



# PROMISES, PROMISES!

## GENESIS

rockypc SERIES COMPANION  
2021

# PROMISES, PROMISES!

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

**GENESIS 1v1**

*"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good."*

**GENESIS 1v31**

*"You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."*

**GENESIS 2v16-17**

*"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

**GENESIS 3v4-5**

*"The LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken"*

**GENESIS 3v22-23**

*"The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

**GENESIS 12v1-3**

The beginning of the Bible immediately raises lots of questions about the origins of the world and how everything came to be how it is. Although it doesn't provide all the scientific answers we would like, Genesis still presents a clear picture of why our world is the way it is today — It started perfectly. It was very good. However, it was quickly spoiled by sin as the first humans decided they wanted more than they thought God was offering them. God banished them from the perfect garden, but he wasn't done with humanity. He is determined to bless his people and creation and we see that as God makes a number of promises to a man named Abram. Genesis tells the story of God's commitment to his own promises.

Over the next 12 weeks, we're going to work our way through Genesis in some rather big chunks, looking for the way God's promises are working out. We'll learn lots about God's character and lots about ourselves as people affected by sin, but we're also going to see how all God's promises point us forward to the Lord Jesus Christ, who we're told in Colossians 1v15-17 is:

*"The image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."*

## **HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS SERIES COMPANION**

We will be looking at GENESIS in some relatively big chunks, so it will be most helpful if you complete the GROWTH GROUP STUDY during the week before the BIBLE TALK. With your group, take your time reading through the passages and don't be afraid to stop and talk about things that grab your attention or raise questions for your group. The questions are there as a guide, but there is lots more to learn about God's character and his faithfulness to his promises than we can capture in a few questions. Make sure you look at the New Testament references too, so that you can see how Genesis points us to Jesus.

On Sunday, make sure you bring your series companion along with you, so that you can keep track of any questions you have and record the way that God's Spirit is helping you to understand His Word and grow in your love for Jesus.

These series companions are designed to be used as either a print version, or interactively on a device. Use whichever method is most helpful for you.

## 8000 4 JESUS

It is our prayer at **rockypc** that you will grow as a disciple every time you read God's Word and meet Jesus in its pages. It's also our prayer that you'll have the opportunity to share your own personal story about Jesus with your friends and family.

While everyone might not all feel able to share the good news about Jesus, we can all relate to different people and invite them into our lives, so that they might see and hear the gospel at work. After all, the gospel is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe and everyone can pray.

So, will you join us by praying that God would give 8000 people to Jesus in our city, in our generation, for a start?

8000 is a big number, but God might just start with one of your friends or family members.

Please pray for 5 friends, for the rest of 2021, for an opportunity to talk and to invite.

How would you feel if one of your friends turned to Jesus? It would be amazing! Even more amazing if all 5 did. But they need you to pray and they need you to share your life with them.

At **rockypc**, we're praying and inviting. Are you?

### CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER & LIFE

In 2021, we're running CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER and LIFE, twice each, so that you and your friends can come along to ask the questions that really matter.

Dates for the next courses are:

CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER — Wednesday 4, 11, 18, 25 August & 1 September  
[register here — https://rockypc.org.au/ctm](https://rockypc.org.au/ctm)

LIFE — Coming in October/November

Don't wait to start the conversation.

Here's how you can give it a go:

- Tell your friend/family member that your pastor at **rockypc** has asked you to get as many answers to this question as possible:

***How would you finish this sentence "God would be good news for me if ....."?***

- Ask what they think and let Andrew know their answer — [andrew@rockypc.org.au](mailto:andrew@rockypc.org.au)
- When the next course approaches invite them to come along to CONVERSATIONS THAT MATTER / LIFE

At **rockypc**, we want to be growing disciples, under God, who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others, to grow the gospel and the church, for the glory of Jesus. We'd love you to grow with us in 2021.



# LIFE ... AND DEATH

## GENESIS 1-5

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

What is your favourite spot in creation? Why do you love it?

