



BIBLE READING GUIDE

WEEK 3 PREVIEW

This week's readings will bring us through the remainder of Jacob's story and focus especially on the story of Joseph's travails and triumphs. Compare and contrast the character of these two figures. Jacob's life is marked by deception, Joseph's by integrity. Finally, this story is one of deliverance, the exodus, by moving Jacob's family to Egypt.

READING HELPS

- DAY 1**
Genesis
30–33
- Notice the progression that takes place in these chapters. Jacob's family and wealth grow. He then separates from Laban and moves his family back toward the Promised Land. A crisis arises and Jacob wrestles with an angelic being who represents God and changes his name from Jacob to Israel (*God strives*). This is a turning point in Jacob's life.
 - What does this passage teach you about how God's blessing often comes through struggle?
- DAY 2**
Genesis
34–37
- Notice the motives and the craftiness of Jacob's sons. They are deceptive like their father.
 - Jacob's favoritism of Joseph creates problems within his family. Yet God worked through his dysfunctional family. He can work through your family as well!
- DAY 3**
Genesis
38–40
- Genesis 38 shows why God removes the Israelites out of Canaan and into Egypt. They are acting like Canaanites!
 - Look for several repeated statements about Joseph in chapter 39.
- DAY 4**
Genesis
41–43
- These chapters remind us of God's sovereign orchestrating of events in the lives of people and nations. Remember, this is God's story!
 - How might God's purpose in Joseph's waiting be related to His timing of events in your life?
- DAY 5**
Genesis
44–46
- As you read these chapters, be on the lookout for various expressions of God's grace.
- DAY 6**
Genesis
47–50
- Notice how Joseph is a channel of God's blessing all the way to the end.
 - How might you bless someone today?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think it so natural to question God's goodness in bad situations?
2. How did Joseph's faithfulness make him a fitting vessel for God's use?
3. Why do we often seek to blame others for our circumstances?
4. What is most often our attitude toward God when our plans are prevented from being successful?

PRAYER

Lord, I've never experienced the kind of injustice that Joseph did at the hands of his brothers and then Potiphar's wife. Yet, you had a plan for his life. You promoted him through his struggles. Please help me to see your goodness and providential hand throughout the affairs of my life. Amen.