis 3:15 seed, that a Savior would come into the world to redeem sinners and crush the head of the serpent?

PRAYING GENESIS 39–41

- *God's providential workings are always for His own name's sake and the good of His people.*
- *God, in various ways, has communicated His truth to His people but has given us His final revelation in His Son, Jesus Christ, and His written Word.*
- *God is sovereign over the nations, even using unbelieving men to accomplish His purposes.*

LESSON 11 | *Genesis 42–43*

SCRIPTURE READING

Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, “Why are you staring at one another?” ² He said, “Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy some for us from that place, so that we may live and not die.” ³ Then ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy grain from Egypt. ⁴ But Jacob did not send Joseph’s brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, “I am afraid that harm may befall him.” ⁵ So the sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who were coming, for the famine was in the land of Canaan also.

⁶ Now Joseph was the ruler over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph’s brothers came and bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. ⁷ When Joseph saw his brothers he recognized them, but he disguised himself to them and spoke to them harshly. And he said to them, “Where have you come from?” And they said, “From the land of Canaan, to buy food.”

⁸ But Joseph had recognized his brothers, although they did not recognize him. ⁹ Joseph remembered the dreams which he had about them, and said to them, “You are spies; you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land.” ¹⁰ Then they said to him, “No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. ¹¹ We are all sons of one man; we are honest men, your servants are not spies.” ¹² Yet he said to them, “No, but you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land!” ¹³ But they said, “Your servants are twelve brothers in all, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no longer alive.”

¹⁴ Joseph said to them, “It is as I said to you, you are spies; ¹⁵ by this you will be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here! ¹⁶ Send one of you that he may get your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies.” ¹⁷ So he put them all together in prison for three days.

¹⁸ Now Joseph said to them on the third day, “Do this and live, for I fear God: ¹⁹ if you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in your prison; but as for the rest of you, go, carry grain for the famine of your households, ²⁰ and bring your youngest brother to me, so your words may be verified, and you will not die.” And they did so. ²¹ Then they said to one another, “Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we would not listen; therefore this distress has come upon us.” ²² Reuben answered them, saying, “Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy’; and you would not listen? Now comes the reckoning for his blood.” ²³ They did not know, however, that Joseph understood, for there was an interpreter between them. ²⁴ He turned away from them and wept. But when he returned to them and spoke to them, he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. ²⁵ Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain and to restore every man’s money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. And thus it was done for them.

²⁶ So they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed from there.

²⁷ As one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money; and behold, it was in the mouth of his sack. ²⁸

Then he said to his brothers, “My money has been returned, and behold, it is even in my sack.” And their hearts sank, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, “What is this that God has done to us?”

²⁹ When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying, ³⁰ “The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly with us, and took us for spies of the country. ³¹ But we said to him, ‘We are honest men; we are not spies. ³² We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no longer alive, and the youngest is with our father today in the land of Canaan.’ ³³ The man, the lord of the land, said to us, ‘By this I will know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me and take grain for the famine of your households, and go. ³⁴ But bring your youngest brother to me that I may know that you are not spies, but honest men. I will give your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.’”

³⁵ Now it came about as they were emptying their sacks, that behold, every man’s bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were dismayed. ³⁶ Their father Jacob said to them, “You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and you would take Benjamin; all these things are against me.” ³⁷ Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, “You may put my two sons to death if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my care, and I will return him to you.” ³⁸ But Jacob said, “My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.”

Now the famine was severe in the land.² So it came about when they had finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, “Go back, buy us a little food.”³ Judah spoke to him, however, saying, “The man solemnly warned us, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’”⁴ If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food.⁵ But if you do not send him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, ‘You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.’”⁶ Then Israel said, “Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man whether you still had another brother?”⁷ But they said, “The man questioned particularly about us and our relatives, saying, ‘Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?’ So we answered his questions. Could we possibly know that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down?’”⁸ Judah said to his father Israel, “Send the lad with me and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, we as well as you and our little ones.⁹ I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame before you forever.¹⁰ For if we had not delayed, surely by now we could have returned twice.”

