



PRECEPT  
UPON  
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*English Standard Version*

# *Genesis*

PART 5

KEEPING YOUR  
FOCUS WHEN  
YOUR DREAMS  
ARE SHATTERED

A STUDY ON JOSEPH

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®

*English Standard Version*

## GENESIS

PART 5

### KEEPING YOUR FOCUS WHEN YOUR DREAMS ARE SHATTERED A STUDY ON JOSEPH

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## HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

**How to Study Your Bible**

*Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010*

**The New Inductive Study Bible—New American Standard Bible**

*Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2000*

**Word Study Tools**

## RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

WALVOORD, JOHN F.; ZUCK, ROY B., EDS.

**The Bible Knowledge Commentary (Old Testament): An Exposition of the Scriptures**

*Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983-c1985*

KIDNER, DEREK F.

**Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries: Genesis**

*Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1967.*

## RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

**Logos Bible Software**

Powerful search engines and up to 4,000 electronic Bible study resources (commentaries, lexicons, Bible dictionaries etc.) make it fast and easy to do simple and complex searches of multiple sources, then pull materials together for orderly presentation—excellent for word and topical studies based on English or original Hebrew and Greek. Available at [www.logos.com](http://www.logos.com).





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*Lesson 1, Genesis 37–39*

## LESSON ONE—Genesis 37–39

THIS LESSON INCORPORATES The following located in the Appendix:  
Observation Worksheets of Genesis 37–39  
“Genesis at a Glance”  
“Journal on God”  
“Abraham’s Sojournings”  
Cross-references

### JEALOUSY

**“... And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs. And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph . . . .”<sup>1</sup>**

### PASSION

**“‘...your daughter-in-law has been immoral. Moreover, she is pregnant by her immorality.’ ”<sup>2</sup>**

### AND HEARTACHE

## DAY ONE

There was a man named Joseph . . . a real man, a human being like us who lived nearly 4000 years ago and faced many of the same temptations, trials, and tests that we face. And because of this, there is much we can learn from his story that can help us in the twists and turns of our lives.

Although Joseph is mentioned earlier in the book of Genesis, his story begins in chapter 37. In the Appendix of this book you will find Genesis 37–50 printed as Observation Worksheets.

1. Read Genesis 37:1-4.
  - a. Mark *Joseph* in a distinctive color, including pronouns referring to him.

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 7:8-9

<sup>2</sup>Genesis 38:24



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- b. Now look at where you marked Joseph and list what these first four verses tell you about him.

2. We want to be sure you have a good understanding of Joseph's background.

- a. As you observed in Genesis 37:1-3, Joseph's father is referred to by two names: Jacob and Israel. Jacob is the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham. God made covenant promises to Abraham and to Isaac and to their offspring.

In Genesis 28 He also gave the promises to Jacob. Read Genesis 28:13-15 and write down what you learn about God's promises to Jacob.

- b. Genesis 32:22-30 tells us how Jacob obtained his name Israel. Write down what you learn regarding his name being changed, who changed his name, and why he was named this.



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- c. Read Genesis 35:22b-29, and record
- 1) How many sons Jacob had
  - 2) Who Jacob's father was and how old he was when he died.
  - 3) The name of Jacob's brother.
  - 4) Listed below is the birth order of Jacob's (Israel's) sons and their mothers' names. Find Joseph, underline his name and see who his mother is.

**The Birth Order of Jacob's (Israel's) Sons**

<b>Mother</b>	<b>Son</b>
Leah	Reuben (born 1921 B.C.) Simeon Levi Judah
Bilhah (Rachel's servant)	Dan Naphtali
Zilpah (Leah's servant)	Gad Asher
Leah	Issachar Zebulun
Rachel	Joseph (born 1914 B.C.) Benjamin

3. Now let's see what we can learn about Joseph's mother, Rachel. Look up the following verses and list any insights you gain regarding Rachel.
  - a. Genesis 29:16-30









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2. Now read Genesis 37:12-17.
  - a. When you observe a passage, you want to pay careful attention to any mention of geographical references.\* So mark them and then trace Joseph's journey on the map in the Appendix, "Abraham's Sojournings."
  - b. Summarize what occurs in this paragraph in no more than two sentences. Just pretend you are telling another person what is covered in this paragraph.
  
