

THE BOOK OF

Genesis

BIBLE STUDY GUIDES FOR SMALL GROUPS

RELATIONAL BIBLE STUDY SERIES

CREATED BY STEVE CASE

Creation

OPENING QUESTION

What is your earliest memory?

READ Genesis 1:1—2:25.

1. What does “in the beginning” tell you?

- A. This is when it all started.
- B. The opening of a story, like “once upon a time.”
- C. God is creative—right from the start.
- D. This will take faith, since nobody but God was present (*Heb. 11:3*).
- E. Every cultural group has to have a beginning story; this is for Jews.
- F. The Trinity was present (God, spoke/word, spirit of God).
- G. The Bible supports baseball: “In the big inning.”
- H. The beginning begins with God.
- I. Other.

2. God pronounced his creation “good,” which means:

- A. Good.
- B. It’s all good.
- C. Nobody else was around to say otherwise.
- D. God don’t make no junk.
- E. It culminates in “very good” found in *Gen. 1:31*.
- F. This stands in contrast to *Gen. 2:18*.
- G. God created the earth sin-free/unbroken.
- H. God sets the standard.
- I. Other.

3. What does it mean for humans to be made in the image of God?

- A. Humans are just like God.
- B. Humans are gods.
- C. God gave humans dominion over the earth.
- D. Humans have abilities no other part of creation has.
- E. God created humans for divine companionship and intimacy.
- F. *Imago Dei* (Latin for the “image of God”).
- G. The image of God requires both genders, not just one.
- H. Humans are similar, but not identical to God.
- I. Other.

4. Why did God rest on the seventh day of creation?

- A. He was tired.
- B. He had accomplished enough to finally enjoy it.
- C. So we could keep the Sabbath for the rest of history.
- D. To create a sanctuary in time.
- E. This oriented humans for intimacy with God on their first full day.
- F. This started the rhythm of work and relaxation.
- G. So when sin entered, people could recalibrate each week.
- H. Creation made the entire world a sanctuary; it was time to worship.
- I. Other.

5. What stands out in your mind about God's creation of humans?

- A. God personally formed humans rather than speaking them into being.
- B. We are made of dust, and we will return to dust.
- C. God breathes life into dirt.
- D. The order/sequencing of creation.
- E. God's choice to make only man first; and then woman.
- F. God's plan for humans to be fruitful and multiply.
- G. Why did he do this when he knew in advance what would happen?
- H. God made humans in his own image.
- I. Other.

6. Why did God create woman?

- A. To complete the image of God.
- B. He didn't mean to do so.
- C. It's not good for a man to be alone (*Genesis 2:18*).
- D. Companionship and intimacy.
- E. This replicates the Trinity with the 3-part union of God, male, female.
- F. All the other animals had a partner suitable to them; why not humans?
- G. To force humans to rely on supernatural help to co-exist and thrive.
- H. So humans could be fruitful and multiply (*Genesis 1:28*).
- I. Other.

7. How do you reconcile the Biblical account of creation with current scientific statements about origins?

8. How does the story of creation impact your perspective and how you live today?

The Fall

OPENING QUESTION

What is one thing that happened (or didn't happen) to you today because of Adam and Eve's Fall in the Garden of Eden?

READ **Genesis 3:1-24.**

1. How did Satan tempt Eve?

- A. Very effectively.
- B. He spoke through one of God's created animals rather than directly.
- C. Raised doubts about God's instructions.
- D. Got her when Adam wasn't by her side.
- E. Told only part of the story.
- F. Lied to Eve.
- G. Promised her more than she had.
- H. He appealed to her ego.
- I. Other.

2. What would have been a better response from Eve?

- A. Run.
- B. Consult with her spouse first.
- C. Consult with God first.
- D. Don't get into a dialogue with the Devil.
- E. She was doomed from the start.
- F. Depend on her head.
- G. Depend on her heart.
- H. "In the name of Jesus Christ, come out of this snake, Satan!"
- I. Other.

3. What was Adam doing while Satan tempted Eve?

- A. Nothing.
- B. Working in another part of the garden.
- C. He was the strong, silent type.
- D. Doing his personal devotions.
- E. Riding a giraffe or a lion.
- F. Quietly beside her.
- G. Adam was part of the dialogue with the serpent, but it's not recorded.
- H. Minding his own business.
- I. Other.

4. What happened when Adam and Even sinned?

- A. They died.
- B. They started to die.
- C. This began “the blame game.”
- D. God could no longer commune face-to-face with humans.
- E. Humans began to know both good and evil.
- F. Humans ran from God.
- G. God went in search of humans.
- H. Satan obtained dominion of this world.
- I. Other.

5. What does *verse 15* mean?

- A. Earth will experience on-going war.
- B. Some will die.
- C. Some will be wounded.
- D. Women will hate snakes.
- E. Snakes will attack women.
- F. There will be lots of stomping.
- G. Satan will one day be defeated.
- H. God promised a Savior and ultimate Winner at The Fall.
- I. Other.

6. What was involved in “the curse”?

- A. Taking God’s name in vain.
- B. Pain in childbirth.
- C. The ground won’t always produce.
- D. Making lots of mistakes.
- E. Banishment from the Garden of Eden and the Tree of Life.
- F. The start of a sinful nature.
- G. Snakes are no longer awesome.
- H. A broken relationship with God.
- I. Other.

7. Whose fault was it that Adam and Eve sinned?

8. How are you affected because of Adam and Eve?

Sin Brings Death

OPENING QUESTION

What is something, big or small, that's died in your world in the past year?

READ **Genesis 4:1-5:32.**

1. How did Cain come to be?

- A. The fulfilment of God's admonition in *Genesis 1:28*.
- B. Adam "knew" his wife, Eve.
- C. It involved a lot of pain (*Genesis 3:16*).
- D. God's help.
- E. Adam's help.
- F. Eve was on her own.
- G. Eve named him "Gotten from the Lord," fulfilling *Genesis 3:15*.
- H. Very much like his parents, due to heredity and environment.
- I. Other.

2. Why did God accept Abel's offering, but not Cain's offering?

- A. God prefers lambs over farm produce.
- B. God liked Abel, but didn't like Cain (similar to *Romans 9:13*).
- C. Abel gave the right gift; Cain didn't.
- D. It seems unfair to me in this brief description.
- E. Abel's gift came with faith (*Hebrews 11:4*).
- F. It didn't have to be such a big deal.
- G. This illustrates righteousness by faith and righteousness by works.
- H. Cain wanted to do it his own way, and that wasn't God's way.
- I. Other.

3. Why did Cain kill Abel?

- A. Cain was very angry.
- B. Abel was a mama's boy.
- C. God hadn't accepted Cain's offering, so Cain took it out on Abel.
- D. He only meant to hurt him; not actually kill him.
- E. Cain saw Abel as a threat.
- F. Abel goaded Cain to do it.
- G. Sin went from independence to feeling rejected, to brooding, to death.
- H. Cain was unwilling to deal with his sinful/selfish attitude and actions.
- I. Other.

4. How would you have corrected Cain?

- A. Spank him.
- B. Give him a major time out.
- C. Demand an explanation.
- D. Put him in a maximum security prison with armed guards.
- E. Make him become a shepherd to replace Abel.
- F. Hold a grudge.
- G. Have him begin counseling sessions.
- H. Kick him out of the house.
- I. Other.

5. What became of Cain's genealogy?

- A. It mimics Seth's genealogy in many ways.
- B. Cain started cities.
- C. The first musicians and musical instruments came through Cain.
- D. Cain's descendants were stronger and more numerous than Abel's.
- E. This marked the start of metallurgy.
- F. The first mention of polygamy came through Cain's line.
- G. It continues until the Flood, and then it disappears forever.
- H. Murder begets more murder.
- I. Other.

6. What grabs your attention in the Genesis 5 genealogies?

- A. How many years they lived.
- B. Only male names get presented, in spite of verse 2.
- C. The variety.
- D. The brief Enoch story.
- E. I look for who lived the longest.
- F. How old they were when they had their first child.
- G. Nothing in particular.
- H. It took Noah 500 years to get three sons.
- I. Other.

7. Are you your brother's keeper? If so, what does that mean? If not, why not?

8. Do these early chapters of Genesis feed your optimism or your pessimism? Why?

The Flood

OPENING QUESTION

What is the worst rain storm you've experienced?

READ Genesis 6:1-8:22.

1. Who are the “sons of God” and the “daughters of humans” (Gen 6:2, 4)?

- A. Supernatural and natural beings.
- B. Males and females in a patriarchal society.
- C. A poor translation that makes no sense.
- D. A contrast of the two genealogies from Genesis 4 and 5.
- E. Tall men and fertile women.
- F. Degradation of Godly people who marry worldly people.
- G. Smart men and beautiful women.
- H. Angels and humans.
- I. Other.