¹¹ Then their father Israel said to them, “If it must be so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man as a present, a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds.¹² Take double the money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was a mistake.¹³ Take your brother also, and arise, return to the man;¹⁴ and may God Almighty grant you

compassion in the sight of the man, so that he will release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.”¹⁵ So the men took this present, and they took double the money in their hand, and Benjamin; then they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house steward, “Bring the men into the house, and slay an animal and make ready; for the men are to dine with me at noon.”¹⁷ So the man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph’s house.¹⁸ Now the men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph’s house; and they said, “It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in, that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us, and take us for slaves with our donkeys.”¹⁹ So they came near to Joseph’s house steward, and spoke to him at the entrance of the house,²⁰ and said, “Oh, my lord, we indeed came down the first time to buy food,²¹ and it came about when we came to the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and behold, each man’s money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full. So we have brought it back in our hand.²² We have also brought down other money in our hand to buy food; we do not know who put our money in our sacks.”²³ He said, “Be at ease, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money.” Then he brought Simeon out to them.²⁴ Then the man brought the men into Joseph’s house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys fodder.²⁵ So they prepared the present for Joseph’s coming at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there.

²⁶ When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present which was in their hand and bowed to the ground before him. ²⁷ Then he asked them about their welfare, and said, “Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?” ²⁸ They said, “Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.” They bowed down in homage. ²⁹ As he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother’s son, he said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?” And he said, “May God be gracious to you, my son.” ³⁰ Joseph hurried out for he was deeply stirred over his brother, and he sought a place to weep; and he entered his chamber and wept there. ³¹ Then he washed his face and came out; and he controlled himself and said, “Serve the meal.” ³² So they served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome to the Egyptians. ³³ Now they were seated before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, and the men looked at one another in astonishment. ³⁴ He took portions to them from his own table, but Benjamin’s portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

With Joseph now acting as Prime Minister of Egypt, the story shifts to Jacob sending ten of his sons (Benjamin did not go) to Egypt to collect grain in response to the famine. When the brothers arrive in Egypt, Joseph recognizes them—but they do not recognize him. Testing the brothers, Joseph then insists that the brothers return home and bring Benjamin to Egypt so he can confirm that his brother is still alive. The brothers fulfill Joseph’s terms and travel with Benjamin back to Egypt. Chapter 43 ends with all the brothers having a meal together—yet the brothers still don’t recognize Joseph.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Jacob not allow Benjamin to travel with the brothers to Egypt? Why is Benjamin so special to Jacob?

2. Why does Joseph immediately begin to test the brothers (42:15)?

3. Why does the narrator give us a comment about Joseph's use of an interpreter? How does this insight add to the suspense of the story?

4. What do we learn about Judah's continual character transformation as described 43:8–10?

5. What are some of the unique details given about the dinner consisting of Joseph, the Egyptians, and the brothers (v. 33–34)?

- *God is sovereign in salvation, able to rescue even the worst of sinners.*
- *God is gracious in salvation, able to reconcile lost sinners to Himself through Christ (vertical reconciliation).*
- *God is gracious, able to help others reconcile with one another (horizontal reconciliation).*

LESSON 12 | *Genesis 44–45*

SCRIPTURE READING

Then he commanded his house steward, saying, “Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in the mouth of his sack. ² Put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his money for the grain.” And he did as Joseph had told him. ³ As soon as it was light, the men were sent away, they with their donkeys. ⁴ They had just gone out of the city, and were not far off, when Joseph said to his house steward, “Up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, ‘Why have you repaid evil for good? ⁵ Is not this the one from which my lord drinks and which he indeed uses for divination? You have done wrong in doing this.’”

⁶ So he overtook them and spoke these words to them. ⁷ They said to him, “Why does my lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing. ⁸ Behold, the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks we have brought back to you from the land of Canaan. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord’s house? ⁹ With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord’s slaves.” ¹⁰ So he said, “Now let it also be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and the rest of you shall be innocent.” ¹¹ Then they hurried, each man lowered his sack to the ground, and each man opened his sack. ¹² He searched, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack. ¹³ Then they tore their clothes, and when each man loaded his donkey, they returned to the city.

