

**GENE**

THE FOUNDATION OF EVERYTHING

**S I S**

**J O S**

GOD HAS A PLAN

**E P H**

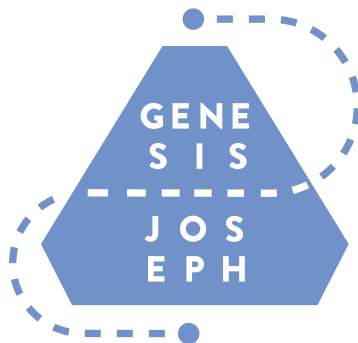


**BROOKSIDE  
CHURCH**

# A BIG THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING...

The following people helped contribute to this project by writing questions: Sandy Blank, David Branson, Olivia Brown, Tim Hodges, Josh Klein, Rosenda Ovalle, Ryan Pramberg, Duane Russell, Kallie Skaggs, and Jessica Tippery. So many others served as a sounding board for ideas and lending another set of eyes on the resource.

Thanks for making this fun, and bringing your gifts to the table! Thanks also to Brian Johnson at A Design Concern for turning some raw content into this amazing booklet and to David Schomer, for his photography.



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# INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS (AND THIS RESOURCE)

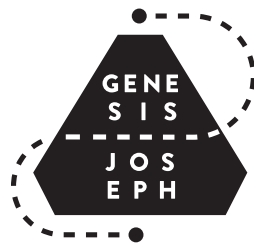
## MAKING THE MOST OF THIS RESOURCE — THE “WHY?” AND THE “HOW?”

One of Brookside’s core values is “Biblical Authority” — we find truth, direction, and inspiration in the Bible. In line with this value, we want to do our best to aid people in the study of God’s Word in a way that **helps people find and follow Jesus** together. This booklet is designed to do just that. Use the beginning of this booklet to familiarize yourself with the storyline of Genesis and then dive in! Each session is divided into 3 sections.



1. Personal study (labeled **study questions**) — questions you’re encouraged to think through and complete before the message on the passage.
2. Message notes — space for you to jot down points from the sermon, take-aways you don’t want to miss, etc.
3. Group discussion (labeled **discussion questions**) — designed for after the sermon has been watched or listened to. Not in a group? Find out more at [www.brookside.net/groups](http://www.brookside.net/groups).

The booklet is designed to coincide with the sermon series on Genesis at Brookside church for the Fall of 2022 but can easily be used independently of it as well. Finally, as you answer the questions in the book remember that this is not a quiz. The questions are not designed to find “right answers” but to aid you in the study of God’s Word.



## **GETTING TO KNOW THE BOOK OF GENESIS**

The book of Genesis is the very first book of the Bible — found in the Old Testament, the section of the Bible that occurs before the arrival of Jesus Christ. (If you need help finding Genesis, check out the Table of Contents at the beginning of the Bible and that’ll help direct you.)

## **HERE’S A QUICK OVERVIEW OF THE STORYLINE OF THE BIBLE:**

(We include this here to help you see the context of the whole Bible at a glance, even though this resource focuses on Genesis.)

The Bible begins with the sovereign and good God making everything “good,” including the creation of humanity in His own image with great dignity and purpose. Very quickly, however, humanity chooses to rebel against God through sin. Our persistent sinfulness and need for a Savior is a drumbeat of the Old Testament. Graciously, God doesn’t abandon His people. He shares His plan of promise (see Genesis 3:15 and 12:1-3), and provides ways that sinful humanity can stay in relationship with Him.

God’s grace is displayed abundantly when He sends Jesus as the Messiah and Savior! Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection are the key climax of the biblical storyline. You can read about Jesus’ life and His work on the cross in any of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.



After Jesus ascended back into heaven, His mission continues in and through the church (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). The rest of the New Testament tells the story of the gospel advancing in and through God's people, the church. Even now the church around the world continues to faithfully advance Jesus' mission as a community transformed by and compelled by the gospel.

We look ahead in hope to the day Jesus returns to earth and the New Heavens and New Earth are established — the culmination of Jesus' redemptive, renewing work.

## SO WHERE DOES GENESIS COME IN?

As the very first book of the Bible starting with God's act of creation, Genesis truly is "the foundation of everything." The topics that arise so vividly in Genesis are the same topics that emerge again and again in the rest of the Bible (topics that are still so relevant to our lives today!) — topics like the sovereignty, goodness, and justice of God, the wonder of God's creation and His design for it, humanity as created in the image of God (with purpose, value, dignity, and responsibility), the sinfulness of humanity and the brokenness of creation, God's redemptive heart and His gracious promises. By understanding Genesis, we're better equipped to understand God and our world today!