3. Now read Genesis 37:18-24.
  - a. Verse 18 opens with "they." Who are "they"? When you observe the text, you want to always check pronouns and make sure you know to whom they are referring.
  - b. Do you see any key word that you marked previously in Genesis 37:5-11? If so, mark it in the same way. Hint: note how Joseph is referred to in verse 19.
  - c. What do Joseph's brothers want to do to him? Look for references to this and mark them in the same way. This is a key phrase.
  
  - d. Which of the brothers opposes this? Where is he in the birth order?
  
  - e. What does this brother suggest they do with Joseph?



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- f. Now summarize in a sentence or two what occurs in this paragraph.
4. Let's move on to Genesis 37:25-28. Read this paragraph and then complete the following:
- Who are the main characters in this paragraph? List them with a brief description of the role each plays.
  - Mark the key words you marked in the previous paragraph along with references to killing Joseph. Also don't forget to mark geographical locations.
  - Once again in a sentence or two summarize what occurs in this paragraph.
5. Finally read Genesis 37:29-36.
- Did you notice how often Joseph's *robe* is mentioned? In light of this repetition you may want to go back and mark it as a key word throughout the chapter. Then you can trace the saga of the robe of many colors. Some believe that the Hebrew word indicates it was a full-length robe.

The various references can give you an idea of what this tunic meant to Jacob. List your observations below.



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- b. Mark key words; watch for geographical references.
  - c. Note below any expressions of emotion.
  
  - d. Now summarize the content of this paragraph in one or two sentences.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - e. Finally, at the beginning of your Observation Worksheet record where Joseph is as the chapter opens and then at the end of your worksheet record where Joseph is as the chapter closes. Also note Jacob's status in the beginning of the chapter and when the chapter ends.
6. Now stop and think about Genesis 37. Record the main theme of this chapter on the line for chapter 37 on the "Genesis at a Glance" chart in the Appendix.  
If you will do this after you finish studying each chapter, from chapter 37 through chapter 50, then when you complete your study you will have a handy summary of this portion of the book of Genesis.
  7. This record of Joseph not only gives us an account of the sons of Jacob, it also serves another purpose. Read Romans 15:4. Then think about how this chapter might instruct us as we find ourselves in similar situations, how it might cause us to endure, to be encouraged, to be warned, or what hope might come from it—if any at this point. So often reading of others in similar situations or circumstances and their relationship to God, negative or positive, helps us evaluate where we are, or where we are headed.

For example, has anything similar happened to you? Has there been a conflict in your family—a case of favoritism, partiality of a parent toward a child? Have you had to deal with a seething jealousy? Have any family members ever ganged up on you? Do you see yourself in any of these characters? Can



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you relate to Joseph? Or maybe Reuben or Judah? Or are you like Joseph's brothers, so eaten up with jealousy that you can hardly talk with them decently, kindly? Has your jealousy turned to hatred? Is there murder in your heart?

Whether you relate to any of these situations or know others who are in them, you want to pay careful attention to what transpires in the chapters to come. Take a moment now to stop and pray about it. You might even want to write out a prayer to our Father and tell Him what you want to learn from all of this.

Record any practical insights you personally have gained in your observations of this chapter.

DAY  
THREE

1. As chapter 37 opens, the author of Genesis lets us know what he is going to cover next in his Genesis account. Look at the phrase, "These are the generations of Jacob."

The phrase "These are the generations" first occurs in Genesis 2:4. It is then repeated in Genesis 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10,27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1,9; and 37:2.

In Genesis 37, God focuses first on Jacob's son, Joseph. Then in Genesis 38, God moves our attention to another of Jacob's sons.



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Read Genesis 38 and note the main characters in this chapter. List them below.

2. Now read Genesis 38 again and observe the chapter, the same way you did Genesis 37.
  - a. Watch for key repeated words and mark them.
  - b. Don't forget to double underline every geographical location.
  - c. Mark time references because they help you discover the “when” of something.
  - d. Watch for references to the *Lord* in this chapter. What do you learn about God from these references? It is so helpful to keep a journal on God as you study the Word of God; it's a real faith builder.

In the Appendix we have included several pages you might want to use for your journal as you study Genesis 37–50. Every time you come across a new insight on God you should record the book, chapter, and verse and what you learn about Him from the text. The journal will then become a wonderful aid to worship, for to worship God is to look at His worth and give Him the reverence and praise worthy His name.

3. The Law did not exist at this point in the history of Israel,<sup>3</sup> but it is apparent from the text that what was written in the Law at a later time regarding the duty of the brother-in-law (Genesis 38:8) was part of the culture then.