Genesis 1 is a familiar passage for many people, but it raises lots of scientific questions for us, like: 'How old is the earth?'; 'How does the Genesis account of creation fit with evolutionary theory?'; and 'how did all this happen in 6 days?!' The difficulty is that Genesis is not a science textbook, so it may not be answering the same questions we want to ask.

As we read the opening page of the Bible, let's try to let God's word speak on its own terms, and hold our science vs the Bible questions to the end.

### READ GENESIS 1v1-2v3

1. What does the opening chapter of the Bible tell us about God? (Don't rush — spend some time on this question because there is a goldmine of information about God here.)

2. What does this passage tell us about creation?

3. What does this passage tell us about humanity in general?

### READ GENESIS 2v4-25

4. The creation story focuses on the creation of humanity in this chapter. What do we learn about men and women?

### READ GENESIS 3

5. What do we learn about ALL sin from the account of the first sin?

6. What are the consequences of this sin?

7. What hope is there for humanity?

#### READ GENESIS 4

8. How do these stories build on the picture of sin and its consequences?

#### READ GENESIS 5

9. How does the repetition and the breaking of the repeated pattern flow out of the Genesis 3 episode?

#### READ COLOSSIANS 1v15-23

10. How is Jesus the true human that we can't be?

11. How does Jesus reverse the curses of Genesis 3?

#### WRAPPING UP

12. Spend some time in prayer, praising your Creator. Thank God for Jesus, the image of God and our reconciler. You can use the space below to write down the things you would like to pray about.

13. If there's time, write down your top 1-2 questions about the creation account. How are you going to find answers to these questions as you seek to grow as a disciple of Jesus?

#### ANDREW'S TOP BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS — AVAILABLE @ KOORONG, MATTHIAS MEDIA OR AMAZON.COM.AU

7 Days That Divide The World  
John Lennox



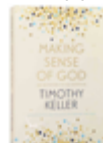
God's Undertaker  
John Lennox



The Reason For God  
Tim Keller



Making Sense Of God  
Tim Keller



Science & God (Youth)  
Scott Petty



In The Beginning (Advanced)  
Henri Blocher



#1

BIBLE TALK

# LIFE ... AND DEATH

GENESIS 1-5

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

# DIVINE REGRET

## GENESIS 6-9

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

William Golding, author of *The Lord of the Flies*, wrote of the Second World War — 'I must say that anyone who moved through those years without understanding that man produces evil as a bee produces honey, must have been blind or wrong in the head.'

In your opinion, is this an accurate assessment of humanity, or is he too pessimistic?

### READ GENESIS 6v1-4

1. Genesis 5 ended on a hopeful note with the news of Noah's family line. Noah's story is interrupted with a bizarre and mysterious story about 'sons of God' and Nephilim. Despite plenty of unknowns here, what clues are in the text to show how this behaviour is symptomatic of the spread and reach of sinfulness? (See Genesis 3v6)

### READ GENESIS 6v5-22

2. How does the depths of humanity's evil affect God?

3. How will God respond to this pervasive wickedness?

### READ GENESIS 7v1-8v19

4. What strikes you about this story? How is it different from kids' cute picture story Bibles?

### READ GENESIS 8v20-9v17

5. How does God start over with Noah? (Compare with Genesis 1v27-30)

**READ GENESIS 9v18-29**

6. Despite our hopes for a new beginning with Noah, how does this story end in shame?

(See also Genesis 3v8-11 & 21)

7. Why do you think it's important for later generations of Israelites to know the blessings and curse that flow to Noah's sons? (See also Genesis 11v10 & 26)

**READ EPHESIANS 2v1-10**

8. How does this passage describe the depths of our sin?

9. How is God beginning a new creation through Jesus?

**WRAPPING UP**

10. What have you learned, or been reminded, about God's character in this story/study?

11. Is there an evil inclination of your heart that you need to repent of?

Talk to God about this now and thank him for Jesus through whom we're a new creation, prepared for good works.