The 50 chapters that make up Genesis are often broken up into two smaller sections, Genesis 1-11 and Genesis 12-50. In Genesis 1-11, we find a broad, extensive sweep of the early history of the world and God's activity in it. Genesis 1-3 records the creation of the world by the

one true God, along with the entrance of sin into the world. In these chapters we discover so much about who God is, who we are, and what's wrong with the world (and us). Genesis 1-11 also includes the true stories of Noah and the ark (chapters 6-9) and the Tower of Babel (chapter 11) — if you read these stories closely you'll see examples of both God's justice and His grace.

Genesis 12-50 then “zooms way in” and focuses predominately on God's activity in and through one family, starting with a man named Abram (or Abraham). In Genesis 12, God initiates a plan of redemption to Abraham, promising to bless “all families on earth” one day through Abraham's descendants (see Genesis 12:1-3). Abraham responds to God's amazing promise with faith (see Genesis 15:6). The book of Genesis then continues to trace God's activity through Abraham's family as it tells the story of Isaac and Jacob, ending in chapters 37-50 by focusing on how God's plan takes shape in and through the life of Joseph.



# INTERESTED IN FURTHER STUDY?

## STUDY BIBLES

- ESV Study Bible. Crossway Books, 2008.
- NIV Zondervan Study Bible. Zondervan, 2015.

## COMMENTARIES

- Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*. Baker Academic, 1998.
- Andrew E. Steinmann, *Genesis*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. IVP Academic, 2019.
- John Walton, *Genesis*. NIV Application Commentary. Zondervan, 2001.

## BOOKS ON THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

- Alistair Begg, *The Hand of God: Finding His Care in All Circumstances*. Moody Publishers, 1999.
- Charles R. Swindoll, *Joseph: A Man of Integrity and Forgiveness. Great Lives from God's Word*. Thomas Nelson, 1998.

## ONLINE

- Bible Gateway — [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)
- The Bible Project —
  - Genesis 1-11: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/genesis-1-11/>
  - Genesis 12-50: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/genesis-12-50/>



# SESSION 1



# SESSION #1

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY OLIVIA BROWN)

## READ GENESIS 1:1-31

Too often we can analyze the opening chapters of Genesis focusing only on the HOW of creation. Genesis 1 is actually even more concerned with the WHO behind creation. This passage reveals so much about God's power, His sovereignty, His goodness, His creativity, and more! In contrast to other "gods" we can be tempted toward, Genesis 1 points us toward the one true God who deserves our glad worship and willing commitment.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Make a summary of what God did and created on each day of the creation account that you can refer back to as you go through your study this week.

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2. As you were making your summaries, did you notice any patterns, repeated words/themes, or interesting word choices? Compare and contrast what happened in Days 1-3 with what happened in Days 4-6. Take some time to look into the significance of anything you noticed and be ready to discuss or ask your group about it.

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**3.** Read through Genesis 1 again and record all of the attributes of God that you see.

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**4.** In Genesis 1:26, God says, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...” Who is the word “us” referring to? For help, see Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:2; and John 1:1-3,14.

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**5.** At the end of every day, God sees that His creation is good. What is the significance of that? What do you learn about God and about creation from this story and His assessment of His own creation?

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Look through your Study Questions and Message Notes. Are there any questions that you have left unanswered or that you would like to discuss deeper together? Was there anything from the sermon that left you with a question or wanting to share how God spoke to you?
2. Share the attributes you found for Question 3 from your Study Questions and make a master list as a group. Now work as a group to identify at least three more attributes that are demonstrated in Genesis 1, but that may be less obvious and take a little more digging together to identify.
3. What are the major points of this passage? What are the points others (even Christians!) can disagree on about this passage? Do you think it is helpful to have some familiarity with and compassion for other understandings of the biblical creation story? Is it helpful for evangelism?
4. This week we are looking at God as the all powerful (or “omnipotent”) Creator of everything. Is it ever hard to reconcile His BIG mighty attributes with His personal love and individual relationship with each of us? Share with your group times when God has worked in your life in MIGHTY ways or in smaller, more individual ways.
5. How has studying who God is as Creator challenged or inspired you this week and how do you feel Him calling you to change in response?

# SESSION 2



# SESSION #2

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY JOSH KLEIN)

## READ GENESIS 1:1-2:25

This session will focus on what Genesis 1-2 teaches about God's design for humanity. We are created in God's image — everyone has dignity and worth (Gen 1:27). We are created with purpose — intended to cultivate God's creation in line with His design (Gen 1:28-30). We are created for community (see 2:18).

