

# GENESIS

PART 4

*God of Joseph*

## PART 4 - GOD OF JOSEPH

Week 25: DREAMER - Gen 37-38

Week 26: PRISON - Gen 39-40

Week 27: PALACE - Gen 41-42

Week 28: BROTHERS - Gen 43-44

Week 29: RESTORED - Gen 45-47

Week 30: GRACE - Gen 48-50

*You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good,*

## INTRODUCTION

We pick up in Joseph's story having established God as the creator and sustainer of the universe. When sin entered the world God promised Eve that from her offspring there would rise One who would rescue all creation from the curse of sin and set all things right (Genesis 3).

God's plan of rescue is established through the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God takes imperfect, ordinary, unremarkable men and women and He loves them, shepherds them, and molds them back into his likeness. He demonstrates His Grace in real and tangible ways with real and very human people. He has shown He will never leave or forsake His creation. So great is His faithfulness! So dependable His promises!

As you begin your study of Genesis 37-50 keep in mind that while much of the spotlight will be on Joseph, these chapters give 'the account of Jacob' and his children. (37:1-2) The events recorded provide insight into how individuals in this family develop in their character and relationship with God over time.

## DREAMS & VISIONS

We see dreams and visions used in scripture and in life when God's word is not available. The dreams point to God's power rather than anything special about a person and their purpose is to bring glory to God as His sovereignty and character are revealed. Some dreams in scripture are given to reveal God's will and to guide His people. Others are given to those outside the Hebrew people – those who do not know God or acknowledge His presence.

### Examples in Scripture:

Abimelech - Gen 20:3-7

Laban - Gen 31:24

Pharaoh's servants - Gen 40:5-19

Midianite - Jdg 7:13-15

Nebuchadnezzar - Dan 2:1, 4:5,8

Joseph - Mat 1:20,21; 2:13,19,20

John - Mat 3:13-17

Pilate's wife - Mat 27:19

Saul & Ananias - Acts 9:3-19

Paul – Acts 16:9-10; 18:9-11; 27:23-25

John – the book of Revelation.

Jacob - Gen 28:12; 31:10

Joseph - Gen 37:5-9

Pharaoh - Gen 41:1-7;

Solomon - 1Ki 3:5-15;

Daniel - Dan 7:1-28

Wise men - Mat 2:11,12;