#2

BIBLE TALK

# DIVINE REGRET

GENESIS 6-9

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

# A GREAT NAME

## GENESIS 10-12

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

What do you think a 'blessed life' looks like? Would your friends agree or would their opinion be vastly different?

### READ GENESIS 10v1-32 (Even have a go at pronouncing the hard names and saying them aloud)

1. Did you notice any names you recognised? Why do you think later generations of Israelites would need to know this family tree?

### READ GENESIS 11v1-9

2. What do you think is the problem with this tower building project? (See also Genesis 1v26-28)

3. What stands out to you about God's response?

The author of Genesis returns from a detour to Babylon (Babel) and Ham's descendants to talk about Shem's family line in more detail.

### READ GENESIS 11v10-32

4. If you image this is being made into a movie, what plot tensions can you see developing in this passage? i.e. what is wrong with this family picture?

### READ GENESIS 12v1-7

5. What does God promise Abram?

6. How does this build on the promises God has been making so far in the story — Genesis 1v28, 3v14-19, 6v7-9?

7. How do these promises differ from what happens at the tower in Babylon?

8. How does Abram respond to God's command and promises?

The story of the rest of the Bible follows Abram's family and keeps showing us how God keeps these key promises of a land, a nation and blessing.

**READ REVELATION 7v9-17**

9. How does God ultimately keep the promises he made to Abraham?

**WRAPPING UP**

10. What encouragement and comfort can you see in God's character and purposes?

11. Do you really believe that true blessing is found in Jesus? How can you lovingly talk with your friends and family about this, when times are good, and when they're not?

#3

BIBLE TALK

# A GREAT NAME

GENESIS 10-12

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

# #4

GROWTH GROUP STUDY

# BLESSINGS ... AND CURSES

## GENESIS 13-14

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

Share a time you got something great for free.

### READ GENESIS 12v10-20

1. Abram's behaviour shows what he truly believes. What do you think might be his underlying beliefs?
2. What are the outcomes:
3. How does this match with God's promises to Abram in Genesis 12v1-3?

### READ GENESIS 13v1-18

4. Abram returns from Egypt very wealthy. What problem does this cause?
5. What do you think of Abram's solution in light of the story so far?
6. What do you think of Lot's choice of land?

7. How does God renew his promises to Abram in v14-17?

**READ GENESIS 14v1-16**

The list of names and places is confusing, try to follow along on the map (the green line). Remember we've already been told about most of these places named after their forefathers in Genesis 10.

Here's the summary: Kedorlaomer is a strong king with 3 vassal states allied with him. He came from East of Canaan and conquered Abram's Canaanite neighbours. These 5 nations eventually joined forces to rebel against Kedorlaomer. He responded with a military campaign to win back the lost territory. A big battle formed up in the Dead Sea valley, but the Canaanite kings lost and fled. Kedorlaomer and his allies stole goods, food and prisoners including Abram's nephew, Lot. When Abram heard the news, he took his allies, pursued Kedorlaomer's armies and recovered the kidnapped people and stolen possessions.



TAKEN FROM HOLMAN BIBLE ATLAS

8. Do you think Abram's victory was likely or unlikely? How have you come to this conclusion?

**READ GENESIS 14v17-24**

Two Canaanite kings come to meet Abraham as he is returning home. The King of Salem's story is sandwiched between the King of Sodom's to make us compare the two responses to Abraham.

9. Describe the interchange between Abram and Melchizedek.

10. How is the interchange different between Abram and the King of Sodom?

11. How do you account for the difference?

All three of these stories seem far from our culture, worldview and experiences thousands of years later. But in each of them, God seems determined to bless Abram as he promised to do. This is regardless of Abram's obedience or not, his faith or lack of trust and even when the odds are low.

**READ HEBREWS 6v13-20**

12.What made God's promises to Abram certain?

13.How does Abram's story encourage us to trust God's promises for ourselves?