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. In what ways was the creation of humanity different than the rest of creation? (Compare and contrast what you see in these chapters.)

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2. Read Genesis 1:27-28. What do you think it means that God created humanity in His image?

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3. What tasks did God give humanity after He created them (in both Genesis 1 and 2)? Did He give tasks to any other living beings He created on earth?

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4. Genesis 2 ends with a small commentary on the relationship between Man and Woman (see 2:24-25). What can we discover from this commentary about the way things should be?

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5. Given the answers to the previous questions, what do you think humanity was supposed to do as perfected creation prior to sin entering the world?

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# SESSION #2

## MESSAGE NOTES

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Some might say that Genesis 1 and 2 are two completely different creation accounts. What do you think of this claim and why?
2. What major themes did you pick out of the creation account?
3. What do you think it means to be made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27-28) and how does that impact how we ought to relate to each other today?
4. What seems to be the significance behind Genesis 2:18 in the creation story? What meaning could carry over to us even today?
5. God gives humanity certain responsibilities immediately after creating them. What significance do these responsibilities reveal — given even before “the fall” into sin in Genesis 3?
6. What was the most impactful take-away from the message on this passage and why?

# SESSION 3



# SESSION #3

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY SANDY BLANK)

## READ GENESIS 3:1-24

Genesis 3 reveals what is broken and polluted with God's good creation, detailing the serpent's deception of the first couple. In this chapter we discover truth about the entrance of sin into the world, the nature of sin, the impact of sin, the extent of sin, and God's response to sin. This sober understanding of sin must remain with us today to maintain a true perspective on what is at the root of evil and what is wrong with the world still today. (And how there is hope in the midst of this!)

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Describe the difference between someone who believes in God and someone who believes God (i.e., believes what He says).

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2. Read Genesis 2:16-17 and Genesis 3:3-4. Only one of these statements can be true. What made the lie so appealing to Adam and Eve?

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3. How did the decision to disobey God's command affect Adam and Eve's relationship with Him? With each other?

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4. How does "the knowledge of good and evil" differ from what the Bible calls "wisdom" in Job 28:28 and Proverbs 1:7?

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5. Does the knowledge of evil tend to make people avoid evil or do evil? Give an example from recent headlines, or from a personal story in your own life.

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# SESSION #3

## MESSAGE NOTES

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did Adam and Eve cover themselves and attempt to hide from God? What were they afraid of?
2. Discuss the significance of God killing an animal so that Adam and Eve could be clothed.
3. God cursed the serpent and the ground. What specific punishments did He give Adam and Eve? How does this underline the seriousness of sin?
4. Adam and Eve were not allowed to eat from the tree of life. What does Revelation 22:1-5 say about the tree of life? What does the presence of the tree of life in Revelation 22 indicate?
5. What is one practical difference that a truth from this passage should make in your life this coming week?

# SESSION 4





# SESSION #4

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY ROSENDA OVALLE)

## READ GENESIS 12:1-3

Between Genesis 3 and Genesis 12, chapters 4-11 recount the hopeless situation of life apart from God: murder in the story of Cain and Abel, depravity in the story of Noah, and autonomy in the story of Babel. Yet God doesn't abandon His creation! Genesis 12 marks a new, hope-filled chapter in the story of God's jaw-dropping plan of redemption that begins with a single man and will extend to every family on earth. Central to the unfolding of this plan is the importance of Abraham's offspring (or "seed," see Gen 12:7; Gal 3:16) and the expression of faith in God (see Gen 15:6; Gal 3:7-9).

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Read the summary of Genesis 4-11 above. What does it say about God, that He initiates a plan of redemption with Abram (or Abraham) even after humanity has proven to be sinfully rebellious?

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2. List the promises that God makes to Abram. What stands out to you about these?

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3. What is the scope of God's promise (see the end of Genesis 12:3)? How should this motivate our mission and evangelism today?

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4. What is the first phrase in Genesis 12:4? Why is this significant?

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5. Make a short list of other promises of God in Scripture. What does it look like for you to live in light of these promises?

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# SESSION #4

## MESSAGE NOTES

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. After knowing the promises God made to Abram and seeing them fulfilled throughout the Bible, how does that impact your faith journey today?
2. Think of a time when God called you into a bold step of faith. How did you respond and what did you learn?
3. Where is God calling you to serve Him in fresh ways?
4. What is required for you to move ahead with God's request in your life?
5. What else stood out to you from the sermon on this passage, or what other questions or take-aways do you have that haven't already been brought up? Discuss them now as a group.