2. How wicked was the earth when the Flood came?

- A. Very, very wicked.
- B. Similar to what life on earth is like now.
- C. Worse than what life on earth is like now.
- D. Better than what life on earth is like now.
- E. Evil thoughts continually.
- F. What life will be like when Christ returns the second time.
- G. Violent.
- H. Corrupt.
- I. Other.

3. Who destroyed the earth with the Flood?

- A. God.
- B. Satan.
- C. Humans.
- D. Bad humans.
- E. The forces of Nature.
- F. Climate change.
- G. Nobody knows.
- H. It was only a local flood, not a world-wide flood.
- I. Other.

4. What was God's covenant with Noah (Gen 6:18)?

- A. God would never destroy the earth with a flood of water again.
- B. Obey God.
- C. Construct an ark on dry land.
- D. Preach for 120 years.
- E. Take animals into the ark.
- F. Go into the ark yourself.
- G. I will protect you and your family from the Flood.
- H. Take additional clean animals for sacrifices and to eat.
- I. Other.

5. What does this pyramid structure (chiasm) in the Flood story tell you?

God remembers Noah (8:1)	
150 days water / (7:24)	150 days water \ (8:3)
40 days flood (7:17)	40 days for dry land (8:6)
7 days wait for flood (7:10)	7 days wait for 1st dove (8:10)
7 days waiting for rain (7:4)	7 days waiting for 2nd dove (8:12)

6. What would it have been like to be inside the ark?

- A. Lonely.
- B. Noisy.
- C. Stinky.
- D. A relief.
- E. A family reunion.
- F. A worship experience.
- G. A zoo.
- H. Quite a ride.
- I. Other.

7. How is the church similar to Noah's ark? How is it different?

8. Where are you on the continuum after reading the Flood story?

PESSIMISTIC

OPTIMISTIC

Descendants

OPENING QUESTION

How far back can you go with your family line?

READ Genesis 9:1-11:32.

1. What changed from God's first "be fruitful and multiply" (1:28) to the second (9:1,7)?

- A. Nothing.
- B. The Fall.
- C. The Flood.
- D. The second one included animals.
- E. Eternal life wasn't an option with the second command.
- F. From vegan to carnivores.
- G. Decreasing lifespan over time.
- H. Larger population with the second.
- I. Other.

2. Is the death penalty "Biblical"?

- A. Yes.
- B. No.
- C. Only for murder.
- D. Consequences need to match the wrong action/disobedience/evil.
- E. Include other parts of the Bible, not just *Genesis* 9.
- F. This limits retribution to equality (eye for eye) rather than inequality (2 eyes for 1 eye).
- G. This matches *Micah* 6:8.
- H. Human "lifeblood" seems important to God.
- I. Other.

3. What was God's covenant with Noah?

- A. Never destroy the earth again.
- B. Never destroy the earth again with water.
- C. Savior will be sent to save you from your sins.
- D. Symbolized by a rainbow.
- E. Different from his covenant with Noah in 6:18.
- F. It extended to Noah's descendants and even to animals.
- G. Humans have no power or control with this covenant.
- H. The earth would return to this condition at Christ's Second Coming.
- I. Other.

4. Why is family lineage so important?

- A. It gives identity.
- B. It provides belonging.
- C. God created families in the beginning, before The Fall.
- D. It's too limiting.
- E. Each family has both good and bad in it.
- F. Each family has a reputation.
- G. Family is important only in Bible times.
- H. It impacts one's heredity and environment.
- I. Other.

5. The Tower of Babel story: What stands out in your mind THE MOST?

- A. Confusion.
- B. Rebellion against God.
- C. How much of the story I remember isn't necessarily in the Bible.
- D. God considered the people unstoppable without his intervention.
- E. When people congregate, bad things happen.
- F. Language matters.
- G. This demonstrates the human attempt to be God.
- H. "Babel" is probably the best app available today for translating.
- I. Other.

6. What did you notice from the genealogy in 11:10-26?

- A. There are a lot of genealogies in the Bible.
- B. These names aren't as difficult to pronounce as the earlier ones.
- C. I finally recognized some names.
- D. God seems to have favorites.
- E. The first birth in a family comes earlier in the father's life.
- F. God picked a family line.
- G. Decreasing lifespan.
- H. Other.

7. In which family line would you like to be a descendant? Why?

8. Have things gotten better or worse since the Flood story?

On the Trust Trail

OPENING QUESTION

In your childhood, what fed (or starved) your ability to trust?

READ Genesis 12:1-20.

1. What's included in the call of Abram?

- A. Abram's named got changed to Abraham.
- B. Abram initiated it.
- C. A promise of many descendants.
- D. Protection.
- E. Obedience.
- F. Departing from the known and going to the unknown.
- G. A long life.
- H. A promise that the Redeemer would come through his family line.
- I. Other.

2. Who went with Abram to the land of Canaan?

- A. Sarai.
- B. Isaac.
- C. Terah.
- D. Lot.
- E. Lot's dad, Haran.
- F. Nahor and Milcah.
- G. Lots of servants.
- H. The Children of Israel.
- I. Converts to Yahweh from the town of Haran.
- J. Other.

3. Why did Abram build altars in Canaan?

- A. So he could worship Yahweh.
- B. It was the worship practice in Canaan.
- C. This showed the Canaanites a new way of worship.
- D. God told Abram to do this.
- E. It established a sense of permanence—a place for daily worship.
- F. It enabled Abram and his family to be mobile—just build another one.
- G. This contrasted the worship of Yahweh with the worship of idols.
- H. To prepare him to one day have to sacrifice his son on an altar.
- I. Other.

4. Why do you think Abram responded to God's call?

- A. Abram already had a relationship with Yahweh.
- B. He had nothing to lose.
- C. His dad had already died.
- D. This was Abram's chance to finally have children.
- E. Abram wanted riches.
- F. Seemed like a reasonable risk.
- G. God's promise to make a great nation through Abram.
- H. He wanted to be a blessing to the whole world.
- I. Other.

5. Why did Abram tell the Egyptians that Sarai was his sister?

- A. She was his sister.
- B. It was half true.
- C. It was half false.
- D. It was deceptive.
- E. Sarai was a head-turning beauty.
- F. It didn't seem God was providing protection for Abram at that time.
- G. Abram wanted to save his own neck.
- H. It seemed like a good plan at the time.
- I. Other.

6. Why was Pharaoh so angry with Abram?

- A. Abram had deceived Pharaoh.
- B. Pharaoh lost his temper easily.
- C. Pharaoh expected Sarai's children would come from him, not from Abram.
- D. The Egyptian society was based on trust, which Abram violated.
- E. Pharaoh felt set up to violate sexual mores of his time and culture.
- F. All those gifts to Abram were now a waste.
- G. Abram couldn't be trusted.
- H. Other.

7. When has God called you to an unknown future requiring trust in Him?

8. When are you more likely to trust yourself more than God?

The Best Place to Live

OPENING QUESTION

If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be?

READ **Genesis 13:1-14:24.**

1. Why was Abram so rich?

- A. God had blessed him.
- B. Pharaoh enriched Abram because of Abram's "sister" Sarai.
- C. It had been a good year.
- D. Abram defeated many villages and took their spoils.
- E. Abram proved to be a good businessman.
- F. He inherited his wealth from his dad.
- G. He followed his business plan and it paid off.
- H. Everyone else was just poor in comparison.
- I. Other.

2. Why did Lot choose to relocate near Sodom?

- A. Sodom was the happening place.
- B. It was obviously the best location.
- C. Abram gave him the first choice.
- D. Marketing studies pointed this direction.
- E. Lot had too much to be near Abram, but not too much for Sodom.
- F. His wife yearned for Sodom.
- G. Country living was never his thing.
- H. He showed no evidence of spiritual consideration in his decision.
- I. This was Yahweh's way of blessing Lot.
- J. Other.

3. What good is it to repeat God's promises when they aren't fulfilled?

- A. It's a waste of time, or just a distraction from harsh realities.
- B. God's promises serve as reminders.
- C. It keeps people brainwashed.
- D. It's a proclamation of faith.
- E. It's a test of faith.
- F. God's promises provide help and guidance when things look bleak.
- G. The promise counts more than the time it takes to be fulfilled.
- H. Other.

4. Why did Lot get captured and plundered?

- A. He lived in the best place.
- B. He happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.
- C. He lived near Sodom.
- D. He lived in Sodom.
- E. He was part of the rebellion to stop paying annual tribute.
- F. He tried to get away, but he had too much stuff to protect.
- G. To free him from worldly possessions.
- H. The “good life” also includes a certain amount of bad stuff, too.
- I. Other.