14.How does Jesus guarantee that we will receive the blessings God promised to all nations though Abram?

**WRAPPING UP**

15.When you're mired in disobedience or filled with doubt or feeling like the odds are against you, can you derail God's plans and promises?

16.Is there something in today's passages that give you assurance that God's promises are unshakable and his blessings certain?

Talk to God now about your doubts and concerns, and praise him that through Jesus, we can be sure that you will keep your promises to us, blessing us because you have sworn to do so.

#4

BIBLE TALK

# BLESSINGS ... AND CURSES

## GENESIS 13-14

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:



#5

GROWTH GROUP STUDY

# IN YOUR HANDS?

## GENESIS 15-17

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

Name some contracts you're in? What are some of the common features of a contract?

### READ GENESIS 15v1-20

1. This chapter starts with a pattern. Fill it out together.

V1 The Lord promises

V2-3 Abram asks how the promise will come true ' \_\_\_\_\_ ?'

V4-5 God responds by

V7 The Lord promises

V8 Abram asks how the promise will come true ' \_\_\_\_\_ ?'

V9-21 God responds by

2. The pattern centres around v6. Put this verse into your own words.

The Lord reassures the nomad, Abram, of his promise of a homeland, with a strange covenant ceremony which involves sacrifices, darkness and a blazing torch. Traditionally, in Ancient Near East practices, both parties would walk between the carcasses to symbolise that each party would suffer the same fate as the animals, if they broke the covenant.

3. Why do you think only God passes through (symbolised by fire) in Genesis 15?

### READ GENESIS 16

4. How do Abram and Sarai repeat Adam and Eve's sin?

5. How does the Lord show kindness to Hagar, even though her son won't be Abram's heir? (See Genesis 17v19)

**READ GENESIS 17**

6. There is a gap of at least 13 years between the covenants of chapters 15 and 17. They are expanding on the promises of chapter 12. What differences do you see in what God promises in these later chapters?
  
7. What part will circumcision play in the covenant between Abraham's family and the Lord?
  
8. God's promises seem so impossible that they're laughable. How many times do we see the Lord reiterating that he *will* give Abraham and Sarah a family? (Do you need to count some name changes in there as well?)
  
9. Summarise what you think these stories tell you about covenants. How are they different from the modern-day contracts that we're familiar with?

God's initial covenant with Abram in chapter 15 seems to be unconditional and not dependent on him. All Abram does is respond with faith. But by Genesis 17, the covenant is conditional on Abraham's faithfulness and obedience.

10. Why do you think the story with Hagar is sandwiched between these covenants?
  
11. How does the narrative give us hope that God will deal with the sinfulness of humanity? (remember Genesis 3v15)

**READ ROMANS 4v1-12**

12. How does Paul know that being circumcised didn't make Abraham righteous or blessed?

**READ ROMANS 4v16-5v2**

13. How do God's promises to Abraham come to us?

14. When are you tempted to think that you need to work to earn God's blessings?

15. In those moments, how does Abraham's story encourage you to know that we're made righteous and are blessed by faith in Jesus?

16. What have you learned about God's character today?

17. Which person on your 5 4 Jesus card needs to hear about this?

Praise the Lord for his kindness, generosity and faithfulness. Thank him that we don't have to strive to earn his favour. Ask for his help to believe his promises. Pray for opportunities and courage to share this with loved ones on your 5 4 Jesus card.

# IN YOUR HANDS?

## GENESIS 15-17

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

# #6

GROWTH GROUP STUDY

# UNEXPECTED GUESTS

GENESIS 18-19

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

## GETTING STARTED

How do you feel when you have surprise guests? Do you love the chaos? Does it send you in to a frenzy of cleaning?

In this section of Genesis we see the Lord appearing, as well as 3 men, and 2 men. As we read today, notice how it's hard to tell how many messengers there are and who is speaking or being spoken to, out of the Lord and the men. Ponder the relationship between the Lord, his word and his messengers.