## GENESIS SERIES NOTES

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## WAYNE COLE

Wayne grew up on a farm in central Nebraska, where his family went to a small church. He knew Jesus, but without much discipleship, turned to a different path in his young adult years. He married and had kids, but ended up divorced due to his life apart from Christ. He found himself alone and feeling broken. Those difficult events caused Wayne to turn every aspect of his life over to Jesus though. "Sometimes we do things, or things happen to us, and we can look back later and see how God was preparing us to be restored." After renewing his relationship with God, Wayne remarried, had children, and now shares his life's journey with others. "No matter what situation we're in, finding ourselves in a place of reliance on God and God alone can allow Him to start to work. And sometimes we have to wait, but the wait is worth it."

# SESSION 5



# SESSION #5

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY KALLIE SKAGGS)

## READ GENESIS 37:1-36 AND GENESIS 39:1-2

Genesis 37 begins with Joseph in a spot of favor. He's his father's favorite. He's got his whole life ahead of him. His dreams indicate a bright future. But by the end of the chapter, Joseph has been betrayed and abandoned by his brothers, his father thinks he's dead, and he's sold into slavery. Life's twists and turns can happen suddenly, where things outside of our control force new realities. Yet even in the midst of this, we learn that God is "with Joseph so that he prospered" (39:2). Life's sudden changes don't jeopardize God's presence and plan.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the descriptions used about Joseph? Why was he so loved by his father and hated by his brothers?

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2. Read Luke 15:11-32. In what ways does Joseph resemble the Prodigal Son? In what ways is he different?

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**3.** In Genesis 37:5 Joseph's dream caused his brothers to "hate him all the more" and still he continued to share his dreams of God's plan with them. Why do you think Joseph does this? Are there any ways this is similar to the life of Jesus during His ministry? Explain.

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**4.** Compare the beginning of Genesis 37 with how this chapter ends. Can you relate (at any level) to the "twists and turns" Joseph experienced? How so?

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**5.** Make a short list of how Joseph's life is different at the end of the chapter than it is at the beginning. (Get practical with this list — what parts of Joseph's life were impacted?)

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**6.** Read the first phrase of Genesis 39:2. What difference does this phrase make in how you understand the story?

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# **SESSION #5**

## **MESSAGE NOTES**

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What can be said about the difference in bravery, boldness, and faith between Reuben and Joseph?
2. Have there been times in your life that you felt out of control, feared, and wept like Reuben? Have there been times in your life you obeyed and followed God's plan through its twist and turns like Joseph?
3. Joseph was one of the youngest of a sheep tending family. What do you think his expectations were for his life before he had the dreams? What do you think they were after?
4. Of all the brothers God chose Joseph. "The Lord was with him and he prospered" (Genesis 39:2). What does this say about our God?
5. Share with your group any "twists and turns" that you've been through in life (or maybe are in the middle of now). How have you sensed God's presence in these times?



# CHANEE MIT

Chanee is an Omaha native, and had a difficult upbringing. After getting involved in the gang and drug life, he spent a lot of time in jail. While there, he found himself wanting more in life, so he surrounded himself with others seeking God. One day while watching a Brookside service, he received Christ in his heart. "God's working His plan in my life," says Chanee, but that doesn't change the fact that he still contends with addiction and temptation every day, even in his recovery. In those moments, he finds it's best to let God take over and surrender to Him. And he gives all credit to God for how he's been able to show strength in his battles.

# SESSION 6



# SESSION #6

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY JESSICA TIPPERY)

## READ GENESIS 39:1-23

Genesis 39 is dominated by the attempted seduction of Joseph by Potiphar's wife, where she tries repeatedly to get him to sleep with her. Joseph resists this temptation, and his ultimate reason is stated in v. 9, "How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" Joseph shows a hatred for sin and a big view of God — helping him successfully fight this temptation. Nevertheless, Joseph is betrayed and unjustly sent to prison. Even here we see that God's presence and favor stays with Joseph in this difficult moment.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean when it says "The Lord was with Joseph"? What is the significance in mentioning this?

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2. How does Joseph prosper? Does following the Lord mean you will prosper as Joseph did? Read Psalm 1:1-3 to help with your answer. (Hint: Be sure to note how Psalm 1 defines prosperity!)

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**3.** What is Joseph's reason for refusing Potiphar's wife?

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**4.** The Lord consistently saves Joseph from difficult situations. What does this tell you about God?

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**5.** Can you fight temptation without the Lord's help? Why or why not?

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**6.** Are there similarities between Joseph's story here in Genesis 39 and what Jesus experienced here on earth? How so?