5. Why did Abram defeat the four kings?

- A. His group outnumbered them.
- B. It was a surprise attack.
- C. Abram’s night goggles gave his group a decided advantage.
- D. Yahweh was on Abram’s side.
- E. The victors were drunk, celebrating their victory over all their foes.
- F. God told Abram to do it and he would be given the victory.
- G. Abram’s household was battle hardened and experienced in war.
- H. He got lucky.
- I. Other.

6. Why did Abram give a tenth of all he had recovered?

- A. It was more convenient than giving online.
- B. That was the custom in the land.
- C. Melchizedek was the only other person who worshiped Yahweh.
- D. Melchizedek was a priest of the Creator of heaven and earth.
- E. Melchizedek was a king.
- F. Melchizedek provided refreshments.
- G. God set this up to be the way to pay for his future fulltime clergy.
- H. Other.

7. What led you to choose the place where you now live?

8. Why do you tithe (or not tithe)? What has been the result financially and spiritually?

Promises, Promises

OPENING QUESTION

What's a promise you've made? When are you likely to make a promise?

READ Genesis 15:1-17:27.

1. Why did Abram believe God's promise of descendants (15:6)?

- A. God had delivered on his previous promises.
- B. God had just saved him (and Lot and the others) following the raid.
- C. Abram simply took God at his word.
- D. He really wasn't completely sure.
- E. Abram had nowhere else to turn.
- F. It came from God, and you're supposed to trust God.
- G. Abram's lifestyle testified to his trust in God's promise.
- H. To please God.
- I. Other.

2. What is your understanding of Genesis 15:16?

- A. Being chosen by God doesn't mean happy times all the time.
- B. God has a time clock ticking.
- C. Different groups have different times.
- D. God's people will leave the Promised Land, and return years later.
- E. I find this verse confusing.
- F. This verse makes several things clear to me.
- G. God can't be trusted.
- H. God can be trusted.
- I. Time plays a role in how God deals with sin and promises.
- J. Other.

3. Why did Abram father a child with Hagar?

- A. Sarai told him to do it.
- B. Sarai suggested he do it.
- C. Abram decided to do it.
- D. Hagar suggested this arrangement.
- E. God told him to do it.
- F. To be an example for Rachel and Leah later with Jacob.
- G. God wasn't doing anything to fulfil the promise of a child.
- H. Other.

4. How did God relate to Hagar?

- A. Contempt.
- B. Salvation.
- C. Dialogue.
- D. Promise.
- E. Instructive.
- F. Inclusive.
- G. Judgment.
- H. Warning.
- I. Other.

5. What's the deal with circumcision?

- A. A physical sign.
- B. A physical sign of a spiritual covenant.
- C. What one would expect from a male-dominated culture.
- D. It increases fertility.
- E. Sex and sexual organs are important to God.
- F. It seems a little crazy to me.
- G. God should provide something to include covenant females, too.
- H. It's included in "obedience to God."
- I. Other.

6. Why did God fulfil the covenant through Isaac instead of Ishmael?

- A. God had chosen Abram and Sarai, not Abram and Hagar.
- B. Ishmael was conceived out of man's work, not God's gift.
- C. God never liked Ishmael.
- D. God heard Hagar and Ismael, but God didn't choose them.
- E. Isaac symbolized God's promise.
- F. This demonstrates the conflict between good and evil.
- G. That was God's promise.
- H. Other.

7. What promise(s) of God for you are still unfulfilled?

8. What do you find difficult to believe?

What a Mess

OPENING QUESTION

If something bad is about to happen would you want to know in advance or just let it happen?

READ **Genesis 18:1-19:18.**

1. What's the significance of the three surprising guests visiting Abraham?

- A. It was such a surprise.
- B. God visited Abraham in person.
- C. They had good news.
- D. They had bad news.
- E. They ate meat.
- F. The number three symbolizes God.
- G. They visited Abraham in the mountains before visiting Lot in Sodom.
- H. Other.

2. Why didn't Sarah believe the promise of bearing a son within a year?

- A. Too many unfulfilled promises.
- B. Too many years had passed.
- C. She was post-menopausal.
- D. Abraham was so old.
- E. Do you really have to ask?
- F. It was laughable.
- G. Even God couldn't pull off this one.
- H. She didn't expect the visitors to know she had laughed and then lied.
- I. She was too busy fixing a feast for the uninvited guests.
- J. Other.

3. What happened with the LORD's dialogue with Abraham?

- A. God included Abraham in the divine plan.
- B. God is soft-hearted, but firm.
- C. God wanted to see Abraham struggle with justice and mercy.
- D. God allowed Abraham to bargain with him.
- E. Abraham knew how to negotiate.
- F. Abraham thought he had saved Sodom.
- G. God chatted with Abraham and sent the angels to do the dirty work.
- H. Other.

4. What was the MOST OUTLANDISH THING that happened the last night in Sodom?

- A. The angels suggested they would sleep in the town square.
- B. Lot prepared a feast for them.
- C. The men of the city formed a mob and came after the angels.
- D. The men demanded to have access to sexually dominate the visitors.
- E. Lot offered his two virgin daughters for sex in place of the two visitors.
- F. The angels saved Lot and his daughters, and blinded the mob.
- G. The daughters' fiancés didn't believe Lot's warnings.
- H. Other.

5. What was the sin of Sodom?

- A. So much evil that its stench reached to high heaven.
- B. Sexual perversion.
- C. Homosexuality.
- D. The desire to dominate.
- E. Lack of hospitality to the poor and needy (*Ezekiel 16:49*).
- F. Pride, gluttony, and laziness (*Ezekiel 16:49 NLT*).
- G. Poor eyesight.
- H. Other.

6. What is your take-away from the story of Lot's daughters?

- A. They needed their mother.
- B. They should have stayed with their fiancés.
- C. The sudden move incapacitated their dad.
- D. They experienced a sudden loss of available bachelors.
- E. Sometimes you have to take things into your own hands.
- F. Their short-term actions had long-term consequences.
- G. They should have moved in with Abraham.
- H. Other.

7. What would you do if God visited? Has God ever visited you (*see Hebrews 13:2*)?

8. What do you consider to be some of the worst sins?

Ups and Downs

OPENING QUESTION

Do you experience lots of extremes, general stability, or both?

READ Genesis 20:1-21:34.

1. Why did Abraham lie about Sarah being his sister, again (12:10-20)?

- A. It seemed to work out so well when they did this earlier with Pharaoh.
- B. That was the agreement the two had for traveling about Canaan.
- C. Abraham still lacked complete trust in God.
- D. Everyone blows it sometime(s).
- E. Abraham still didn't have a son, so he needed to protect himself.
- F. Gerar was a God-forsaken place, with pagan people.
- G. Past mistakes need correction or we repeat them by default.
- H. It wasn't a lie; she was his (half) sister.
- I. Other.

2. Why did God dialogue with Abimelech, king of Gerar?

- A. Abraham wasn't talking to Abimelech about God.
- B. Abraham wasn't talking to God about Abimelech.
- C. Abimelech was a friend of God.
- D. Abimelech was related to Melchizedek.
- E. God wanted to prevent him from unknowingly committing adultery.
- F. To save Abimelech and his family from annihilation.
- G. To save Sarah.
- H. So Sarah wouldn't think Isaac came from Abimelech's seed.
- I. Other.

3. Why did Abraham need to pray for Abimelech?

- A. God told Abraham to do so.
- B. God told Abimelech to ask Abraham to pray for him.
- C. Abraham was a prophet (one who proclaims Yahweh).
- D. The guilty had to pray for the innocent.
- E. Abraham had missed his chance to pray for Pharaoh earlier (12:20).
- F. To restore fertility to the women in Abimelech's kingdom.
- G. To make Sarah fertile as well.
- H. God wanted to bless everyone through Abraham.
- I. Other.

4. Why was the son of promise named Isaac (“he laughs”)?

- A. Funny you should ask.
- B. The name ran in the family.
- C. God has a sense of humor.
- D. The birth of Isaac was ridiculously funny.
- E. Isaac created a lot of laughter wherever he went.
- F. This was payback from *Genesis 17:17* and *18:12*.
- G. This was a prediction about the future (*Genesis 21:6-7*).
- H. Everyone had been laughing at Abraham and Sarah for years.
- I. Other.

5. What did Abraham give Hagar and Ishmael?

- A. Not much.
- B. Their lives.
- C. The family name.
- D. Half of the family wealth.
- E. A God they could trust.
- F. Pain and sorrow.
- G. God’s blessing to become a great nation.
- H. Enough to last a little while.
- I. Other.

6. Why did Abimelech seek a treaty with Abraham?

- A. He could see God had blessed Abraham.
- B. He feared Abraham’s military might.
- C. He wanted a shared future with Abraham’s family.
- D. He still wasn’t over Sarah.
- E. Individual Canaanite kings sought alliances.
- F. When we don’t take people to God, God brings them to us.
- G. Phicol (the commander) put Abimelech up to it.
- H. Other.

