



# GENESIS HISTORY

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# Life Group Questions



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- Head: Joseph is a typology of his greatest nephew: Jesus.
- Jacob's lifelong **HARDSHIPS** didn't **HARDEN** his heart, as he blesses others to the very end.
- God's **FAVOR** and **FORTUNE** is so phenomenal, His people can **FLOURISH** in the midst of a **FAMINE**. (Genesis 47)



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- ✿ **Heart:** (1) How can we **intentionally** prevent life's hardships from hardening our hearts, following Jacob's example of blessing others despite experiencing 20+ major adversities throughout his life?
- ✿ (2) What does it mean to view our lives as a 'pilgrimage' rather than a permanent settlement, and how should this perspective **shape** our daily decisions and priorities?  
(Genesis 47)



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- **Heart:** (3) How can we **prepare** now to grow old with grace and joy rather than becoming bitter and difficult, especially as we face the inevitable losses that come with aging?
- (4) How should the generous treatment of Jacob's family as immigrants in Egypt **inform** how Christians today respond to immigration issues and the treatment of foreigners in our own country?

(Genesis 47)



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- **Heart:** (5) What does Joseph's request that Jacob swear by placing his hand under his genitals reveal about the significance of covenant promises in ancient Israel, and how do we **honor** sacred commitments today?

(Genesis 47)



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- Hands: Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:
  - Option 1: **The Blessing Challenge** —
    - Identify someone who has hurt you or a situation that has hardened your heart.
    - Intentionally bless that person this week (through prayer, a note, an act of service, or words).
    - Journal about how it feels to bless despite the hurt.
  - Option 2: **The Immigrant/Outsider Challenge** —
    - Research one way your church or community serves immigrants, refugees, or outsiders.
    - Commit to one concrete action: volunteer, donate, educate yourself, or advocate.
    - Share what you learned with your small group next week. (Genesis 47)



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- ❖ **Hands:** Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:
- ❖ **Option 3: The Gratitude in Hardship Challenge —**
  - ❖ List your current hardships or difficulties.
  - ❖ For each one, write one way God is still blessing you or one way you can bless others despite it.
  - ❖ Pray specifically that your hardships won't harden your heart.
- ❖ **Option 4: The Planning to Age Well Challenge —**
  - ❖ Have an honest conversation with a trusted friend or family member about what kind of patriarch or matriarch you want to be.
  - ❖ Write down 3-5 character qualities you want to maintain as you age.
  - ❖ Pray and ask God to help you "grow old with grace".

(Genesis 47)



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# Five Day Devotional

# Day 1: Blessing Beyond Bitterness

Reading: Genesis 47:7-10; Hebrews 12:15

- ❖ Devotional: Jacob stood before Pharaoh after 130 years of hardship—family betrayal, deception, loss, and grief. Yet twice he blessed the most powerful man in the world. His suffering hadn't hardened his heart into bitterness. How remarkable that after cataloging twenty major hardships, Jacob still had blessing to give!
- ❖ The writer of Hebrews warns us about roots of bitterness that defile many. Hardship is **inevitable**, but bitterness is **optional**. Jacob teaches us that we can choose **grace** over **grudges**, blessing over resentment. As you age and face losses—mobility, independence, loved ones—will you become crotchety or gracious?
- ❖ Today, identify one hardship that threatens to harden your heart. Ask God to soften it so you can bless others even from your pain.

# Day 2: Life as Pilgrimage

## Reading: Genesis 47:9; 1 Peter 2:11; Hebrews 11:13-16

- 📍 Devotional: "My pilgrimage has lasted 130 years," Jacob told Pharaoh. He never settled permanently—born in Beer-lahai-roi, moved to Gerar, Beersheba, Haran for twenty years, Succoth, Shechem, Bethel, Hebron, and finally Egypt. Constant transition marked his existence.
- 📍 Peter calls believers "foreigners and exiles" on earth. Like Jacob, we're passing through. This world isn't our permanent address; **heaven** is our true **home**. This perspective transforms how we hold possessions, relationships, and circumstances. When we grip too tightly to earthly things, transitions devastate us.
- 📍 Jacob's pilgrim mindset prepared him to bless Pharaoh and trust God through instability. Are you holding something too tightly today? What would change if you truly embraced your identity as a pilgrim? Let go and trust the God who guides pilgrims home.

# Day 3: Joseph, Our Savior's Shadow

Reading: Genesis 47:13-25; John 6:35; Colossians 1:13-14

- ❖ Devotional: The Egyptians cried to Joseph, "You have saved our lives!" Through wisdom and provision, Joseph rescued a dying world from famine. He foreshadows Jesus, who saves not just from **physical** famine but **spiritual** death.
- ❖ Both were beloved sons, sent to brothers who rejected them. Both suffered unjustly before being exalted to the right hand of power. Both invited families into blessing they couldn't earn. Joseph provided bread for survival; Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life."
- ❖ The Egyptians gladly surrendered everything—silver, livestock, land, even their freedom—to Joseph for salvation. Have you surrendered everything to Jesus? He doesn't **exploit**; He **liberates**. True freedom comes through belonging completely to Him. Today, what are you still withholding from your Savior?

# Day 4: Flourishing in Famine

## Reading: Genesis 47:27; Psalm 1:1-3; Jeremiah 17:7-8

- Ｒ Devotional: While Egypt contracted under famine's grip, Genesis records something astonishing: "Israel...became fruitful and very numerous." Surrounded by death, scarcity, and suffering, God's people multiplied and prospered. This wasn't natural—it was supernatural favor.
- Ｒ Psalm 1 promises that those rooted in God's Word are "like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither." Even in **famine**, God's people **flourish**.
- Ｒ You may be surrounded by contraction—financial stress, relational drought, emotional depletion. Everything around you seems to be dying. But God can make you fruitful in famine. His grace enables **thriving** when others are merely **surviving**. Your flourishing in difficulty becomes a testimony to His faithfulness. What "famine" surrounds you today? Ask God to make you fruitfully fruitful right there.

# Day 5: Anchored by Covenant Promises

Reading: Genesis 47:28-31; 2 Corinthians 5:1-8; Philippians 3:20-21

- ❖ Devotional: Dying in Egypt, Jacob made Joseph swear to bury him in Canaan's Promised Land. Though he lived seventeen comfortable years in Egypt, Jacob knew it wasn't home. The oath, taken by placing hands under Jacob's genitals, invoked the covenant sign of circumcision—God's promise to Abraham's descendants.
- ❖ Jacob's final request reveals what anchored his soul: **covenant promises**, not **current comfort**. Egypt offered security, but Canaan held God's promises. Paul echoed this: "Our citizenship is in heaven."
- ❖ Where is your true home? Are you more invested in earthly comfort or eternal promises? Like Jacob, we must live with one foot already in our true homeland. Death isn't tragedy for those anchored in covenant promises—it's going home. Today, evaluate: are you living for temporary **Egyptian pleasures** or eternal **Canaan promises**?

# Closing Prayer Prompt

“Master, give us hearts that remain soft and blessing-focused despite hardships. Also, give us wisdom and compassion in how we treat immigrants and outsiders. May Your favor help us flourish even in ‘famine’ seasons. Finally, give us grace to grow old with joy, not bitterness.”



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