### READ GENESIS 18v1-15

1. How does Abraham respond to his surprise guests?

2. How does Sarah respond to their message?

Both Abraham and Sarah have now laughed at God's promise of a son in their old age (see Genesis 17v17-19). He will even be named 'He laughs', which is the meaning of Isaac. But despite their mirth, God is determined to keep the promise he made many years earlier. After so much waiting, it will happen within a year.

### READ GENESIS 18v16-33

In echoes of the Tower of Babel, God determines to go down to see what the people of the twin towns of Sodom and Gomorrah are up to. Perhaps victims are calling on the name of the Lord (4v26b) or perhaps the very ground cries out against the violence (4v10).

3. What aspects of God's character does Abraham appeal to on behalf of these cities?

4. What do you make of his bargaining with God?

The next section comes with a warning, that it is one of the most disturbing passages in the Bible. You might find that it hits close to home for you, in some way. If so, please feel free to take a break or signal to the leader that you're struggling or talk privately later if you need help.



**READ MATTHEW 10v5-15**

12.How are these towns in greater danger than Sodom and Gomorrah?

**READ 2 PETER 3v3-15**

13.How can we know God's final judgment for all sin is both just and certain?

14.What does the delay in God judging sin show about him?

15.What hope can we have?

16.How should we respond to the coming day of the Lord?

# UNEXPECTED GUESTS

## GENESIS 18-19

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:



#7

GROWTH GROUP STUDY

# THE LORD PROVIDES

## GENESIS 20-22

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

How do you know someone means it when they say 'I love you'? What makes you feel loved?

### READ GENESIS 20

1. If you've been reading through Genesis, you might be having a sense of déjà vu. We've been here before with Abraham passing his beautiful wife off as his sister. Compare 12v10-20 with chapter 20. Why do you think Abraham persists in this ploy?
2. Why do you think God continues to bless him no matter what?
3. How is Abraham acting as a prophet?

### READ GENESIS 21v1-7

4. What do we learn about God's character as Sarah's mocking laughter turns to joy?

### READ GENESIS 21v8-21

5. It's déjà vu again as Sarah rejects Hagar (see Genesis 16). How do we see God acting towards each of the characters?

### READ GENESIS 21v22-34

6. Despite a show of military force and conflict over water sources, Abraham remains on good terms with the Philistine king. Is it a good idea to make a treaty with a foreign king (see Exodus 34v10-16)? How is this interaction with Abimelek evidence of God fulfilling his promises to Abraham?

**READ GENESIS 22v1-19**

7. Why does God command Abraham to do something so detestable as sacrificing his son (see also Deuteronomy 12v29-31)?

8. How do you feel about God commanding him to do this?

9. How does God provide for Abraham now and into the future?

**READ ROMANS 8v31-39**

10. God didn't allow Abraham to sacrifice his only son. How does he go one step further himself?

11. How does the gift of his beloved son guarantee that he will love and bless us, no matter what?

12. How would you answer someone who is doubting that God could love them when they're hurting, grieving or suffering?

13. How will you show your thankfulness to the God who has provided a sacrifice to spare you?

#7

BIBLE TALK

# THE LORD PROVIDES

GENESIS 20-22

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

# STEADFAST LOVE

## GENESIS 22-25

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

Share a time when you witnessed an amazing coincidence.

### READ GENESIS 22v20-24

1. The author of Genesis seems to introduce new characters by a genealogy. Do you recognise any names in this genealogy?

### READ GENESIS 23

2. Why do you think Abraham works so hard to pay for a burial site for his wife?

### READ DEUTERONOMY 7v1-6

3. Should we be concerned about Abraham making treaties with Hittites?

### READ GENESIS 24

4. Why is Abraham concerned that Isaac should not have a Canaanite wife? (See the Deuteronomy 7 passage above)
5. Why doesn't he want Isaac to go to his homeland?
6. How do we know that there's more than an amazing string of coincidences going on here?