7. Why is God’s timing so confounding to humans?

8. What do you find troubling about God in these chapters? What do you find troubling about God today?

What a Sacrifice!

OPENING QUESTION

Do you prefer a story about love at first sight, or a relationship that gradually turns into love?

READ Genesis 22:1-24.

1. Why did God test Abraham in such an extreme way?

- A. God was tired of Abraham's unfaithfulness in calling Sarah his sister.
- B. This would demonstrate Abraham's faith to the pagans in Canaan.
- C. It prepared Abraham for something greater.
- D. This revealed the plan of salvation to Abraham and all who followed.
- E. It wasn't God who set up this test.
- F. We don't know all that transpired in the 20 years that led to this.
- G. It increased Abraham's intimacy with God who sacrificed his Son.
- H. So Abraham wouldn't make his child his God.
- I. Other.

2. How was this different from God's call for Abraham to leave Ur?

- A. The people in Canaan weren't as wicked.
- B. God's voice was more easily recognized by Abraham at this time.
- C. Abraham finally had a son.
- D. Abraham had two sons.
- E. Abraham now had more wealth.
- F. Abraham now had more faith.
- G. Abraham was a lot older.
- H. Sarah wasn't part of the discussion this time.
- I. Other.

3. What would be your response to Isaac's question, "Where's the lamb?"

- A. There are plenty of lambs around; we'll find one.
- B. I thought you brought the lamb.
- C. We don't need a lamb.
- D. Ask me that same question tomorrow.
- E. God will provide a lamb.
- F. None of your business.
- G. You're it!
- H. I don't want to talk about it right now.
- I. Other.

4. Why did Isaac allow himself to be sacrificed by his dad?

- A. Abraham was still a great, strong warrior.
- B. Isaac had learned to obey his father.
- C. Isaac had learned to trust his father.
- D. Isaac had learned to trust God.
- E. Isaac believed God would resurrect him.
- F. It was a struggle for him.
- G. He willingly laid down his life.
- H. With a dad like that, why would you want to keep living?
- I. Other.

5. When are you likely to withhold your child/children from God?

- A. God would never put me through a test like that.
- B. I would never go through a test like that the way Abraham did.
- C. When I can do something about the situation myself.
- D. God entrusted them to me to protect them.
- E. When I've invested more in them than I've invested in God.
- F. When my gut tells me to do so.
- G. When they're doing just what I want them to do.
- H. When they're not doing what I want them to do.
- I. Other.

6. After returning home, what would you have said to Sarah.

- A. That was an unbelievable camping trip!
- B. You should have come with us.
- C. Sit down; I've got something to tell you.
- D. Isaac has a story for you.
- E. I really missed you.
- F. I've now experienced something that words can't express.
- G. God blew me away.
- H. Other.

7. What do you do when what you want seems the opposite of what God wants you to do?

8. When has the LORD provided for you in a surprising way (vs. 13-14)?

Love Story

OPENING QUESTION

Do you prefer a story about love at first sight, or lots of twists and turns?

READ **Genesis 23:1-24:67.**

1. Why did Abraham need a family burial plot?

- A. The love is his life had died.
- B. This was only the first of more deaths to come.
- C. He wasn't going to ever return to Ur.
- D. God had promised him land, but Abraham still didn't have any.
- E. That's the way the Hittites did life (and death).
- F. This would diversify Abraham's portfolio.
- G. Abraham really didn't need it.
- H. He was so "done" with being nomadic.
- I. Other.

2. Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman?

- A. Canaanite women were wicked.
- B. A Canaanite wife would lead Isaac into polytheism.
- C. No Canaanite woman seemed good enough for his son.
- D. God had told Abraham Isaac shouldn't marry a Canaanite.
- E. It's always better to marry within the family.
- F. It's always better to marry within the faith.
- G. This could be a good way to get other relatives to immigrate.
- H. God had a specific, non-Canaanite person picked for Isaac to marry.
- I. Other.

3. What do you think of the servant's prayer request at the well (24:14)?

- A. The servant had a lot of faith.
- B. This was like a "hail Mary" pass in hopes of a receiver.
- C. This was a common practice at the time.
- D. It seems like the request could be fulfilled easily.
- E. It seems like the request could be fulfilled only by a miracle.
- F. There are other ways that would have been better.
- G. This is the way I get direction from God, too.
- H. It makes for a good story.
- I. Other.

4. What qualities did Laban seem to have?

- A. Hospitable.
- B. Opportunistic.
- C. Protective.
- D. Loyal.
- E. Involved.
- F. Deceptive.
- G. Perceptive.
- H. Diligent.
- I. Other.

5. Who had a say in securing Rebekah as Isaac's wife?

- A. Abraham.
- B. Isaac.
- C. Abraham's servant.
- D. Yahweh.
- E. Rebekah.
- F. Laban.
- G. Bethuel.
- H. Nahor and Milcah.
- I. Other.

6. What blessing would you give your child who is leaving for forever?

- A. Good luck.
- B. God bless.
- C. Go with God.
- D. Hope to see you again.
- E. May you become the mother of millions.
- F. Peace, prosperity, and I sure hope Isaac is a decent guy.
- G. You're always welcome back here.
- H. Other.

7. How did Isaac and Rebekah's wedding compare to weddings today?

8. How is the love story of Isaac and Rebekah different from/similar to your relationship with God?

The Next Generation

OPENING QUESTION

What causes a family to transition from one generation to the next?

READ **Genesis 25:1-26:35.**

1. What did Isaac receive in terms of blessings?

- A. Direct communication from God.
- B. All of Abraham's wealth.
- C. His life was spared multiple times.
- D. All rival siblings/half-siblings were sent away.
- E. Lots of wives.
- F. Lots of children.
- G. Lots of land.
- H. Lots of promises.
- I. Other.

2. What is the significance of Ishmael's descendants?

- A. They were descendants of Abraham, the man of Yahweh's promises.
- B. There were 12 sons, just like Jacob had 12 sons.
- C. They seemed to get along with each other.
- D. God blessed them.
- E. They stayed away from Isaac.
- F. They eventually fought against Isaac's descendants.
- G. They kept filling in Isaac's wells.
- H. God chose to bless the whole world through them, too.
- I. Other.

3. Why were Isaac and Rebekah destined to have rival twin sons?

- A. Boys will be boys.
- B. Twin boys perpetually compete with each other.
- C. This was a continuation of the Great Controversy from *Gen. 3:15*.
- D. They actually got along fairly well most of the time.
- E. It would make them more dependent on God each and every day.
- F. That's the down side to having more than one child.
- G. They weren't destined for this; it's just the way it happened.
- H. They just got off on "the wrong foot."
- I. Other.

4. Why did Esau sell his birthright for one meal?

- A. He would have died of starvation without that food.
- B. Esau did poorly at delaying gratification.
- C. He figured it wasn't actually a trade that would stick.
- D. It had been a bad day for hunting.
- E. The birthright hadn't been given to Esau, so he couldn't barter with it.
- F. Jacob was out to get the birthright for himself.
- G. Esau knew he could get it back.
- H. As Isaac's favorite, it wouldn't be a problem.
- I. Other.

5. Why did Isaac say Rebekah was his sister?

- A. This was part of the "Smart Survival Skills" Abraham had taught him.
- B. Isaac was afraid for his own life.
- C. Isaac feared for Rebekah's life.
- D. God needed Isaac's help to fulfill the divine promises.
- E. Famine pushed them to the brink.
- F. This was just common sense.
- G. It was Rebekah's idea.
- H. It worked out so well for his father, so why not?
- I. Other.

6. What was the deal with Isaac's wells?

- A. They didn't produce water.
- B. He couldn't keep them operational.
- C. Water was vital for Isaac and his wealth.
- D. Those jealous of him plugged them.
- E. Famines make wells even more important.
- F. Water rights are always controversial.
- G. It's hard to claim a well when you don't own the land.
- H. Wells make good landmarks and namesakes.
- I. Other.

7. Why does God bless you?

8. When and how does God communicate with you?

Trick or Treat

OPENING QUESTION

When are you likely to trick someone? When are you likely to give a treat?

READ Genesis 27:1-28:9.

1. What is “the blessing” that goes with the birthright in Bible times?

- A. Continuation of the blessings given to your ancestors.
- B. Financial prosperity.
- C. Having children.
- D. Living a Godly life.
- E. Safety from enemies and threats.
- F. Wisdom.
- G. Lots of land.
- H. The lineage of the Messiah.
- I. Other.

2. What was going on between Isaac and Rebekah?

- A. Not much.
- B. A lot.
- C. They weren't doing any more marriage seminars.
- D. Lack of communication.
- E. They had chosen sides with different sons, splitting the family.
- F. Determination to pass on the birthright blessing to one's favored son.
- G. This is what happens when parents live through their children.
- H. Helping God's will to be done, just like Abraham had done.
- I. Other.

