

someone ahead to make plans and prepare for the famine. This is a good place to talk about how God uses us and sometimes life can take very unexpected turns when the Lord is positioning us to serve Him where He needs us.

Week 4 - Genesis ☐ 44 ☐ 45 ☐ 46 Exodus ☐ 1 ☐ 2



Joseph's story wraps up successfully in **chapters 44-45**. Note Joseph's faith in 44:5-9. In **chapter 46** the family of promise moves to Egypt, but not without God's special permission (v. 4). Genesis closes with the family settling in, and Jacob blessing Joseph's children and then his own children. The book concludes with a strong statement that the family of promise doesn't belong in Egypt and some day must return to the Promised Land (50:24). **Exodus 1** starts the next chapter of God's story. One of the key ideas in the chapter is the multiplication of Israel's population (note verses 7, 10, 12, 20). The promise to Abraham to make his descendants a great nation is coming to pass! Yet in the 400 years that have passed God's people have become ruthlessly enslaved. How will they get back to where they belong? **Exodus 2** begins answering that question with the birth of Moses.



Moses' father-in-law is called Reuel in 2:18 but later is called Jethro (Exo 18:1ff), which may be a second name or a title.



Twice the beginning of Exodus spotlights people who risked much to do what is right (1:17; 2:1-3). In our times adversity or persecution seem to cause many to throw in the towel and quit. Think carefully about what was different about these faithful servants in Exodus and how we can mirror their perseverance today.



Here is a good place to make the point with your family that the Bible is the story of God's plan of salvation. From Genesis 50 to Exodus 1 more than 400 years of history elapses, and Scripture says virtually nothing about it. Why not? There must have been a lot of interesting stories and people in that time. The Bible doesn't talk about those years because it doesn't advance the story of redemption. The Bible isn't a storybook about random happenings. It is the history of God fulfilling His promise to bring the Messiah to this world for our salvation. Talk as a family about how the Bible is different from how humans would have written it. As always, keep your eye on the promises of God! The faith of Moses' parents in **chapter 2** also provides another fine place to show that how we fit into God's plans may appear small and insignificant at first, but God may be looking for someone with courage and trust to give a Moses to!

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God's Plan of Salvation

Bible Reading Plan February 2020

We are marching forward in reading God's Word. We will spend the majority of our time this month in Genesis but this first book is so key in setting the stage for all that comes afterward that it is hard to miss even a single chapter. However, by the end of the month we will be in Exodus and in Egypt, locked in a battle between God and Pharaoh for His people. Let's keep watching as God's plan to save men and women unfolds in Scripture.

Week 1 - Genesis ☐ 24 ☐ 25 ☐ 26 ☐ 27 ☐ 28



Our story is in transition toward a new character, Isaac. **Genesis 24** shows the elaborate precautions Abraham takes to make sure Isaac doesn't marry a Canaanite woman. God is at work again, answering prayer and blessing Abraham's family as He promised. **Genesis 25** ends Abraham's story and places two new characters center stage: Jacob and Esau. Note the repetition of Abraham's promises to Isaac in **Genesis 26**. Isaac promptly duplicates the mistakes his father made and is protected by God just as Abraham was. Lies and deceit seem to be part of Jacob's standard operating procedure, and work again in **Genesis 27** to steal the blessing. As we are watching the promises of God, this blessing is very important. Jacob's trickery results in him being sent away where God gives to him the promises of Abraham (vv. 3-4, 13-15). What will God do next with this crafty grandson of Abraham's?



Already the Bible is stressing a distinction between Abraham's people and the people of Canaan. How is that to be lived out among God's people now (see James 1:27)? Watching Jacob trick his way to what he wants (and end up having to run for his life) provides a good place for us to think about reaping and sowing (Gal 6:10). Do you use any methods to get what you want, deciding the end justifies the means? How much like Jacob are we?.



The two boys, Esau and Jacob, provide lots of fodder for talking about family relationships, disobeying parents and fighting among siblings. Some talk about the importance of the blessing in **chapter 27** will help your family see how much this really mattered. Again, stress that God’s promises dominate everything that is going on. Jacob receives those promises in **chapter 28** and will be cared for by the Lord even in a foreign country. Help your children grow in their trust of the Lord!