Read the following Scriptures and next to them record what they say with respect to carrying on the bloodline of a family member. As you look at these two passages, you will see how long this custom of the law continued.

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<sup>3</sup>The Law wouldn't be given until 430 years after the Abrahamic Covenant, when the children of Israel came out of Egypt (Genesis 15:12-16; Galatians 3:16-17).



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a. Deuteronomy 25:5-10

b. Matthew 22:23-33

4. Read Matthew 1:1-3 and note who is recorded in the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Now, isn't it exciting to see the hand of God in this event in Judah's life?
5. Finally write the theme of Genesis 38 on the "Genesis at a Glance" chart.

*O Beloved, life may be difficult with all of its unexpected, unwelcome twists and turns, and yet we never know what God is about! And although we may not know or understand all that is transpiring and what God's ultimate purpose is, our calling is simply to be faithful to our God and His precepts no matter the situation. The question then becomes, Am I?*



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DAY  
FOUR

1. Your assignment for today is a simple one. Following the pattern of what you did as you observed the other chapters this week, read Genesis 39 and mark the text.
  - a. Also mark the words *blessing*, *blessed* (see *bless*\*) and *sin*.\* Although *sin* is not repeated throughout the chapter, it is always good to mark the word when you come across it in your Bible. This way it will always be easy to find and to discern what God says is sin and consequently avoid it. Mark synonyms such as *iniquity* and *transgression* in the same way.
  - b. You might find it helpful to list the main points about Joseph in the margin of your Observation Worksheet.

When you finish, reflect on what you observed. Are there any qualities beyond his physical appearance that you admire, respect or desire to imitate? It seems we are so caught up in the physical that we often neglect the character side of who we are.

2. Now pause and put yourself in Joseph's sandals. How would you feel if you were in the place and position of Joseph as described at the end of this chapter? What would your reaction be? How would you be feeling about God? How would you respond to Him? Write out your answer. Then consider how you are to behave, to respond.





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4) Hebrews 13:4

If you have the time, you may want to look up the following passages and note what they teach about sex outside marriage. If you are not familiar with these passages, we suggest that you write them somewhere in your Bible for future reference so you can share with others what God says on the subject.

Deuteronomy 22:13-30

Job 31:1, 9-12

Proverbs 5:1-23; 7:1-27

Matthew 5:27-30

Ephesians 5:5-6

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

Revelation 21:8

2. Now feel free to see what commentaries say about Genesis 37–39.

*Aren't you touched by how relevant all this is to our day, to our lives! Press on. You are going to learn so much over the next three weeks that it will astound you and, we pray, make you hunger for more and more. . . as you hunger and thirst for righteousness.*

*Blessings . . . .*



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*Lesson 1, Genesis 37-39*



## GENESIS 37

### Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme \_\_\_\_\_

**JACOB** lived in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan.

**2** These are the generations of Jacob.

**Joseph**, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father.

**3** Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors.

**4** But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.

**5** Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more.

**6** He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed:

**7** Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."

**8** His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

**9** Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me."



- 10 But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?”
- 11 And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.
- 12 Now his brothers went to pasture their father’s flock near Shechem.
- 13 And Israel said to Joseph, “Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.” And he said to him, “Here I am.”
- 14 So he said to him, “Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me word.” So he sent him from the Valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.
- 15 And a man found him wandering in the fields. And the man asked him, “What are you seeking?”
- 16 “I am seeking my brothers,” he said. “Tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock.”
- 17 And the man said, “They have gone away, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’ ” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.
- 18 They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him.
- 19 They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer.
- 20 “Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams.”
- 21 But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.”



- 22 And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him”—that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father.
- 23 So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore.
- 24 And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.
- 25 Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt.
- 26 Then Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood?
- 27 “Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” And his brothers listened to him.
- 28 Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.
- 29 When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes
- 30 and returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is gone, and I, where shall I go?”
- 31 Then they took Joseph’s robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood.
- 32 And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, “This we have found; please identify whether it is your son’s robe or not.”
- 33 And he identified it and said, “It is my son’s robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces.”



- 34 Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days.
- 35 All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, “No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.” Thus his father wept for him.
- 36 Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.