3. Why was Jacob reticent to deceive his father?

- A. You just don't do that to your father.
- B. Fear of getting caught in his deception.
- C. It would be a great sin against God.
- D. Esau's rage if the deception worked.
- E. It meant obeying his mother to deceive his father.
- F. He knew God could take care of the birthright promise.
- G. There were too many ways it could fail.
- H. Trying to impersonate Esau would be virtually impossible.
- I. Other.

4. What steps did Jacob follow to deceive his father?

- A. Not put up a fight.
- B. Do whatever his mother told him to do.
- C. Let his mother do the cooking.
- D. Practice speaking so he would sound like Esau.
- E. Role-playing with Rebekah.
- F. Putting on Esau's clothing.
- G. Claiming God had blessed him with quick success on the hunt.
- H. Wrapping fresh goat skins on his arms and neck.
- I. Other.

5. What does God have to do with all of this?

- A. Nothing.
- B. God always has to overcome evil for good.
- C. It's God's fault for picking the second born to get the birthright.
- D. This sounds like a repeat of Cain and Abel.
- E. A Great Controversy perspective shows God's intense involvement.
- F. Making sure Jacob didn't get caught until the blessing was given.
- G. God is the one who blesses, not humans.
- H. Other.

6. What are Rebekah's good (write "G") and bad (write "B") qualities?

- _____ Visionary.
- _____ Determined.
- _____ Creative.
- _____ Loving.
- _____ Loyal.
- _____ Sacrificial.
- _____ Industrious.
- _____ Other: _____ .

7. When have you been ripped off?

8. How do you know when God needs/wants your help?

Surprises

OPENING QUESTION

When have you had a dream that surprised you?

READ Genesis 28:10-29:35.

1. What did Jacob's dream reveal?

- A. When your pillow is as hard as a rock, crazy things can happen.
- B. Even though Jacob had fled, God hadn't abandoned him.
- C. Esau would never harm Jacob.
- D. God had continuous access to Jacob.
- E. Jacob had continuous access to God.
- F. Jacob would see his parents again.
- G. God had forgiven Jacob for deceiving his father and brother.
- H. Jacob had the spiritual birthright and blessing.
- I. Other.

2. What conditions did Jacob set for Yahweh to be his God?

- A. Protection.
- B. Peace.
- C. Prosperity.
- D. Presence.
- E. Partner in marriage.
- F. Progeny.
- G. Promised Land.
- H. Percentage/Tithe to Yahweh if Jacob's conditions were met.
- I. Other.

3. Why did Jacob kiss Rachel?

- A. It was love at first sight.
- B. He was overcome with emotion.
- C. To get her father's attention.
- D. This seemed like a repeat of how his father and mother got together.
- E. Jacob wanted to marry her.
- F. That's how people greeted each other in that place, at that time.
- G. That's how friends and relatives greeted each other.
- H. Jacob had a lot to learn about cultures and traditions in this place.
- I. Other.

4. Why did Laban give Leah as Jacob's wife?

- A. In that culture, the father had the right to do these kinds of things.
- B. Leah had begged him to do this.
- C. The first born must be married first.
- D. Jacob, the deceiver, had this coming to him.
- E. Rachel wasn't ready to get married to Jacob just yet.
- F. Laban would not have been able to get Leah married later.
- G. God told Laban to do this.
- H. So Laban could get another seven years of work out of Jacob.
- I. Other.

5. What was the Best part of Leah's life (B), and what was the Worst (W)?

- _____ Childhood.
- _____ Wedding night.
- _____ When Rachel married Jacob 1 week after Leah had.
- _____ Giving birth to a boy for Jacob.
- _____ Having four sons (and Rachel had none).
- _____ No longer being able to get pregnant.
- _____ Rachel's death.
- _____ Escaping with Jacob and Rachel away from Laban.
- _____ Other: _____ .

6. Why did Leah have all of those sons?

- A. She was simply fertile.
- B. God opened her womb and closed Rachel's womb for a time.
- C. Leah was more sexually active than Rachel.
- D. Luck.
- E. Rachel couldn't provide sons, so Leah was Jacob's hope for progeny.
- F. God made the unloved wife more loveable.
- G. Leah practiced a healthier lifestyle.
- H. Other.

7. When have you been surprised to find out God was present?

8. What seems unfair in this Bible story? What seems unfair in your story?

Family Foibles

OPENING QUESTION

Don't give names, but what are some family dysfunctions you've observed?

READ **Genesis 30:1-31:55.**

1. Why did Jacob's wives use surrogate mothers?

- A. They couldn't have children themselves.
- B. They weren't very good mothers.
- C. Jacob seemed okay or at least passive about it.
- D. This was common practice in that culture at that time.
- E. Abraham and Sarah modeled this with Hagar.
- F. Jealousy.
- G. God suggested this as the way to fulfill his promise.
- H. Patriarchal societies made bearing sons vital.
- I. Other.

2. Rank the cheaters, from smallest (1) to biggest (9):

- _____ Jacob.
- _____ Laban.
- _____ Rachel.
- _____ Leah.
- _____ God.
- _____ Reuben.
- _____ Laban's sons.
- _____ Jacob's sons.
- _____ Other: _____ .

3. What do you think of Jacob's animal breeding tactics?

- A. Creative.
- B. Inspiring.
- C. Scientific.
- D. Magical.
- E. Conniving.
- F. Lucky.
- G. Vengeful.
- H. Blessed.
- I. Other.

4. Why did Jacob finally head back to Canaan?

- A. He missed his family.
- B. Things were falling apart with Laban's family.
- C. He had enough to make it on his own.
- D. Both of his wives wanted to get away.
- E. God told him to return to the promised land.
- F. He could hardly wait to be reunited with Esau.
- G. He had paid his debt to Laban.
- H. He didn't want to be a shepherd any longer.
- I. Other.

5. Why did Laban pursue Jacob, Leah, and Rachel?

- A. He wanted to kiss them good bye.
- B. He needed to keep the wealth-maker in his household.
- C. God told him to pursue them.
- D. Laban wanted to throw a big farewell party for them.
- E. They might have Laban's missing household gods.
- F. He felt like he deserved an explanation for fleeing from home.
- G. The flocks and herds they took really came from Laban.
- H. Other.

6. Why did Rachel steal her father's household gods?

- A. She didn't expect to get caught.
- B. After the way Laban treated her, she deserved to have them.
- C. Rachel didn't believe in Jacob's God.
- D. Jacob's God hadn't done much for Rachel.
- E. The more gods you have, the better your chances for success.
- F. Leah put her up to it.
- G. She knew Jacob wouldn't do anything about it.
- H. Other.

7. What covenants do you have now?

8. What role did God play in this story? What role did humans play?

A Cross-Country Move

OPENING QUESTION

When have you experienced a big move?

READ **Genesis 32:1-33:20.**

1. Why did Jacob see angels of God after departing from Laban?

- A. God showed them to Jacob.
- B. Angels are always present even though we don't usually see them.
- C. To encourage Jacob.
- D. To assure Jacob he was protected by God.
- E. To assure Jacob's household that they were protected by God.
- F. This prepared him for his encounter with Esau.
- G. Jacob had a history of seeing things nobody else saw.
- H. Mahanaim (two camps) indicates God went before him and after him.
- I. Other.

2. What message(s) did Jacob send ahead to his brother Esau?

- A. I'm coming home.
- B. Is it okay with you if I come home?
- C. God has blessed me.
- D. I consider you as the "master" and I consider myself as the "servant."
- E. You can keep the (inheritance) birthright.
- F. I have Yahweh's support and protection.
- G. I sure miss you.
- H. All of our relatives send their best.
- I. Other.

3. How did Jacob respond to Esau move toward him with 400 armed men?

- A. Jacob freaked out.
- B. He sent another set of messengers.
- C. He sent spies.
- D. Jacob prepared his household for a battle.
- E. Jacob reminded God that this was God's idea.
- F. Jacob claimed God's promises of protection.
- G. He asked for input from his entire household.
- H. Jacob brought up God's covenant that included lots of descendants.
- I. Other.

4. Why did Jacob try to appease Esau with presents?

- A. It usually works with most people.
- B. Esau had valued the financial blessings more than the spiritual ones.
- C. This would lighten Jacob's load.
- D. These would slow down Esau by adding lots of animals to his group.
- E. To show that Jacob didn't need any of Esau's inheritance.
- F. This proved Jacob wasn't returning to claim his financial birthright.
- G. God told him to share his blessings.
- H. This was all Jacob had to offer.
- I. Other.

5. Why did God wrestle with Jacob?

- A. It wasn't God; it was an angel (*Hosea 12:4*).
- B. The "Angel of God" is the covenant God.
- C. God needed a workout.
- D. Jacob had not yet come to the end of himself.
- E. It turns out that Jacob wasn't such a mama's boy after all.
- F. Wrestling with God isn't about conquering God, but conquering self.
- G. This was an experience a person can't get any other way.
- H. Other.