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# SESSION #6

## MESSAGE NOTES

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Joseph refuses Potiphar's wife's advances "day after day". Does the frequency or proximity of temptation give one an excuse to sin? Does it matter what the sin is?
2. Sometimes temptation can be so strong God calls us to literally run from it. Is there temptation in your life that you need to "run" from? Share this with God or someone to bring that sin into the light.
3. Where does temptation come from? Refer to 1 Corinthians 10:13 and James 1:13-15 to help with your answer.
4. How do you react to this reality we've seen in the passage — that sometimes even doing what is right can lead to hardship? Explain your answer.
5. Joseph trusted God in the midst of temptation and hardship. What steps can you take to trust God when you are faced with seemingly impossible situations?



# JAKE BAILEY

The year 2021 brought a great deal of suffering Jake's way. It began with an unforeseen separation and divorce, and then the sudden loss of his father. In sadness and sorrow, he never found himself angry, but instead began to develop ways to deal with his emotions. The recurring phrase he kept in mind was "I give this all to you, God." Jake says, "To one going through something hard, I'd say to concentrate on God more than the circumstance. He is greater than what we're going through." He's still in the process of working through these challenges to be sure, but carries a perspective that keeps him close to the One who comforts him.

# SESSION 7



# SESSION #7

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY JOSH KLEIN)

## READ GENESIS 40:1-23

Genesis 40 finds Joseph in prison. And while he's entrusted with responsibility, this doesn't change the fact that he's in prison. And he's there for a while — years, in fact (see 40:1; 41:1). Yet Joseph doesn't give up or give in. He stands out with excellence and earns a position of responsibility. He shows care for prisoners who are sad (see 40:4, 7) and ministers to them. After all this, Joseph is still forgotten in prison by someone he helped (40:23). Joseph is suffering and feels forgotten. Even in this hard situation, he has lived faithfully.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why was Joseph in prison at the beginning of chapter 40?

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2. How does Joseph treat his fellow prisoners? List some examples from the passage.

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**3.** How does Joseph exhibit faith in God in this chapter? How many times is God mentioned and in what context?

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**4.** What role does Joseph have in prison and how does he operate within that role?

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**5.** Take special notice of Joseph's words in the passage. What does he say and how does he say it?

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# SESSION #7

## MESSAGE NOTES

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 40:3-4. What does this passage tell us about how Joseph operated in the midst of imprisonment?
2. How does Joseph show faithfulness in this chapter?
3. Put yourself in Joseph's shoes (i.e., that he is wrongfully imprisoned). How do you think that would impact your faith and attitude? How did it impact Joseph's?
4. What seemed to be Joseph's reward for his faith in Genesis 40:23? It takes 2 years for Joseph to be remembered. How do we seem to handle delayed affirmatives to our prayers? How should we respond?



## RYAN DAHLGAARD

Ryan is a husband, father, and business owner of 18 years. Ryan can trace the workings of God throughout his career and life, even when his old job resulted in burnout and disillusionment. Ryan chose to change and let the idea of "success" take on a new definition. He found a new freedom in Christ, and instead of money being a motivator, he began to seek better ways to frame his efforts in business. He truly feels that God has given him his company as a way to serve those around him, be that in leadership, stewardship, or influence.



# SESSION 8



# SESSION #8

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY DUANE RUSSELL)

## READ GENESIS 41:1-57

In Genesis 41 Joseph is given the opportunity to serve Pharaoh by interpreting his dreams. Even with this opportunity to get a standing with the highest ruler in the land and make a name for himself, Joseph directs attention to God (see 41:16, 25, 28). Joseph is appointed to a place of prominence (41:41-44) and uses his excellent administrative gifts to serve a country (and region). He continues to see God's hand in his life, evident in the names of his children (41:51-52).

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What were Pharaoh's dreams and what was their interpretation?

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2. What was the job of the magicians and wise men in Egypt (see Genesis 41:8)? What was the difference between what they were able to do and what Joseph was able to do?

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**3.** How did Joseph handle being asked by Pharaoh to do something that seemed impossible?

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**4.** Why did Pharaoh change Joseph's name and give him an Egyptian wife? (See Genesis 41:45.)

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**5.** What position of prominence was Joseph promoted to? How could this be an opportunity to be used by God?