Week 2 - Genesis □ 29 □ 30 □ 31 □ 32 □ 37



Genesis 29 tells us how Jacob the Deceiver ends up being tricked into marrying two wives. That story continues in **Genesis 30**, in the “Great Baby Race.” The heartache and strife in Jacob’s home is plain to see. **Genesis 31** puts a heavy emphasis on God’s care for Jacob, because he is the recipient of the promises of God (see vv. 5, 7, 13, 24, 29, 42). **Genesis 32** has Jacob and Esau prepare to meet again (and they are reconciled in ch. 33) but the dominant note in the chapter is Jacob wrestling with God. There is a lot about that we may not understand (see below) but the key seems to be Jacob’s name being changed (vv. 27-28). He no longer will be Jacob, which means “tricks” but instead “Israel” which may mean “strives with God” or better, “God fights for you.” It is time for Jacob to quit living by his wits and live by faith! **Chapters 33-36** covers material about Esau and his family, and the terrible defiling of Jacob’s daughter (ch. 34), along with a repetition of the promises to Jacob (35:11-12) and Rachel and Isaac dying (35:16ff). We resume our reading in **chapter 37** where we meet a new and tremendously important character, Joseph.



Jacob wrestles with God in **chapter 32** and there is almost no end to our questions. How can Jacob hold God? Why does God want to wrestle with Jacob anyway? Satisfactory answers to these and other questions are hard to find. We have to be content to see that Jacob realizes he is wrestling with God and that he persists in wanting a blessing from God (v. 26). Jacob’s toughness yields him that blessing in the form of a new name, and perhaps a new outlook on life. Don’t be thrown by verse 30. No one can see God in His full, unaltered, unshaded form and live, but many have seen a manifestation of God that the Lord allows them to see. For example, Jesus was God, and many saw Him.



Chapter 31 really lets us think about our own dependance on God. Do you see all you have as a result of God’s care and blessing? **Chapter 37** gives us an ironic fulfillment of “you reap what you sow” (Gal 6:7) as the man who deceived his own father is now tricked by his sons. How often are we tempted to try and fudge a little here, or

cheat a little there, as if deception won’t ultimately come back to hurt us?



Spend some time talking about blessings as a family. Jacob believed in the promises of God and then gave credit for what had happened to him for being the fulfillment of those promises. What has God promised us today? What do we see as tangible fulfillment of those promises? Later in the week it will be time to start talking about Joseph. He provides lots of opportunities to talk about character. Was he wise in 37:2 and 37:5-7? Ask your children how they would feel about Joseph as a brother. Emphasize that Joseph was not the first born (so important in Bible times) but he is being treated as a first born (the coat of many colors probably signified that, v. 3). Envy and jealousy were running rampant in Jacob’s house! What can be done to keep us from being envious of the good others are getting?

Week 3 - Genesis □ 39 □ 40 □ 41 □ 42 □ 43



We are jumping the Judah and Tamar story in **chapter 38** this week, even though it figures in the Lord’s lineage (Matt 1:3). **Chapter 39** refocuses on Joseph, as he prospers and then suffers even more in Egypt. **Chapter 40** gives the reader a glimmer of hope that Joseph may eventually get out of prison. In **chapter 41** Joseph’s phenomenal faith and determination to always credit God for all things comes to the front. We finally begin to see God’s plan for Joseph take shape! 42:57 reveals why we are learning about Joseph. There is famine everywhere which means the family of promise is threatened with starvation back in Canaan! Will the promises die with Jacob? **Chapter 42** begins the trips to Egypt where Joseph will save his own family. Those trips continue in **chapter 43** where Joseph tests his brothers to see if they are the kind of evil men who will give up a brother to save their own necks. Will they do to Benjamin what they did to him so long ago?



What will you do when you do what is right and are rewarded for it by being severely punished? That is exactly what happened to Joseph in **chapter 39**. Are you ready for that? These chapters also provide much food for thought on the subject of forgiveness. Could you forgive someone who had done you the kind of wrong that Joseph’s brothers did him? Do you see him working to see if they are genuinely repentant in his schemes?



Let’s keep the main thing the main thing here. The entire Joseph story is told to help us see how God kept the promises to the house of Abraham alive. Jacob and his family don’t starve in the great famine. God has foreseen everything and sent

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