7. How does God show his kindness and faithfulness to Abraham?

**READ GENESIS 25v1-18**

8. Abraham takes another wife and fathers more children. We then hear about his oldest son, Ishmael descendants. How do these other family lines cause trouble for Isaac's line?

**READ NUMBERS 25 & JUDGES 6v1-10**

9. How does the conflict escalate with later generations of Abraham's family lines?

The story of Abraham finding a wife for Isaac shows his trust in God's provision, leading and faithfulness to his promises. But it's surrounded on either side with examples of Abraham bargaining with his enemies, marrying enemy women and fathering nations who will oppress and ensnare his chosen nation of Israel.

10. Why do you think the stories are arranged and told in this way? What does it show about humanity and about God?

**READ JOHN 10v1-18**

11. How does Jesus describe himself here?

12. How can we be sure that he will lead and provide for us? Is he really trustworthy?

13. How do the episodes of disobedience in your life display a lack of trust in Jesus to provide?

14. How does it work out for you when you go your own way?

15. How can you grow in trusting Jesus to provide for you in these circumstances?

16.How does Jesus lead us?

17.Are coincidences always/the only sign of God's leading? Why or why not?

Praise God for the ways he has lead and provided for you in his kindness in your life. Thank him for the Good Shepherd, Jesus. Ask for his help to trust him to provide in all circumstances.



If you want to think further about the way God leads us,  
then grab a copy of 'Guidance and the Voice of God' by Phillip Jensen and Tony Payne.  
Available at <https://matthiasmedia.com.au/products/guidance-and-the-voice-of-god>

#8

BIBLE TALK

# STEADFAST LOVE

GENESIS 22-25

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

# YOU CAN'T CHOOSE FAMILY

## GENESIS 25-28

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

If you're preparing this study at home, don't answer this question until it's your group time. When you're together, set a timer for 30 seconds. Write down as many human rights as you can think of and then share as a group.

### READ GENESIS 25v19-26

1. For 20 years, Isaac and his wife relive the pain of childlessness that his parents felt. Then the Lord answers Isaac's prayer for children. What promises does God give Rebekah before they are born?
2. What humour is there in the twins' birth story?

### READ GENESIS 25v27-34

3. What is Esau's attitude to his inheritance as the oldest son? How does he display this?
4. How are the twins living up to their names?

### READ GENESIS 26v1-33

5. The story switches back to focusing on Isaac. How is he following in his father's footsteps? Make a note of the parallel passages in Abraham's life story.
6. What point do you think the narrator is making by using this technique of parallelism with some twists?



7. Why is it important that Isaac keeps finding well after well? i.e. what would it have meant for a farmer? For someone receiving God's promises?

**READ GENESIS 26v34-28v9**

8. What do you make of each of the characters' actions and attitudes?

9. How do we know God is at work in this whole sorry incident? (Hint: see Genesis 25v23 and 28v3-4)

**READ HEBREWS 12v14-17**

10. Are there ways you are in danger of despising God's blessings as Esau did?

**READ JOHN 4v4-14**

11. God blesses Isaac with wells wherever he goes. Hundreds of years later, Jesus asks a woman for a drink at another well. Why should she be the one asking him for a drink instead? (See also Jeremiah 17v13)

12. Is this living water a right to be demanded? Or is Jesus weak and fickle to be manipulated? How are they described/ portrayed here?

13. What should our attitude to God's blessings be?

14. What convinces you that Jesus is the one to come to for life and blessing?

# YOU CAN'T CHOOSE FAMILY

## GENESIS 25-28

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

#10

GROWTH GROUP STUDY

# LOOKING FOR LOVE

## GENESIS 28-30

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

What does your name mean? Do you know why your parents chose it? Was it for its meaning or some other reason?

We pick up the story as Jacob is on the road, fleeing the anger of his brother after stealing Esau's blessing. But he is also seeking a wife from within his own family, rather than the pagan Canaanites (reminiscent of his father Isaac's story in acquiring a wife in Ch24).