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# SESSION #8

## MESSAGE NOTES

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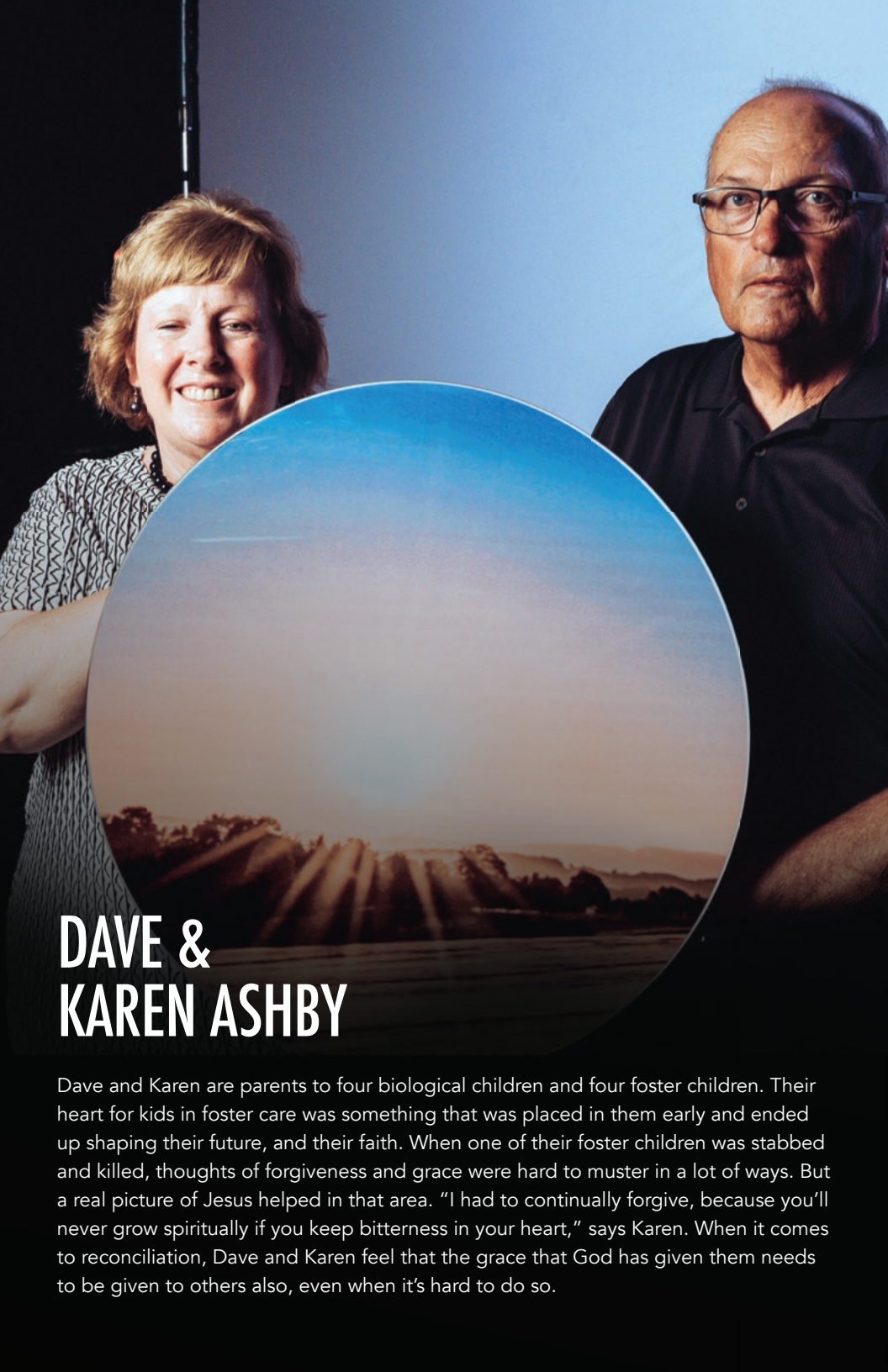
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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you see how Joseph was ready for whatever happened in the future because of his close relationship with God? How are you preparing for whatever may happen in the future?
2. Why did Joseph say he could not interpret the dreams in 41:16? In what ways are you put into sticky situations in your life?
3. How do you think Joseph felt while he was in prison, and then when he was promoted?
4. How did Joseph direct his attention to God while living in a foreign culture (see Genesis 41:16, 25, 28)? Describe some things in our culture that are foreign to the Christian life. What can we learn from this for our lives?
5. List several ways in which you have seen God's intervention when there would have been severe difficulty or desperation otherwise.
6. How does Joseph see God's continued working in his life toward the end of Genesis 41? How do you see God's continued working in your life/the life of your church?
7. What was your big take-away from the sermon on this passage? What practical steps of application do you need to take in response to the truth in this passage?