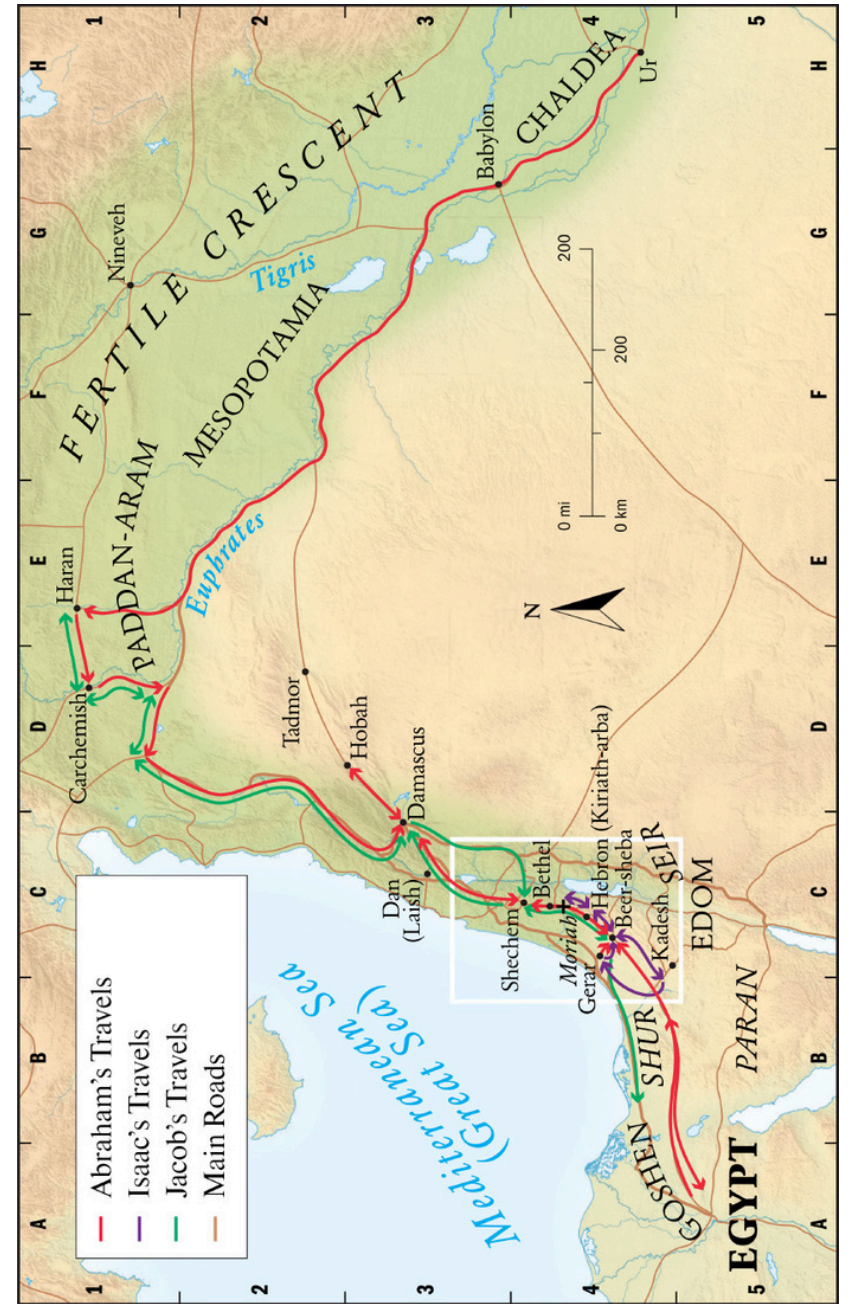
Disciples - Mat 17:1-13

Stephen - Acts 7:54-58

Peter – Acts 10, 11:4-18

**A word of caution:** We must be on guard against anything that distorts the gospel and promotes idolatry. All throughout scripture we are warned against false teaching and false prophets. In this country we have resources to cultivate knowing God through His word and we must be faithful to saturate our lives with regular study and application of the Bible, to prayer, and to fellowship with other Christians. We must weigh everything against God's character, work and His call to *love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love your neighbors as yourself*. **Please read Deut 13:1-5, 18:9-14, & 1 Peter 1:12-2:22**





# DREAMER

Gen 37-38

## PREPARE

Long ago Jacob deceived his father Isaac with a robe and food from a slaughtered goat. Now his sons deceive him with a coat and blood from a slaughtered goat. Jacob's family knows the true and living God, yet their sin patterns seem at times to be much stronger than their faith. Over the course of this story we will begin to recognize a contrast between two of the brothers. Young and immature Joseph has been spared hard work raised as the favored firstborn son of Rachel, the wife Jacob loves. Joseph starts out with dreams of power and a princely coat and ends up exiled from his family when he is sold into slavery. As a shepherd, Judah knows hard work and is the fourth son of Leah, the wife Jacob rejects. He chooses to leave his family and settle among the Canaanites. Through it all the Lord's providential hand, strengthening presence, and unchanging Grace are at work.

Pray  
asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand God's word.

Read Genesis 37-38  
and answer the following questions.

How did Jacob's sons feel about Joseph. Why?

How old is Joseph? Why do you think God gave Joseph the dreams? Does it appear Joseph knew what the dreams meant?

What kind of report did Joseph give about his brothers?

Which brothers acted on Joseph's behalf? What did they do to spare his life?

Who did Judah marry?

Why do Judah's sons die?

Who was Judah's mother? Why did she name him Judah?(Gen 29:35)  
Does it appear that Judah shares his mother's faith? Explain.

How does Tamar protect herself? How does God honor Tamar?  
(see Matthew 1:3)

**Read through Genesis 37-38 again.**

What does this passage reveal about Joseph, Jacob, Judah, and Tamar's character?

The promised seed is to come through Abraham's family. What do you think God is revealing about Himself with His choice of Judah and Tamar?

*What profit is it for us to kill our brother?*

# ATTEND

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# REFLECT

What is your main takeaway from this passage?

What challenged you or encouraged you?

What did you learn about the character of God?

How did this week's study affect your perspective on God, yourself, and/or your life?

How does God intervene in ways unknown to the people at the time?

# ACT

Note **one specific thing** you can do this week to put into practice what you learned from this passage?

Note **one specific person** you can share something you learned with.

Name **one specific change** you will make in how you relate more deeply to God who **Intervenes**.

Who will you tell so they can support you as you act on God's word?