## GENESIS 38

### Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme \_\_\_\_\_

- IT happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers and turned aside to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.
- 2 There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua. He took her and went in to her,
- 3 and she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er.
- 4 She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan.
- 5 Yet again she bore a son, and she called his name Shelah. Judah was in Chezib when she bore him.
- 6 And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar.
- 7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD put him to death.
- 8 Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother."
- 9 But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his. So whenever he went in to his brother's wife he would waste the semen on the ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother.
- 10 And what he did was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death also.
- 11 Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house, till Shelah my son grows up"—for he feared that he would die, like his brothers. So Tamar went and remained in her father's house.



- 12 In the course of time the wife of Judah, Shua's daughter, died. When Judah was comforted, he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.
- 13 And when Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep,"
- 14 she took off her widow's garments and covered herself with a veil, wrapping herself up, and sat at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah was grown up, and she had not been given to him in marriage.
- 15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face.
- 16 He turned to her at the roadside and said, "Come, let me come in to you," for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"
- 17 He answered, "I will send you a young goat from the flock." And she said, "If you give me a pledge, until you send it—"
- 18 He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She replied, "Your signet and your cord and your staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him.
- 19 Then she arose and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood.
- 20 When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite to take back the pledge from the woman's hand, he did not find her.
- 21 And he asked the men of the place, "Where is the cult prostitute who was at Enaim at the roadside?" And they said, "No cult prostitute has been here."
- 22 So he returned to Judah and said, "I have not found her. Also, the men of the place said, 'No cult prostitute has been here.' "



- 23 And Judah replied, “Let her keep the things as her own, or we shall be laughed at. You see, I sent this young goat, and you did not find her.”
- 24 About three months later Judah was told, “Tamar your daughter-in-law has been immoral. Moreover, she is pregnant by immorality.” And Judah said, “Bring her out, and let her be burned.”
- 25 As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, “By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant.” And she said, “Please identify whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff.”
- 26 Then Judah identified them and said, “She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.” And he did not know her again.
- 27 When the time of her labor came, there were twins in her womb.
- 28 And when she was in labor, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, “This one came out first.”
- 29 But as he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out. And she said, “What a breach you have made for yourself!” Therefore his name was called Perez.
- 30 Afterward his brother came out with the scarlet thread on his hand, and his name was called Zerah.





## GENESIS 39

### Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme \_\_\_\_\_

**NOW** Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there.

2 The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master.

3 His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands.

4 So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.

5 From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field.

6 So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

7 And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me."

8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge.

9 "He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"



- 10 And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.
- 11 But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house,
- 12 she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house.
- 13 And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house,
- 14 she called to the men of her household and said to them, “See, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice.
- 15 “And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house.”
- 16 Then she laid up his garment by her until his master came home,
- 17 and she told him the same story, saying, “The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me.
- 18 “But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house.”
- 19 As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, “This is the way your servant treated me,” his anger was kindled.
- 20 And Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison.
- 21 But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.
- 22 And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it.
- 23 The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph’s charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed.



*Keeping Your Focus When  
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*Abraham's Sojournings*







## GENESIS AT A GLANCE

### Theme of Genesis:

#### Chapter Themes

1	Creation in Six Days
2	Creation of Mankind
3	The Fall
4	Cain & Abel
5	Life under the Curse
6	Setting for the Flood Judgment
7	The Flood
8	The End of the Flood
9	God's Covenant with Noah
10	Nations Separated after the Flood
11	Babel/Terah and Family to Haran
12	God Calls Abram/Abram & Pharaoh
13	Abram and Lot Separate
14	Abram Rescues Lot/Melchizedek
15	God's Covenant with Abram
16	Hagar Bears Ishmael
17	Circumcision—Sign of the Covenant
18	Promise of Isaac/Abraham Intercedes for Sodom
19	Destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah
20	Abraham & Abimelech
21	Sarah Bears Isaac
22	Abraham Offers Isaac
23	Sarah Buried at Hebron
24	Rebekah Becomes Isaac's Wife



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*Genesis at a Glance*

<b>Chapter Themes</b>	
25	Abraham Marries Keturah/Dies/Jacob & Esau
26	God's Covenant with Isaac/Isaac & Abimelech
27	Isaac Blesses Jacob
28	God's Promise to Jacob/Jacob's Vow to God
29	Jacob Serves for Leah & Rachel
30	Jacob's Children/Prosper
31	Jacob's Covenant with Laban
32	Gifts for Esau/Jacob Wrestles
33	Jacob Meets Esau/Settles in Shechem
34	Dinah & Shechem
35	Jacob to Bethel/Benjamin Born/Rachel Dies
36	Generations of Esau
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