## DAVE & KAREN ASHBY

Dave and Karen are parents to four biological children and four foster children. Their heart for kids in foster care was something that was placed in them early and ended up shaping their future, and their faith. When one of their foster children was stabbed and killed, thoughts of forgiveness and grace were hard to muster in a lot of ways. But a real picture of Jesus helped in that area. "I had to continually forgive, because you'll never grow spiritually if you keep bitterness in your heart," says Karen. When it comes to reconciliation, Dave and Karen feel that the grace that God has given them needs to be given to others also, even when it's hard to do so.

# SESSION 9



# SESSION #9

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY DAVID BRANSON)

## READ GENESIS 42-45

In Genesis 42-45, Joseph comes face to face with his brothers who betrayed him more than a decade earlier. He has both the opportunity and the authority to punish them in any way he would want. And yet rather than exacting revenge, after a series of wise tests Joseph ends up revealing himself to them and even stating how God had sent him to Egypt (see 45:7) in an emotional scene (see 45:12-15). Joseph's relationship with God enables him to show radical forgiveness to those who had hurt him deeply. If Joseph can reconcile with his brothers who had hurt him deeply, we need to be willing to extend a radical reconciliation to others ourselves.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been betrayed or dishonored by another that made you feel you could never forgive them? How has God's grace aided you in intentionally forgiving others?

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2. Read Matthew 18:21-22. What are the stumbling blocks that discourage us from radical forgiveness and reconciliation?

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**3.** Compare these chapters to the story of Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32. How did Joseph react differently in Genesis 45 than the older brother in Luke 15:28? How was his response similar to the Father in Luke 15?

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**4.** “Silver” is used twenty times in Genesis 42-45. Compare and contrast the use of silver/money from Genesis 37 and Genesis 42-45.

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**5.** What emotions do you think Joseph experienced in Genesis 42:7? How would you respond if you were in a similar situation?

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# SESSION #9

## MESSAGE NOTES

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did Joseph's dreams in Genesis 37:5-11 prepare him for the arrival of his brothers and his responsibilities in Egypt?
2. How did Joseph's relationship with God develop in Genesis 39-41 to set up this moment with his family?
3. A central theme of Genesis is the providence of the one true God. How is that theme emphasized in the orchestration of Joseph's power and ability to save his family?
4. Think of a time when forgiveness was especially hard for you. How did extending forgiveness transform you spiritually and bring you closer to Christ?
5. What else stood out to you from the sermon on this passage, or what other questions or take-aways do you have that haven't already been brought up? Discuss them now as a group.



## CAL & COURTNEY HERRMANN

Cal and Courtney met doing missions work, and share a passion to stay in overseas missions long-term. But as a young couple with a baby due this year, their plan to move to the Dominican Republic in the Spring has them understandably uneasy. "But something God keeps reminding us of is His provision and that he's not called us to be comfortable." So they are keeping their hands open, trusting God, and taking leaps of faith. "God is calling us into something beautiful AND scary, but seeing God come through time and time again builds our faith!"

# SESSION 10



JOS  
EPH

# SESSION #10

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY TIM HODGES)

## READ GENESIS 48:1-49:33

It always seems easiest to see God's providence and His plan by looking in the rear-view mirror. And yet Jacob and Joseph show trust in God's future providence, evidenced in the many blessings and forward-looking statements in these chapters (e.g. 48:15-17, 21-22; 49:1-28). This teaches us that God isn't only working in our past and present; God also has a plan for the future. He is faithful to His promises. This should lead to a forward-looking legacy, and a perspective of hope and trust.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 48 is focused on Jacob's blessing of his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh. While tradition would have the right hand blessing the firstborn, Jacob intentionally blesses Ephraim (the younger son). From earlier stories in the book of Genesis, what are some other examples of the younger son having preference over the older?

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2. In Genesis 48: 17-18, Joseph tries to correct his father's apparent confused mistake. What is the irony of this action? (Hint: See the birth orders of both Jacob and Joseph in Genesis. For Jacob, scan Genesis 25:24-25 and 27:1-41. For Joseph, see Genesis 37:1-3.)

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**3.** What does Jacob blessing the younger son over the older son (which would have been the traditional approach) say about how God chooses who to use in His story?

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**4.** What is the meaning of Genesis 49:10? What famous person would come from the tribe of Judah? (Hint: See Matthew 1:1-3.)

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**5.** Scan the passage and summarize how these chapters are “forward looking.” What is the significance of this?

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**6.** How do Jacob’s words convey trust in God’s plan and His promises? (See Genesis 12:1-3 for a quick refresher on God’s promises.)