6. What were the important steps Jacob took for settling in Canaan?

- A. Keeping distance between Esau and himself.
- B. Constructing shelters.
- C. Purchasing land.
- D. Finding wives for his sons.
- E. Setting up a family altar.
- F. Digging Jacob's well.
- G. Using his new name, Israel, rather than his old name, Jacob.
- H. Other.

7. When have you wrestled with God? What was the result??

8. What is a limp/scar you have?

Family Ups and Downs

OPENING QUESTION

What makes you proud of your family? What embarrasses you?

READ **Genesis 34:1-36:43.**

1. What reasons were given to Jacob for Dinah to marry Shechem?

- A. They made such a great couple.
- B. Jacob's family was new in Shechem (Hamor's neighborhood).
- C. Dinah really wanted to marry Shechem.
- D. To avert revenge from Dinah's brothers.
- E. To avert revenge from Dinah's parents.
- F. It would be an arranged marriage—what could be better?
- G. It was love at first sight.
- H. This could start a number of marriages to Jacob's sons.
- I. Other.

2. What reasons were given to the town leaders to circumcise all males?

- A. It's really not that bad.
- B. This will financially benefit all of us.
- C. It will add to our male population.
- D. Just trust us.
- E. We want to follow their god(s).
- F. Our daughters need husbands.
- G. They seem to be the nicest people.
- H. There's plenty of room to accommodate them.
- I. Other.

3. Why did Jacob move his family to Bethel?

- A. That's where the "Jacob's ladder" dream had occurred.
- B. When you murder all the males and plunder the rest, you can't stay.
- C. Bethel was a good place for flocks and herds.
- D. They hoped to plunder anyone living there, too.
- E. God told Jacob to take his family there.
- F. To get away from potential retaliation from nearby Canaanites.
- G. To be closer to his father—Isaac.
- H. To be closer to his brother—Esau.
- I. Other.

4. What was involved in the family's move to Bethel?

- A. A consecration service.
- B. Jacob's directive.
- C. Repentance.
- D. Returning the women, children, and goods they had plundered.
- E. Relinquishing their idols.
- F. Physical cleansing.
- G. Spiritual cleansing.
- H. A big feast.
- I. Other.

5. What blessing did God give Jacob this time at Bethel?

- A. A re-run of previous promises.
- B. A new name.
- C. God's protection.
- D. A continuation of Yahweh's covenant with Abraham and Isaac.
- E. The birthright.
- F. Direct communication from God.
- G. No more problems for his family.
- H. Other.

6. What comes to mind as you read about Esau's descendants?

- A. Lots of hard-to-pronounce names.
- B. Names that are uncommon to me.
- C. The Bible actually includes Esau's descendants.
- D. Esau gave way to Jacob like Abraham had done for Lot (*Gen 13:9*).
- E. Edomites had kings before the Israelites did.
- F. This is the last we hear of Esau.
- G. The Edomites will war against Israelites for years to come.
- H. Other.

7. What extremes has your family faced?

8. Where is God in this Bible story? Where is God in your story?

Perfect Parents

OPENING QUESTION

What's an example of a parenting mistake you or your parents have made?

READ **Genesis 37:1-38:30.**

1. Why did Joseph's brothers hate him?

- A. Joseph was a brat.
- B. Jacob favored Joseph noticeably more than all others.
- C. Joseph was Rachel's first-born son.
- D. That "coat of many colors."
- E. It was their hatred for their father; they just took it out on Joseph.
- F. It looked like Joseph would get the birthright.
- G. All of the other brothers were older.
- H. The other brothers had different moms (not Rachel).
- I. Other.

2. What happened because of Joseph's two dreams?

- A. Joseph told them to his brothers since they were in his dreams.
- B. Jacob held a family council to set things straight.
- C. This started Joseph on the pathway of receiving dreams from God.
- D. Joseph lacked discretion (no filter) in sharing the dreams.
- E. His brothers hated him even more.
- F. Jacob wondered why Joseph received the dream instead of Jacob.
- G. Other members of the family claimed to receive their own dreams.
- H. Nobody took the obvious meaning of the dreams seriously.
- I. Other.

3. Why did Joseph's brothers want to kill him?

- A. They had simply had enough of him.
- B. This was their first opportunity to get rid of him without getting caught.
- C. Joseph's dreams still irritated them.
- D. When given the chance, the human heart can be very cruel.
- E. A Joseph-free life is a better life, no matter the consequences.
- F. The fact they had to work and Joseph didn't.
- G. Once you start down a dark path, it can quickly snowball.
- H. To help the family dynamics.
- I. Other.

4. Did Joseph's brothers lie to their father Jacob about Joseph?

- A. Technically—no.
- B. In principle—yes.
- C. They let Jacob arrive at his own conclusions.
- D. They only presented (some of) the facts.
- E. They left out the most damning facts.
- F. Jacob knew something was wrong when Joseph hadn't returned.
- G. The brothers used deception to direct Jacob's thinking.
- H. At least they hadn't killed Joseph.
- I. Other.

5. What did Judah do wrong in *Genesis 38*?

- A. Moved away from home and married a Canaanite woman.
- B. Did a poor job parenting his children.
- C. Forced his second-born son to impregnate his sister-in-law.
- D. Sent Tamar back to her parents.
- E. Withheld his third son from Tamar.
- F. Slept with a prostitute.
- G. Demanded Tamar be stoned for prostitution.
- H. Joined the Messiah's lineage with his illegitimate son from Tamar.
- I. Other.

6. What did Tamar do right in *Genesis 38*?

- A. Married Judah's wicked son Er.
- B. Agreed to bear a son with Onan, despite Onan's reluctance.
- C. Obeyed her father-in-law and returned home to wait for Shelah.
- D. Slept around like a prostitute.
- E. Outsmarted Judah.
- F. Slept as a prostitute with Judah.
- G. Exposed Judah's personal articles when judged guilty of prostitution.
- H. Never slept with Judah again.
- I. Other.

7. In what ways has your childhood affected other parts of your life?

8. Who do you identify with most in these two chapters?

Doing Time

OPENING QUESTION

When have you received a promotion? How about a demotion?

READ **Genesis 39:1-40:23.**

1. In what ways was Joseph “blessed” in his time in Potiphar’s household?

- A. Promotion after promotion.
- B. He proved to be a blessing to Potiphar.
- C. Eventually he was put in charge of Potiphar’s entire household.
- D. Joseph was able to earn his freedom.
- E. He continued to receive dreams from Yahweh.
- F. Joseph became Potiphar’s favorite.
- G. He wasn’t killed when Potiphar’s wife accused him of attempted rape.
- H. He had lots of suiters as a good-looking single male (slave).
- I. Other.

2. Why didn’t Joseph give in to Potiphar’s wife?

- A. It would be a sin against God.
- B. It would be a sin against Potiphar.
- C. It would be a sin against Potiphar’s wife.
- D. It would be a sin against Potiphar’s household.
- E. It would be a sin against Joseph.
- F. Joseph had already seen dire results from sexual promiscuity.
- G. It’s just wrong.
- H. It went contrary to the expectation to obey those over you.
- I. Other.

3. If God was “with Joseph,” why did things go so badly for him?

- A. That’s life.
- B. God wasn’t with Joseph in every little detail.
- C. It could have been worse.
- D. The bad things actually made Joseph stronger.
- E. God’s presence doesn’t mean things always go the way you want.
- F. It doesn’t make a lot of sense from a human perspective.
- G. God was with Joseph, as shown by his many promotions.
- H. God’s presence matters a lot more than one’s environment.
- I. Other.

4. What were Joseph's benefits from being put in charge of the prison?

- A. I can't think of any.
- B. Decent food and lodging for himself.
- C. It gives the chief jailer an easier job.
- D. The opportunity to get a little money on the side.
- E. Learning to lead a diverse group of people.
- F. Input and impact on prison reform.
- G. He modeled an honorable life as he lived in dishonor.
- H. He got to see justice and injustice at the lowest levels of society.
- I. Other.

5. How did Joseph maintain a trust in God while in Egypt?

- A. It beat the option of the Egyptian gods.
- B. He received regular communication with God by dreams.
- C. He didn't have to deal with his jealous and angry brothers anymore.
- D. His life had been spared.
- E. He was rewarded with promotions in spite of unfair setbacks.
- F. Joseph resolved to follow his father's God while on his way to Egypt.
- G. Regular evidences of God's work in Joseph's life.
- H. Joseph experienced the ups and downs of a relationship with God.
- I. Other.