# PRISON

Gen 39-40

## PREPARE

God's presence with Joseph in Egypt is having an impact on his conduct and character. He resists multiple advances from a powerful woman and suffers greatly for it. Somehow away from his family Joseph is able to break some unhealthy patterns of deceit and develop a true relationship with his God. In this pagan land of Egypt we are told repeatedly that God is with him there. At the same time Joseph is a slave and is imprisoned even though he is innocent of wrongdoing. How is it possible that God can be with a person yet allow him to suffer so much? And in the face of injustice how does one remain steadfast and not lose heart or lose faith? Endurance comes from the presence and comfort of Almighty God, the strength He supplies and His Grace all sufficient.

Pray

asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand God's word.

Read Genesis 39-40  
and answer the following questions.

What type of slavery was Joseph sold into? Why was Joseph successful in Potiphar's house?

What core values of Joseph caused him to resist the advances of Potiphar's wife? How and where do you think Joseph developed these values?

How many times and in what circumstances do you find the phrase; "The Lord was with Joseph"?

Summarize the cupbearer and baker's dreams:

Who do interpretations belong to? How then would Joseph know what the dreams meant?

What did Joseph ask the cupbearer to do for him? How was Joseph's request answered?

**Read through Genesis 39-40 again.**

What insights into Joseph's character are given in these chapters? How would these trials impact Joseph as a leader?

What do we learn about Pharaoh's character from these chapters?

What truths about God do you find?

*and the Lord was with Joseph.*

# ATTEND

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# REFLECT

What is your main takeaway from this passage?

What challenged you or encouraged you?

What did you learn about the character of God?

How did this week's study affect your perspective on God, yourself, and/or your life?

What are some good strategies for dealing with persistent temptation that continues day after day?

# ACT

Note **one specific thing** you can do this week to put into practice what you learned from this passage?

Note **one specific person** you can share something you learned with.

Name **one specific change** you will make in how you relate more deeply to God who **Gives Strength**.

Who will you tell so they can support you as you act on God's word?



# PALACE

Gen 41-42

## PREPARE

After being forgotten in prison for two years, Joseph finds himself standing before Pharaoh, an extremely powerful man thought to be descended from the gods. And yet when Joseph stands before him he does not seek to advance his own interests or take any glory for himself. Instead he gives all glory to the true God and gives counsel for the help of others. God gives Joseph wisdom with a plan to preserve life during a great famine and gives wisdom for bringing about true reconciliation with his brothers. Joseph begins the reconciliation process with a series of tests that will reveal how his brothers have or have not changed. Joseph himself has experienced his relationship with God develop over time thru trying circumstances and will need God's help with this new trial of great power and seeing his brothers again.

### Pray

asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand God's word.

Read Genesis 41-42  
and answer the following questions.

Dreams are given to people who do not acknowledge nor worship God. These dreams show future events and need interpretation to be understood. Why would God work in this way?

Which verses mention God and what do you learn from them?

What five things does Joseph tell Pharaoh to do?

List phrases that describe Joseph's position. How old is he?

When Joseph recognized his brothers and remembered his childhood dream – what was his response? Why do you think he behaves this way?

Who does Joseph confess that he fears? Why would this be important for his brothers to know?

What could be accomplished with the tasks given to his brothers?

Why do you think Joseph choose Simeon to keep in custody?

**Read through Genesis 41-42 again.**

What has grief and suffering produced in Jacob? In Joseph's brothers? In Joseph?

*I cannot do it...but God will give Pharaoh the answer*

# ATTEND

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# REFLECT

What is your main takeaway from this passage?

What challenged you or encouraged you?

What did you learn about the character of God?

How did this week's study affect your perspective on God, yourself, and/or your life?

# ACT

Note **one specific thing** you can do this week to put into practice what you learned from this passage?

Note **one specific person** you can share something you learned with.

Name **one specific change** you will make in how you relate more deeply to God who **Empowers**.

Who will you tell so they can support you as you act on God's word?



# BROTHERS

Gen 43-44

## PREPARE

Through a series of tasks Joseph's brothers reveal who they are now, thirteen years later, and how far he can trust them. In order for true reconciliation in this family there must be sincere forgiveness on one side and repentance demonstrated by humble confession of sin and change in behaviour on the other side. All of which takes time as trust is built and wounds are healed. Judah's character seems to have come a long way since his sin with Tamar. He takes personal responsibility for his youngest brother, Jacob's new favored son, Benjamin. Before, Judah encouraged his brothers to sell Joseph into slavery in Egypt and let Jacob believe he was dead. Now, Judah offers himself in Egypt as a slave in place of his brother, so Benjamin can return home to his father who treasures him.

Pray

asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand God's word.

Read Genesis 43-44  
and answer the following questions.

How does Jacob use a tactic similar to the one he used prior to meeting Esau?