### READ GENESIS 28v10-22

1. What happens when Jacob encounters God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What does this show about God's relationship with Jacob?

### READ GENESIS 29v1-30

3. How does Jacob respond to seeing his cousin?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What do you think of Laban's actions?

### READ GENESIS 29v31-30v24

5. Describe each of the characters' attitudes and actions:

Leah

Rachel

Jacob

Note on 30v14-17: Mandrake roots were thought to be an aphrodisiac and increase fertility

6. Go back through this section and discuss how the Lord treats the women. What do you notice?

**READ GENESIS 30v25-43**

7. What do you think of Jacob and Laban's deal? (And how they both try to work around it?)

**READ GENESIS 31**

8. How does Laban interpret Jacob's actions?

9. How does Jacob see God at work?

10. Rebekah told her son to find a wife from within her family so that he wouldn't be enticed by idolatrous Canaanite women (27v46-28v2). Does this plan work?

11. In summary, how do we know God kept his promise of being with Jacob wherever he went (28v15)?

**READ MATTHEW 28v16-20**

12. What confidence can Jesus' disciples have that he will always be with us?

**READ EPHESIANS 3v12-21**

13. How is Jesus with us when we've never seen him in person?

14. What blessings flow to us through Christ's presence?

15.How is this even better than what is promised to Jacob?

16.Do you find it hard to believe that Jesus is always with you? What is hard about it?

17.How can we have certainty that Jesus is with us, seeing, hearing and understanding us in pain and sinfulness?

18.With whom can you share this comfort, hope and encouragement?

#10

BIBLE TALK

# LOOKING FOR LOVE

GENESIS 28-30

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

# #11

GROWTH GROUP STUDY

# THE FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE

## GENESIS 31-36

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

Who is the strongest person you know? How do they show their strength?

Jacob spent many years away from his parents and brother. Re-read why he left and what God promised him as he was departing in Genesis 27v41-45; 28v10-19.

### READ GENESIS 32v1-21

1. Why does Jacob divide up his family and possessions into two groups and send gifts ahead?

### READ GENESIS 32v22-32

2. How does Jacob try to attain a blessing?
3. Jacob doesn't realise the man he's struggling with is actually God until afterwards. How does he react when he does realise?
4. Who is strongest in this encounter? Why do you think that?

### READ GENESIS 33

5. Describe Jacob's attitude to Esau.
6. In light of God's promises to Jacob, should he be fearing his brother? Or wrestling blessing from God?

7. What aspects of God's character should Jacob be trusting? (Hint: pay attention to the meaning of place names)

**READ GENESIS 34**

8. How is Shechem behaving like Adam and Eve? (Genesis 3v6)

9. How does the narrative show that Shechem's actions are immoral despite his claim to love Dinah?

10. What do you make of Simeon and Levi's actions? (See also Genesis 49v5-7)

11. What is ironic about Jacob's fears when he is living in El Elohe Israel?

**READ GENESIS 35**

12. How does Jacob respond to God's command, given what he knows about God from his first encounter at Bethel?

13. Why do you think God changes Jacob's name to Israel?

14. What do you notice about God's promises to Jacob?

**READ GENESIS 36v1-8 AND CAST YOUR EYE OVER THE REST OF THE CHAPTER.**

Despite Jacob stealing his blessing, God makes a great nation from Esau (also called Edom). Throughout the rest of the Old Testament, Israel are told to treat Edom as a brother nation. Yet there is a lot of conflict as Edom is contemptuous (eg Numbers 20v14-21); and Israel wins many battles (eg 2 Samuel 8; 2 Kings 14). Esau now fades into the background



as the narrative traces through Jacob's family line. God uses his mighty power to bless and protect Jacob.

**READ PHILIPPIANS 1v27-30; 3v18-4v1**

15.How do we know that Jesus is mighty?