¹⁴ When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, he was still there, and they fell to the ground before him. ¹⁵ Joseph said to them, "What is this deed that you have done? Do you not know that such a man as I can indeed practice divination?" ¹⁶ So Judah said, "What can we say to my lord? What can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; behold, we are my lord's slaves, both we and the one in whose possession the cup has been found." ¹⁷ But he said, "Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose possession the cup has been found, he shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father."

¹⁸ Then Judah approached him, and said, "Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord's ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh. ¹⁹ My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' ²⁰ We said to my lord, 'We have an old father and a little child of his old age. Now his brother is dead, so he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.' ²¹ Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me that I may set my eyes on him.' ²² But we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' ²³ You said to your servants, however, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.' ²⁴ Thus it came about when we went up to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. ²⁵ Our father said, 'Go back, buy us a little food.' ²⁶ But we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' ²⁷ Your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; ²⁸ and the one went out from me,

and I said, "Surely he is torn in pieces," and I have not seen him since. ²⁹ If you take this one also from me, and harm befalls him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.' ³⁰ Now, therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, ³¹ when he sees that the lad is not with us, he will die. Thus your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant our father down to Sheol in sorrow. ³² For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then let me bear the blame before my father forever.' ³³ Now, therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. ³⁴ For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me—for fear that I see the evil that would overtake my father?"

Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, "Have everyone go out from me." So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it. ³ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me." And they came closer. And he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are still five years

in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. ⁸ Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, “God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰ You shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. ¹¹ There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine to come, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished.”’ ¹² Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. ¹³ Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here.” ¹⁴ Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. ¹⁵ He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.

¹⁶ Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh’s house that Joseph’s brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. ¹⁷ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: load your beasts and go to the land of Canaan, ¹⁸ and take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you will eat the fat of the land.’” ¹⁹ Now you are ordered, ‘Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come. ²⁰ Do not concern yourselves with your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’”

²¹ Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. ²² To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments. ²³ To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey.

²⁴ So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, “Do not quarrel on the journey.” ²⁵ Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. ²⁶ They told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” But he was stunned, for he did not believe them. ²⁷ When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. ²⁸ Then Israel said, “It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

Not completely convinced of his brother's change in character, Joseph plans to sneakily disrupt their travel home by putting his silver cup in Benjamin's bag. After being confronted on their journey and being found to be with the cup, Judah, the fourth-born, steps forward as a leader of the brothers and offers an impassioned speech, begging for Joseph's forgiveness and seeking reconciliation. In response, Joseph no longer restrains himself but makes it known to his brothers that he is in fact their brother Joseph. Stunned by the news, the brothers return home to tell Jacob and to reunite him with Joseph in Egypt.

QUESTIONS

1. In 44:1–13, how does Joseph test his brothers again? Why is his testing so extensive?
2. What are some of the key points that Judah makes in his impassioned speech (44:18–34)? Why does his speech put so much emphasis on Jacob?

3. What are the theological and practical reasons for Joseph's unique rise to power in Egypt (45:5)? How does this theology give us confidence in our own lives?

4. What does Joseph suggest that the brothers do now that reconciliation has been confirmed (45:9–20)?

5. How does Jacob respond to the news of Joseph being alive?

PRAYING GENESIS 44–45

- *God sovereignly governs the universe and uses both good and evil to accomplish His good purposes.*
- *God desires to draw sinners to Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ.*
- *God can heal and restore broken relationships for His glory.*

LESSON 13 | *Genesis 46–48*

SCRIPTURE READING

So Israel set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2 God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, “Jacob, Jacob.” And he said, “Here I am.” 3 He said, “I am God, the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there. 4 I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will close your eyes.”

5 Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob and their little ones and their wives in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6 They took their livestock and their property, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and came to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him: 7 his sons and his grandsons with him, his daughters and his granddaughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.