Do these brothers trust Joseph? Does Joseph trust his brothers?  
Explain.

From Gen 43:23 Why do you think Joseph credits God for the brother's silver?

Why does Joseph need to remove himself (43:30)

Why couldn't Egyptians eat with Hebrews? In light of this, what do you find surprising about Joseph rising to the position he has?

Summarize all the 'tests' Joseph has put his brothers through.

**Read through Genesis 43-44 again.**

What do you find most moving in Judah's statements.

What do these chapters reveal about the change in character of Jacob's sons, especially Judah, Joseph, & Benjamin.

*Joseph recognized his brothers and remembered his dreams.*

## ATTEND

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## REFLECT

What is most meaningful to you regarding the process by which growth, maturity, and reconciliation happen?

What is your main takeaway from this passage?

What challenged you or encouraged you?

What did you learn about the character of God?

How did this week's study affect your perspective on God, yourself, and/or your life?

## ACT

Note **one specific thing** you can do this week to put into practice what you learned from this passage?

Note **one specific person** you can share something you learned with.

Name **one specific change** you will make in how you relate more deeply to God who **Reconciles**.

Who will you tell so they can support you as you act on God's word?



# RESTORED

Gen 45-47

## PREPARE

The long tense back and forth with these brothers finally comes to a good and satisfying end! Twice now Joseph has wept privately, but this time he weeps publically and declares to his brothers; *"I am Joseph!"* He invites them to move in closely and they embrace one another through tears. And then they talk! When Joseph was a teenager living at home his brothers hated him so much they couldn't even speak to him. (37:4) But now that they have been forgiven and reconciled, a new relationship is forming. There are five years of famine still to come, but this family will spend it together, protected and provided for through God's providential *'working all things for their good.'* Joseph shows us what God can do with a life in the midst of hard circumstances and evil schemes.

### Pray

asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand God's word.

Read Genesis 45-47  
and answer the following questions.

What difficult circumstance has created opportunity for this family to be together again?

What do Joseph's words reveal about who he credits for both the good and bad in his life?

What command does Joseph give his brothers? (vs. 24)

Where is Jacob when God speaks to him? What is the significance.

List the four promises God gives Jacob.

In light of what transpired when Abraham & Isaac went to Egypt during previous famines, what makes this time different?

How large has Jacob's family now become?

How is the Egyptians' feelings toward shepherds a protection for Jacob's family?

How old is Jacob and how does Jacob describe his life?

**Read through Genesis 45-47 again.**

How long did Jacob live in Egypt?

When facing his death, what concerns him?

*do not be afraid . . . I will go with you to Egypt*

# ATTEND

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# REFLECT

What is your main takeaway from this passage?

What challenged you or encouraged you?

What did you learn about the character of God?

How did this week's study affect your perspective on God, yourself, and/or your life?

# ACT

Note **one specific thing** you can do this week to put into practice what you learned from this passage?

Note **one specific person** you can share something you learned with.

Name **one specific change** you will make in how you relate more deeply to God who **Safeguards life**.

Who will you tell so they can support you as you act on God's word?



# GRACE

Gen 48-50

## PREPARE

*"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for."*  
(Heb 11:1) At the end of his life, we come to the place where Jacob's faith is commended and recorded in the New Testament. Without reservation he blesses Joseph's younger son ahead of the firstborn and worships God. He makes arrangements for his body to be *'buried with my fathers'* in the cave Abraham purchased in the land of Canaan. After Jacob's death Joseph reassures his brothers of his complete forgiveness and reminds them of God's promises, presence, and protection. These men did not live perfect lives but nothing was beyond God's redemptive power. So many times God overruled and intervened on their behalf, giving grace upon grace!

### Pray

asking the Holy Spirit to help you understand God's word.

Read Genesis 48-50  
and answer the following questions.

Which words describe Judah as powerful and predict Jesus will be part of his lineage? What do these words tell us about Jesus?

How do Jacob's final instructions show his faith in God's promise to him in Genesis 28:4, 13-15?

What insight does Matthew 22: 31-32 give regarding death?

Who else is buried in the cave Abraham bought?

How many days did the Egyptians grieve for Jacob? How many days of mourning did the family spend near the Jordan?

What did Joseph's brothers fear once Jacob dies? Explain.

What enables Joseph to forgive? How does understanding God's sovereignty influence Joseph's perspective of his life?

What instructions does Joseph give to his brothers before he dies?

### Read Genesis 48-50 again

Six times we've seen Joseph weep. Can you recall each circumstance that produced his tears? What does this tell you about God's view of tears? (see also John 11:35)

List all the names for God you find in these chapters.