16.How does God use his mighty power to bless and protect those who are in Christ?

17.Can you trust God's mighty power to bless and protect you?

18.How will that show in your life, with the fears you have at the moment?

**READ REVELATION 21v22-22v5**

19.What hope do we have of being spared to see God face to face, and be in his house?

20.God doesn't promise us health, wealth and happiness now. Instead, we're promised suffering along with our Saviour. How does a future hope of resurrection and eternal life with Jesus encourage and comfort you now?

#11

BIBLE TALK

# THE FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE

GENESIS 31-36

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

# STILL AT WORK

## GENESIS 37-50

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

### GETTING STARTED

The story of Joseph and his brothers is pretty famous and well-known to us (thanks Andrew Lloyd-Webber!) We're going to read back through the story again today and hopefully you'll see something new in a familiar story. The book of Genesis ends with these words from Joseph to his brothers: 'You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.' As we read through today, notice how God is bringing about his good purposes of salvation despite the evil intentions of the people.

We want to read through it all, so we're going to keep the questions to a minimum as we try to see the big picture. If you're getting tired of reading out loud, you could play a reading from a Bible app.

### READ GENESIS 37

1. Jacob clothes his favourite son with an ornate robe, giving him great honour. Clothing in Genesis hides shame (see God's clothing of Adam and Eve in Ch 3 and Noah's sons in Ch 9). But Joseph's brothers strip him of it (killing a goat to deceive the deceiving Jacob), and it looks like even God has abandoned Joseph in an empty well (where he has previously been providing water, see Ch 26). How does this story echo what happens with Cain and Abel?

### READ GENESIS 38

2. The story switches scenes to another brother, Judah. Judah was active in sending Joseph to slavery and deceiving their father. But he's passive in this story, where he doesn't seem to care enough about continuing the family line, as God has commanded repeatedly (eg Ch 1v28; 9v7; 35v11). In a clever parallel to the previous story, Tamar takes Judah's cord (or robe) as a promise for a goat payment, and he is left shamed. How is Tamar judged to be righteous in this story?

### READ GENESIS 39-41

3. Joseph is derobed again, this time by Potiphar's wife. How does God bring him honour at each turn, instead of shame?

### READ GENESIS 42

4. What's Joseph's plan in keeping Simeon in prison?

### READ GENESIS 43

5. What is ironic about Judah's interaction with his father?

**READ GENESIS 44**

6. What is Joseph's plan in planting the silver cup in Benjamin's sack?

**READ GENESIS 45v1-46v7**

7. Joseph has been deceiving his brothers. How does he treat them in the big reveal?

8. Why does he respond this way?

**CAST YOUR EYE OVER ALL THE NAMES IN THE REST OF CHAPTER, 46v8-25, THEN READ 46v26-47v31.**

9. How is God providing for Jacob and his family?

10. How is God blessing even Pharaoh, for Joseph's sake?

**READ GENESIS 48v1-49v28**

11. How does this story echo previous blessings of brothers?

12. What do you think it shows about the way God works?

**READ GENESIS 49v29-50v26**

13. Which sons' blessings stand out to you?

14. Why do you think it's so important for both Jacob and Joseph to be buried in the cave near Mamre?

The book ends on a hopeful note, as God has been keeping the promises of a large nation and blessing to Abraham and his family. Joseph is certain they will receive the land God promised. But there are also hints that Israel will have a hard time in Egypt first... the rest is history!

**READ ACTS 2v22-24**

15.How does Jesus' story echo Joseph's?

16.What does this show us about God?

17.How is this a comfort and encouragement to us?

Thank God that he is always in control, even in the midst of evil. Praise him that nothing can stop or thwart his plans to bless his people. Thank him for overcoming evil through the death of Jesus and forgiving us for our evil intentions and harmful actions. Ask him to comfort you when you face evil or you can't understand what he's doing; that you'd trust him and his promises.

#12

BIBLE TALK

# STILL AT WORK

GENESIS 37-50

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

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