8 Now these are the names of the sons of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn. 9 The sons of Reuben: Hanoch and Pallu and Hezron and Carmi. 10 The sons of Simeon: Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman. 11 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 12 The sons of Judah: Er and Onan and Shelah and Perez and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). And the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. 13 The sons of Issachar: Tola and Puvvah and Iob and Shimron. 14

The sons of Zebulun: Sered and Elon and Jahleel. 15 These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, with his daughter Dinah; all his sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three. 16 The sons of Gad: Ziphion and Haggi, Shuni and Ezbon, Eri and Arodi and Areli. 17 The sons of Asher: Imnah and Ishvah and Ishvi and Beriah and their sister Serah. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel. 18 These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah; and she bore to Jacob these sixteen persons. 19 The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. 20 Now to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphra, priest of On, bore to him. 21 The sons of Benjamin: Bela and Becher and Ashbel, Gera and Naaman, Ehi and Rosh, Muppim and Huppim and Ard. 22 These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob; there were fourteen persons in all. 23 The sons of Dan: Hushim. 24 The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel and Guni and Jezer and Shillem. 25 These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel, and she bore these to Jacob; there were seven persons in all. 26 All the persons belonging to Jacob, who came to Egypt, his direct descendants, not including the wives of Jacob's sons, were sixty-six persons in all, 27 and the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt were two; all the persons of the house of Jacob, who came to Egypt, were seventy.

28 Now he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out the way before him to Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. 29 Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; as soon as he appeared before him, he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a long time. 30 Then Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have

seen your face, that you are still alive." 31 Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me; 32 and the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock; and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.' 33 When Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' 34 you shall say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,' that you may live in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians."

Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, and said, "My father and my brothers and their flocks and their herds and all that they have, have come out of the land of Canaan; and behold, they are in the land of Goshen." ² He took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh. ³ Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" So they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers." ⁴ They said to Pharaoh, "We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now, therefore, please let your servants live in the land of Goshen." ⁵ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. ⁶ The land of Egypt is at your disposal; settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land, let them live in the land of Goshen; and if you know any capable men among them, then put them in charge of my livestock."

⁷ Then Joseph brought his father Jacob and presented him to Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ⁸ Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How many years have you lived?” ⁹ So Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The years of my sojourning are one hundred and thirty; few and unpleasant have been the years of my life, nor have they attained the years that my fathers lived during the days of their sojourning.” ¹⁰ And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from his presence. ¹¹ So Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had ordered. ¹² Joseph provided his father and his brothers and all his father’s household with food, according to their little ones.

¹³ Now there was no food in all the land, because the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. ¹⁴ Joseph gathered all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan for the grain which they bought, and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh’s house. ¹⁵ When the money was all spent in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, “Give us food, for why should we die in your presence? For our money is gone.” ¹⁶ Then Joseph said, “Give up your livestock, and I will give you food for your livestock, since your money is gone.” ¹⁷ So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses and the flocks and the herds and the donkeys; and he fed them with food in exchange for all their livestock that year. ¹⁸ When that year was ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, “We will not hide from my lord that our money is all spent, and the cattle are my lord’s. There is nothing left for

my lord except our bodies and our lands. ¹⁹ Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food, and we and our land will be slaves to Pharaoh. So give us seed, that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be desolate.”

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for every Egyptian sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. Thus the land became Pharaoh’s. ²¹ As for the people, he removed them to the cities from one end of Egypt’s border to the other. ²² Only the land of the priests he did not buy, for the priests had an allotment from Pharaoh, and they lived off the allotment which Pharaoh gave them. Therefore, they did not sell their land. ²³ Then Joseph said to the people, “Behold, I have today bought you and your land for Pharaoh; now, here is seed for you, and you may sow the land. ²⁴ At the harvest you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four-fifths shall be your own for seed of the field and for your food and for those of your households and as food for your little ones.” ²⁵ So they said, “You have saved our lives! Let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s slaves.” ²⁶ Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt valid to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh’s.

²⁷ Now Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in Goshen, and they acquired property in it and were fruitful and became very numerous. ²⁸ Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the length of Jacob’s life was one hundred and forty-seven years.