*God will surely come to your aid.*

# ATTEND

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# REFLECT

What is your main takeaway from this passage?

What challenged you or encouraged you?

What did you learn about the character of God?

How did this week's study affect your perspective on God, yourself, and/or your life?

# ACT

Note **one specific thing** you can do this week to put into practice what you learned from this passage?

Note **one specific person** you can share something you learned with.

Name **one specific change** you will make in how you relate more deeply to God our **Shepherd**.

Who will you tell so they can support you as you act on God's word?



## SUMMARY OF PART 4

Take a moment to reflect and note your main takeaways.

Review the attributes and concepts (next page). Which have impacted your perspectives the most?

How has your understanding of forgiveness deepened through your study of Joseph and his family?

Joseph spent much of his life rejected and alone. How did God meet him in his hardship and suffering?

***The transformation of a family:*** Thru injustice, hardship, and loneliness, though cast aside and forgotten, Joseph holds on to the God who is with him and grows into a man of integrity who saves many lives. Judah responds to rebuke with repentance and begins to show loyalty and love to his family, without any change of affection from his father. Jacob seems to wallow in self pity and grief, harming his family with his favoritism towards Rachel and her sons only. But at the very end of his life he leads with faith; demonstrating trust in what he cannot see and certainty of what he hopes for. We close out this book of beginnings with God's promises to Abraham incomplete. His 'children' are settled in Egypt, nowhere near the land God promised. But they have hope of His promises and knowledge of His faithful presence. They too will live imperfect lives but God will remain steadfast in His commitment to them. It has and will always be His Grace at work, God's gift and not mankind's works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

## KNOWING CHRIST

During the time of the early church Stephen answers his accusers in part with a summary of Genesis 12-50. Read his answer in Acts 7 and write a summary of your own, connecting to Jesus as appropriate.

Part 1: God of the world. Genesis 1-11

Part 2: God of Abraham & Isaac. Genesis 12-26

Part 3: God of Jacob. Genesis 27-36

Part 4: God of Joseph. Genesis 37-50

## MAKING CHRIST KNOWN.

As followers of Jesus, we may never be called to lead a nation, but all of us are commissioned to make disciples. (Mat 28:18-20) Don't let all you've gained be in vain – continue to put into practice your new understanding, perspectives, and priorities and bring another along with you. Sharing with others is one of the best ways to retain what you learn. You have been equipped through midweek teaching, your own personal study, and Jesus' promise to be with you. Go forth and share in His kingdom work of making His name and character known! Study books are always available free of charge. To request copies email [melony.lucas@gracecomm.org](mailto:melony.lucas@gracecomm.org)

# GOD'S ATTRIBUTES FOUND IN GENESIS

## PART 1 -GOD OF THE WORLD

- Creator (Gen 1:1-2:3 CREATION)
- Gives Life (Gen 2:4-25 HUMANKIND)
- Pursues (Gen 3 FALLEN)
- Warns (Gen 4-5 HUMANITY)
- Rescues (Gen 6-8 FLOOD)
- Promise Keeper (Gen 9 COVENANT)
- Intervenes (Gen 10-11 BABEL)

## PART 2 - GOD OF ABRAHAM & ISAAC

- Calls (Gen 12 CALLED)
- Reassures (Gen 13-14 GOING)
- Shield & Great Reward (Gen 15 COVENANT)
- Sees (Gen 16-17 COMMITMENT)
- Draws Near (Gen 18 CONVERSATION)
- Judges Sin (Gen 19 CONSEQUENCES)
- Promise Keeper (Gen 20-21 LAUGHTER)
- Provides (Gen 22 TESTED)
- Guides (Gen 23-24 PROVISION)
- With Us (Gen 25-26 COVENANT)

## PART 3 - GOD OF JACOB

- Prevails (Gen 27 BLESSING)
- Accessible (Gen 28-29 COVENANT)
- Overcomes (Gen 30 MESSY)
- Commits (Gen 31-32:21 RETURN)
- Clobbers (Gen 32:22-33 WRESTLE)
- Restores (Gen 34-36 COVENANT)

## PART 4 - GOD OF JOSEPH

- Intervenes (Gen 37-38 DREAMER)
- Gives Strength (Gen 39-40 PRISON)
- Empowers (Gen 41-42 PALACE)
- Reconciles (Gen 43-44 BROTHERS)
- Safeguards (Gen 45-47 RESTORED)
- Shepherds (Gen 48-50 GRACE)

*God has been my shepherd all my life to this day.*