6. Why did the butler forget about Joseph?

- A. Out of sight, out of mind.
- B. It really wasn't his business.
- C. Too happy in his restored role to think about his prison time.
- D. He didn't think that, as a butler, he could help Joseph much.
- E. Joseph didn't restore him; he only interpreted the butler's dream.
- F. Joseph had also predicted the baker's death; stay clear of this guy.
- G. The butler was one who looked forward more than looking backward.
- H. Other.

7. When have you questioned if God is actually "with you"?

8. Are you passing time, or does what you do day-to-day actually make a difference?

A Dream Come True

OPENING QUESTION

What's a dream you've had that made no sense to you?

READ Genesis 41:1-57.

1. Why couldn't Pharaoh or his wise men interpret these obvious dreams?

- A. They weren't so obvious.
- B. They became obvious after Joseph interpreted them.
- C. God hid their meaning until he revealed it to Joseph.
- D. The wise men weren't all that wise.
- E. The butler needed to redeem himself by remembering Joseph.
- F. God chooses who gets to understand dreams.
- G. This was God's way of getting Joseph out of prison.
- H. God wanted Joseph to rule Egypt, and this was his way to do that.
- I. Other.

2. Why did Joseph deflect dream interpretations to God (vs. 16)?

- A. Only God would know the interpretation.
- B. Only God would reveal the interpretation to Joseph.
- C. It was Joseph's way to cover in case he couldn't interpret the dreams.
- D. This testified to the power of Joseph's god.
- E. To point out the impotence of the Egyptian gods.
- F. To point out the impotence of the Egyptian wise men.
- G. To be a role model for Daniel with Nebuchadnezzar later.
- H. He felt sure God would reveal the dream's interpretation.
- I. Other.

3. Why did God show Pharaoh in advance what would happen?

- A. That's the way God does things.
- B. So Pharaoh would save food before the famine.
- C. To save people during the coming famine.
- D. So Israel's family line would be preserved.
- E. It typifies *Amos 3:7*.
- F. So Joseph would be elevated to the position of prime minister.
- G. Pharaoh was leading the civilized world at that time.
- H. So Pharaoh would know firsthand who was the most potent God.
- I. Other.

4. Why did God give two dream variations with the same meaning?

- A. Confirmation.
- B. Variety.
- C. Urgency.
- D. Creativity.
- E. God was just playing with Pharaoh.
- F. God used the two key food groups of Egypt—plants and animals.
- G. This made the interpretation obvious . . . eventually.
- H. In case Joseph didn't catch on to the first dream.
- I. Other.

5. Why did Pharaoh appoint Joseph as prime minister of Egypt?

- A. Joseph's interpretation impressed Pharaoh.
- B. Joseph's recommendations for action impressed Pharaoh.
- C. Pharaoh's advisors recommended Joseph.
- D. The butler recommended Joseph.
- E. Joseph was the wisest man in Egypt.
- F. Pharaoh's prime minister had recently run off with Potiphar's wife.
- G. To have someone connected to the gods connected to his team.
- H. Other.

6. What rewards did Joseph experience after his 30th birthday?

- A. Freedom from prison.
- B. Empowerment by Pharaoh.
- C. The chance to clear his name.
- D. The opportunity to return to his family of origin.
- E. Running the most powerful country in the world.
- F. Marriage and family.
- G. Forgetting his past.
- H. Proper preparation for the famine.
- I. Other.

7. Joseph experienced extremes. What extremes have you experienced?

8. What key messages from God have shaped your life?

Turnabout

OPENING QUESTION

When have you recognized someone, but they didn't recognize you?

READ Genesis 42:1-38.

1. What went through Joseph's mind when his brothers bowed to him?

- A. I'm shocked!
- B. I always knew this was going to happen one day.
- C. This opens a scab I thought had healed.
- D. I'd like to go home with them.
- E. I wonder if they will recognize me.
- F. I'm tempted to give them a taste of their own medicine.
- G. I definitely don't trust these guys.
- H. It turns out that I'm their savior.
- I. Other.

2. What went through the brothers' minds while they were in prison?

- A. Who saw this coming?
- B. This is because of what we did to Joseph 20+ years ago.
- C. It's a good thing baby Benjamin isn't with us.
- D. Are we going to be stuck here the rest of our lives?
- E. I think we can escape.
- F. This Egyptian ruler has some major trust issues.
- G. Where is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?
- H. Why did we come here for food?
- I. Other.

3. Why was Joseph so mean to his brothers?

- A. Their presence shocked him so much he didn't know how to react.
- B. Joseph still had a lot of pent up anger toward his brothers.
- C. He still had a certain amount of fear when it came to his brothers.
- D. Benjamin's absence made him think they treated him poorly, too.
- E. They had such bad manners.
- F. Joseph didn't want the Egyptians to see any favoritism to Hebrews.
- G. This was Joseph's way to test the current character of his brothers.
- H. Things weren't going well for Joseph at home; it spilled into his work.
- I. Other.

4. Why did Joseph give his brothers grain + their money in their sacks?

- A. So he could use this against them later if needed.
- B. Joseph couldn't help but be generous.
- C. It was one more way he was testing his brothers.
- D. Their Hebrew money was worthless in Egypt.
- E. They came for food; Joseph met their need and request.
- F. Joseph was just playing with them.
- G. He hoped this would enable him to see his brother and father.
- H. Other.

5. What message(s) would you have given Jacob if you were a brother?

- A. We have a deep, dark secret to share with you.
- B. We're never going back to Egypt.
- C. We have to go back to Egypt.
- D. We have to take Benjamin with us the next time we go to Egypt.
- E. You should go to Egypt.
- F. The Egyptian prime minister is one hostile dude.
- G. We need to pray more.
- H. Other.

6. What emotions were most dominant for Joseph after his brothers left?

- A. Joy.
- B. Hope.
- C. Anger.
- D. Uncertainty.
- E. Fear.
- F. Love.
- G. Vengeance.
- H. Compassion.
- I. Other.

7. What's an example of a secret you've had to keep for a long time?

8. Where do you find people "following God's leading" in this story? Where is that difficult in your life now?

From Bad, to Good, to Bad

OPENING QUESTION

When did you expect something bad, but received something good?
When did you expect something good, but received something bad?

READ Genesis 43:1-44:34.

1. Why was Jacob so reticent to let Benjamin go with his brothers to Egypt?

- A. Jacob didn't trust Benjamin's brothers.
- B. Jacob didn't trust Egypt's prime minister.
- C. He had already lost Joseph.
- D. Simeon was stuck in an Egyptian jail.
- E. Jacob only really cared about Rachel, Joseph, and Benjamin.
- F. Benjamin was the baby of the family and not ready for this.
- G. The God of Abraham and Isaac hadn't done much lately for Jacob.
- H. Other.

2. What did the brothers expect, and what did they receive in Egypt?

EXPECT		RECEIVE
_____	Accusation of being spies	_____
_____	Accusation of not paying for grain	_____
_____	A warm welcome	_____
_____	Prison	_____
_____	A trip to the palace	_____
_____	A feast	_____
_____	Free grain to take home	_____

3. What clues about Joseph could his brothers have noticed?

- A. A completely different reception on their second arrival.
- B. Simeon's release.
- C. Joseph's special interest in the family members not present.
- D. Joseph's quick departure when introduced to Benjamin.
- E. Being seated according to age on Joseph's command.
- F. Benjamin receiving five times as much as the other brothers.
- G. They were still too paranoid to know what to think.
- H. They could never imagine Joseph was prime minister of Egypt.
- I. Other.

4. Why did Joseph set up this clever test with the silver cup?

- A. To see if the brothers would gladly be free of all of Rachel's boys.
- B. He was still playing with them.
- C. He still felt the need to test the character of his brothers.
- D. It gave him the opportunity to test his own household.
- E. God told him to do this.
- F. Crises bring out the best and the worst in people; hence a crisis.
- G. Joseph didn't need the cup; who needs tea leaves with Yahweh?
- H. Other.

5. Why did the brothers brashly deny the silver cup was with them?

- A. It seemed completely impossible that could happen.
- B. They had a history of being brash—talking big.
- C. They had a history of killing and offering to kill.
- D. They had already checked their bags as soon as they left Egypt.
- E. The brothers were thrown off by the prime minister's earlier kindness.
- F. They wanted to be slaves in Egypt.
- G. They combatted the accusation with a strong defense.
- H. Other.

6. Why did Judah offer to take Benjamin's place as an Egyptian slave?

- A. At least it was slavery instead of death.
- B. Judah had lost his wife anyway.
- C. Simeon told him Egyptian life wasn't too bad.
- D. Judah had promised his father he would care for Benjamin's safety.
- E. Judah was a man of his word (*Gen. 38*).
- F. Reuben was no longer acting as the leader among the brothers.
- G. Judah was more than happy to be out of this family.
- H. Other.

7. If you had been Joseph, how would you have handled the brothers?

8. How do you deal with your life when things go bad? How do you deal with your life when things go good?

No Longer A Secret

OPENING QUESTION

When have you been surprised to see someone in a different context than you expected?