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# SESSION #10

## MESSAGE NOTES

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. God's plan does not always align with human tradition. In what ways has God used you, even though you might not have been the obvious choice? What does this teach you about God's gracious working?
2. Genesis 48:15 is the first biblical reference to God as a shepherd. At the end of his life, Jacob reflects not on how faithful he was to God, but how faithful God was to him. What are some examples of how God has been faithful to you?
3. Jacob's blessing of his grandsons was obviously meaningful for Joseph, as it signified carrying on a legacy of faith. What is the faith story in your family? Are you continuing a legacy of faith or starting a new story? What can you do to intentionally cultivate a legacy of faith as you look ahead?
4. In Genesis 49:18, Jacob pauses his prophecies about his sons to briefly ask for God's help. When is the last time you paused in the midst of an important work to ask for God's help? How might you make that a more regular occurrence?
5. These chapters are very forward-looking — looking ahead to God's plan. Do you believe God has a plan for the future? How can this cultivate hope and trust?
6. What else stood out to you from the sermon on this passage, or what other questions or take-aways do you have that haven't already been brought up? Discuss them now as a group.



# MACKENDY & MICKELSON LEMPKE

Mackendy and Mickelson knew they would one day be adopted out of an orphanage in Haiti - things were in process and they had even met their new family! However, an eleven year waiting period for things to come to completion was a test of their faith. They'd see other kids leave the orphanage before them, and in those moments it was hard to remember that their new parents, and God, hadn't forgotten them. They went through stages of sadness and fear, but when asked about their eventual arrival to the US after so long, Mackendy says, "I can explain that. God knows His plan."

# SESSION 11



# SESSION #11

(QUESTIONS WRITTEN BY RYAN PRAMBERG)

## READ GENESIS 50:1-26

Genesis 50 spotlights God's providence in a big way. Joseph states the reality of God's providence ("You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good...", Gen 50:20). This trust in God's providence isn't some abstract belief. It transforms Joseph's relationships — he comforts his brothers, provides for them, and is kind to them (50:21). It transforms Joseph's death, as he even then trusts God to come to His people's aid and fulfill His promises (50:22-26).

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What does this passage tell me about God?

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2. What does it tell me about relationships and how I relate to others?

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**3.** Who in your life would be surprised if you showed them grace like Joseph did to his brothers?

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**4.** Who would you be surprised by if they showed YOU grace?

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**5.** Where else in Genesis can you see God “bringing good out of evil”?

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**6.** Genesis 50 is the final chapter of this book — why do you think Moses (the author of Genesis) ends with Joseph making his kids vow to return to the land of Canaan?

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# SESSION #11

## MESSAGE NOTES

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Share your answers to Study Questions #3 and #4. Briefly share with the group why you answered the way you did.
2. What part of Joseph's story shocks you the most?
3. Who do you relate to more — Joseph, his brothers, his dad, or some other Genesis person? If your answer is some combination of these, explain why.
4. What else stood out to you from the sermon on this passage, or what other questions or take-aways do you have that haven't already been brought up? Discuss them now as a group.
5. Big Picture - As we complete Genesis, what will you apply so everyone clearly sees a change in your life?
6. Big Picture - Often, the Holy Spirit wants to get our attention as we hear the same thing over and over. What keeps "jumping out at you" as something you need to address as we close our Genesis series?

# CONGRATULATIONS! (LET'S FINISH STRONG!)

Congratulations on making your way through this Genesis & Joseph resource! And praise God for how He's revealed Himself and what He's doing in the Bible. Before you close the booklet, take some time soon to review what you've learned and identify 2-3 big take-aways and/or action steps flowing from your time in God's Word.

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Finally, conclude this study by writing down a prayer to God. This could include any of the following ideas: expressing what you've learned about who He is, what He's leading you toward, thanking Him for His Word, etc.

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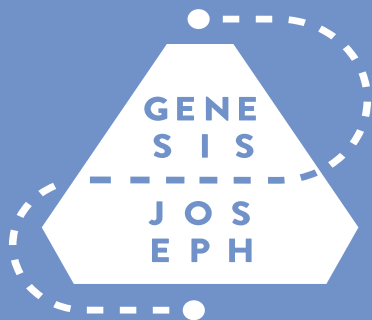
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# SCRIPTURE MEMORY SUGGESTIONS *from Genesis.*

- In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. - Genesis 1:1
- So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. - Genesis 1:27
- That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. - Genesis 2:24
- So the Lord God said to the serpent... "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." - Genesis 3:15
- After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward." - Genesis 15:1
- Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness. - Genesis 15:6
- You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. - Genesis 50:20





**BROOKSIDE  
CHURCH**