²⁹ When the time for Israel to die drew near, he called his son Joseph and

said to him, "Please, if I have found favor in your sight, place now your hand under my thigh and deal with me in kindness and faithfulness. Please do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰ but when I lie down with my fathers, you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place." And he said, "I will do as you have said." ³¹ He said, "Swear to me." So he swore to him. Then Israel bowed in worship at the head of the bed.

Now it came about after these things that Joseph was told, "Behold, your father is sick." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. ² When it was told to Jacob, "Behold, your son Joseph has come to you," Israel collected his strength and sat up in the bed. ³ Then Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, ⁴ and He said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.' ⁵ Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. ⁶ But your offspring that have been born after them shall be yours; they shall be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance. ⁷ Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died, to my sorrow, in the land of Canaan on the journey, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

⁸ When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" ⁹ Joseph said

to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." So he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." ¹⁰ Now the eyes of Israel were so dim from age that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. ¹¹ Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well." ¹² Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground. ¹³ Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. ¹⁴ But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. ¹⁵ He blessed Joseph, and said,

"The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,
¹⁶ The angel who has redeemed me from all evil,
Bless the lads;
And may my name live on in them,
And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;
And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

¹⁷ When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head."

¹⁹ But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also will

become a people and he also will be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.”²⁰ He blessed them that day, saying,

“By you Israel will pronounce blessing, saying,
‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!’”

Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.²¹ Then Israel said to Joseph, “Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers.²² I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.”

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

After reconciling with Joseph and returning to the land of Canaan, the brothers and their father, Jacob, and many others (70 in total) collect their things and travel to Egypt. Upon arrival, Joseph introduces his family to Pharaoh, and Jacob responds to Pharaoh’s warm greeting by blessing Pharaoh. After Joseph leads Egypt through the famine and as Jacob’s life comes to an end, Jacob begins blessing his 12 sons by first blessing Joseph (48:15) by blessing his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

QUESTIONS

1. What made Jacob so confident that he’d survive the journey to see Joseph in Egypt (46:1–7)?

2. Why does chapter 46 include the names of everyone that traveled to Egypt?

3. How does Pharaoh respond when first meeting Jacob and the brothers?

4. Why does Jacob bless Joseph's sons? And why does the narrative give so much attention to this scene?

5. Jacob's last words to Joseph include reassurance that God will bring His people back to the land of Canaan—why does Jacob spend his final words emphasizing this point?

PRAYING GENESIS 46–48

- *God sustains the lives of His people to accomplish His purposes through them.ell.*
- *God desires not only to save individuals but that entire families would come to be saved—thus, worshiping Him as the one true God.*
- *God will destroy this world and create a new heaven and earth for His people to dwell in.*

LESSON 14 | *Genesis 49–50*

SCRIPTURE READING

Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, “Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come.

² “Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob;
And listen to Israel your father.

³ “Reuben, you are my firstborn;
My might and the beginning of my strength,
Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.

⁴ “Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence,
Because you went up to your father’s bed;
Then you defiled it—he went up to my couch.

⁵ “Simeon and Levi are brothers;
Their swords are implements of violence.

⁶ “Let my soul not enter into their council;
Let not my glory be united with their assembly;
Because in their anger they slew men,
And in their self-will they lamed oxen.

⁷ “Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel.
I will disperse them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.

⁸ “Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
Your father’s sons shall bow down to you.
⁹ “Judah is a lion’s whelp;
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He couches, he lies down as a lion,
And as a lion, who dares rouse him up?
¹⁰ “The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet,
Until Shiloh comes,
And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
¹¹ “He ties his foal to the vine,
And his donkey’s colt to the choice vine;
He washes his garments in wine,
And his robes in the blood of grapes.
¹² “His eyes are dull from wine,
And his teeth white from milk.
¹³ “Zebulun will dwell at the seashore;
And he shall be a haven for ships,
And his flank shall be toward Sidon.
¹⁴ “Issachar is a strong donkey,
Lying down between the sheepfolds.
¹⁵ “When he saw that a resting place was good
And that the land was pleasant,
He bowed his shoulder to bear burdens,