READ Genesis 45:1-28.

1. What did Joseph hope for by revealing his identity to his brothers?

- A. A chance to see his father.
- B. Obtain a much-deserved apology from his brothers.
- C. Have his brothers bow down to him again.
- D. Save his family of origin from five more years of famine.
- E. Move the family to Egypt.
- F. Let Pharaoh know about his origins.
- G. Introduce his boys to their grandpa.
- H. Other.

2. If you were one of Joseph's brothers, how would you have reacted?

- A. I don't believe it.
- B. This explains a lot.
- C. How did Joseph become prime minister of Egypt?
- D. This is great!
- E. We're doomed.
- F. I'm so sorry.
- G. We can't let father know.
- H. We have to tell father.
- I. Other.

3. Why was Joseph sold as a slave to the Egyptians?

- A. His brothers didn't want him.
- B. The Ishmaelite traders didn't want him.
- C. It was better than killing him.
- D. God sent Joseph to Egypt.
- E. God didn't send Joseph to Egypt, but he turned it into good.
- F. Pharaoh was going to need some outside help.
- G. So he could save his family from a future famine.
- H. This illustrates how supernatural forces keep influencing our lives.
- I. Other.

4. What did God have in mind for sending Joseph to Egypt?

- A. Jacob's family was in a mess and needed a major change.
- B. Joseph's older brothers were a bad influence.
- C. Joseph wasn't doing well and needed a new start.
- D. This was a way to get Jacob's family on track.
- E. God cared about saving the Egyptians.
- F. This would preserve Jacob's birthright.
- G. This was God's way of providing through a supernatural famine.
- H. Other.

5. Why did Pharaoh proactively offer Joseph's family the best of Egypt?

- A. Pharaoh was a nice guy.
- B. Joseph saved Pharaoh from the famine.
- C. Joseph saved all Egypt from the famine.
- D. Joseph saved that entire part of the earth from the famine.
- E. Pharaoh figured they wouldn't really take it.
- F. Any friend of Joseph's is a friend of mine.
- G. Any family of Joseph is family to me.
- H. Other.

6. What convinced Jacob that Joseph was the prime minister of Egypt?

- A. Jacob trusted everything his sons told him.
- B. Benjamin returned alive.
- C. Jacob's sons told him the true reason Joseph had disappeared.
- D. God gave Jacob a dream about this.
- E. Jacob had some reservations until he could see Joseph for himself.
- F. The carts with all the treats from Egypt proved the point.
- G. Joseph had sent along a hand-written letter to his father.
- H. Other.

7. Joseph's brothers would forever be indebted to him. To whom are you indebted? What is that like?

8. Which did Joseph experience more: sorrow OR joy? Which have you experienced more?

On the Move

OPENING QUESTION

What was involved when you moved to a new place?

READ Genesis 46:1-47:31.

1. Why did God appear to Jacob in a dream at Beersheba?

- A. Jacob had already decided to move to Egypt.
- B. To let Jacob know he was doing the right thing.
- C. Going to Egypt meant leaving the “Promised Land.”
- D. This was the opposite of God’s instructions to Isaac (*Gen. 26:2-5*).
- E. To reveal the family’s future.
- F. To do a re-run of “Jacob’s ladder.”
- G. Beersheba is where God appeared previously (*Gen. 21:33; 26:25*).
- H. Jacob had just offered sacrifices to God.
- I. Other.

2. What do you make of the descendants who went with Jacob to Egypt?

- A. There were a lot of them.
- B. There weren’t that many.
- C. That’s a lot of mouths to feed during a famine.
- D. This group is too small to be considered “a (great) nation.”
- E. The family continued to be divided based on the mothers.
- F. Leah had the lion’s share.
- G. The number 70 matches the 70 nations after the Flood (*Gen. 10*).
- H. Specifying some females in this patriarchal society.
- I. Other.

3. Why did Joseph coach his brothers to identify as shepherds?

- A. That’s what they were.
- B. This wouldn’t threaten Pharaoh.
- C. This wouldn’t threaten Joseph.
- D. It would keep them separate from the Egyptians.
- E. Goshen was the most fertile part of the Egyptian desert.
- F. Joseph’s wife didn’t want them around her.
- G. Egyptians wouldn’t want to be around (dirty, low class) shepherds.
- H. Joseph knew they wouldn’t survive if they competed with Egyptians.
- I. Other.

4. What happened when Jacob interacted with Pharaoh?

- A. Nothing much.
- B. It was nothing more than one of those necessary formalities.
- C. Jacob blessed Pharaoh, showing Jacob's superiority.
- D. Because Jacob was older, he deserved greater respect.
- E. Jacob embarrassed Joseph.
- F. Jacob had no tangible gifts, so he gave a spiritual blessing.
- G. Pharaoh was so pleased with Joseph that no wrong could be done.
- H. Other.

5. What happened economically in Egypt because of the famine?

- A. Pharaoh became very rich.
- B. Government investments paid off.
- C. The Egyptian government came to own everything.
- D. Money no longer mattered since nobody had any.
- E. It became Communism's first country.
- F. It proved to be a model for socialism.
- G. It worked great until new generations arrived after the famine.
- H. Other.

6. Why did Jacob insist on being buried in Canaan?

- A. He never liked Egypt.
- B. He only went to Egypt to see his favorite son, Joseph.
- C. Canaan was the "Promised Land."
- D. Jacob wanted to be buried by Abraham and Isaac.
- E. Jacob wanted to be buried with Rachel.
- F. He knew the family's time in Egypt was limited.
- G. Canaan was where God had appeared to him multiple times.
- H. Other.

7. What makes a place "home" for you?

8. How do you know you are living where God wants you to live?

Your Future

OPENING QUESTION

What prediction has one of your parents made about you that came true?

READ Genesis 48:1-50:26.

1. Why didn't Jacob recognize Joseph's two sons?

- A. Jacob had asked for Joseph, so he didn't expect anyone else.
- B. The boys changed so much during this stage of life.
- C. Jacob was practically blind.
- D. The boys were in the background and hard to identify.
- E. They looked more like their mother than like Joseph.
- F. Jacob hadn't spent much time with them.
- G. Due to his life story, Jacob had learned not to trust people.
- H. His mind was on Joseph's future, not his grandsons' futures.
- I. Other.

2. Why did Jacob give the second-born the first-born blessing?

- A. That's what had happened to Jacob.
- B. God told him to do it that way.
- C. Relax; Joseph was still getting a double blessing.
- D. He decided to irritate Joseph by not giving him what he wanted.
- E. Rachel was Jacob's second wife, technically. He favored the second.
- F. Jacob was just confused by this time in his life.
- G. Manasseh had some major character flaws.
- H. Sometimes first-borns act like second-borns, and vice-versa.
- I. Other.

3. How was Jacob able to predict each son's future by his blessing?

- A. He didn't.
- B. It was only a suggestion or a possibility.
- C. That's just the way they talked back then.
- D. God revealed it to Jacob in advance.
- E. God revealed it to Jacob in the moment.
- F. This was a parent's hope, but not necessarily a child's destiny.
- G. Parents have tremendous influence on their children.
- H. It was like a horoscope—vague but generally applicable.
- I. Other.

4. How does this description of Jacob's 12 sons compare with the 12 tribes and the 144,000 in Revelation 7:4-8?

- A. It's an exact match.
- B. It's not an exact match.
- C. God's people will be placed in the tribes that characterize them.
- D. *Genesis 49* is literal; *Revelation 7* is symbolic.
- E. The descriptions of some sons don't sound like God's people.
- F. None of God's people have a perfect record.
- G. The winner is either Judah or Joseph.
- H. Other.

5. Why was Jacob's burial such a big deal?

- A. Joseph was like a savior in Egypt, so everyone there mourned.
- B. As the father of the prime minister, it had to be a big deal.
- C. Jacob only came to Egypt to see Joseph.
- D. Burial in Egypt would acknowledge the gods of Egypt as supreme.
- E. Jacob claimed God's promise of Canaan being the Promised Land.
- F. Abraham had paid for a burial cave, and he was buried there.
- G. Jacob was the patriarch of the family.
- H. Other.

6. Why was Joseph buried in Egypt instead of in Canaan?

- A. Joseph, as Egypt's prime minister, had to be buried there.
- B. His brothers didn't want him buried in the family burial plot.
- C. Joseph asked to be buried in Canaan when the family moved there.
- D. His wife was Egyptian, so he had to spend some dead time there.
- E. Joseph had no status in Canaan.
- F. His request gave his sons an anchor point to be Israelites.
- G. Pharaoh wouldn't let his body go at that time.
- H. Other.

7. Do others fear you or are you more likely to fear others (like Joseph's brothers feared Joseph)?

8. What's in your future?