And became a slave at forced labor.
¹⁶ “Dan shall judge his people,
As one of the tribes of Israel.
¹⁷ “Dan shall be a serpent in the way,
A horned snake in the path,
That bites the horse’s heels,
So that his rider falls backward.
¹⁸ “For Your salvation I wait, O Lord.
¹⁹ “As for Gad, raiders shall raid him,
But he will raid at their heels.
²⁰ “As for Asher, his food shall be rich,
And he will yield royal dainties.
²¹ “Naphtali is a doe let loose,
He gives beautiful words.
²² “Joseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a spring;
Its branches run over a wall.
²³ “The archers bitterly attacked him,
And shot at him and harassed him;
²⁴ But his bow remained firm,
And his arms were agile,
From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob

(From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),

²⁵ From the God of your father who helps you,

And by the Almighty who blesses you

With blessings of heaven above,

Blessings of the deep that lies beneath,

Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

²⁶ “The blessings of your father

Have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors

Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills;

May they be on the head of Joseph,

And on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.

²⁷ “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;

In the morning he devours the prey,

And in the evening he divides the spoil.”

²⁸ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him. ²⁹ Then he charged them and said to them, “I am about to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site. ³¹ There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah, there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there I buried Leah— ³² the field and the cave that is in it, purchased from the sons of Heth.” ³³ When Jacob

finished charging his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

Then Joseph fell on his father’s face, and wept over him and kissed him.

² Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

⁴ When the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ ‘My father made me swear, saying, “Behold, I am about to die; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.” Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.’” ⁶ Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.”

⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸ and all the household of Joseph and his brothers and his father’s household; they left only their little ones and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen. ⁹ There also went up with him both chariots and horsemen; and it was a very great company. ¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he ob-

served seven days mourning for his father. ¹¹ Now when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning for the Egyptians.” Therefore it was named Abel-mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

¹² Thus his sons did for him as he had charged them; ¹³ for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field for a burial site from Ephron the Hittite. ¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

¹⁵ When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!” ¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father charged before he died, saying, ¹⁷ ‘Thus you shall say to Joseph, “Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong.”’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in God’s place? ²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. ²¹ So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

²² Now Joseph stayed in Egypt, he and his father’s household, and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. ²³ Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim’s sons; also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph’s knees. ²⁴ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.” ²⁵ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here.” ²⁶ So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

SCRIPTURE SUMMARY

After blessing Joseph and his two sons, Jacob blesses his remaining sons, including extended blessings to Joseph (the leader of the brothers) and Judah (the eventual leader of the brothers). Chapter 49 ends with the death of Jacob, who, like Abraham and Isaac, is gathered to his people. With Jacob gone and the brothers troubled, Joseph reassures them that true and lasting reconciliation is in fact a reality and they do not need to fear him. Joseph acknowledges that God, by His sovereign and providential workings, has permitted evil—the brothers’ treatment of Joseph—for His good purposes, the saving of the nation of Israel and Egypt (50:20).

QUESTIONS

1. Why are Jacob's blessings on Joseph (49:22–26) and Judah (49:8–12) much longer than on the other brothers?

2. What does it mean that “The scepter shall not depart from Judah” (49:10)? How does this passage connect to Jesus Christ?

3. Why did the brothers think that Joseph might harm them after Jacob died?

4. Although 50:20 summarizes Joseph's situation, how does it ultimately summarize the entire book of Genesis?

5. After Joseph dies and is buried, notice that 50:20's final word is “Egypt.” What is the significance in light of Genesis 12:1–3? How does this connect Genesis and Exodus?

PRAYING GENESIS 49–50

- *God promises eternal life for all those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ—they will spend eternity with Him in heaven.*
- *God works all things for both His glory and the good and growth of His people.*
- *God and His redemptive plan continue to be worked out according to His will—and this plan will culminate in the return of Christ, followed by a 1,000 year kingdom and the creation of a new heaven and earth.*