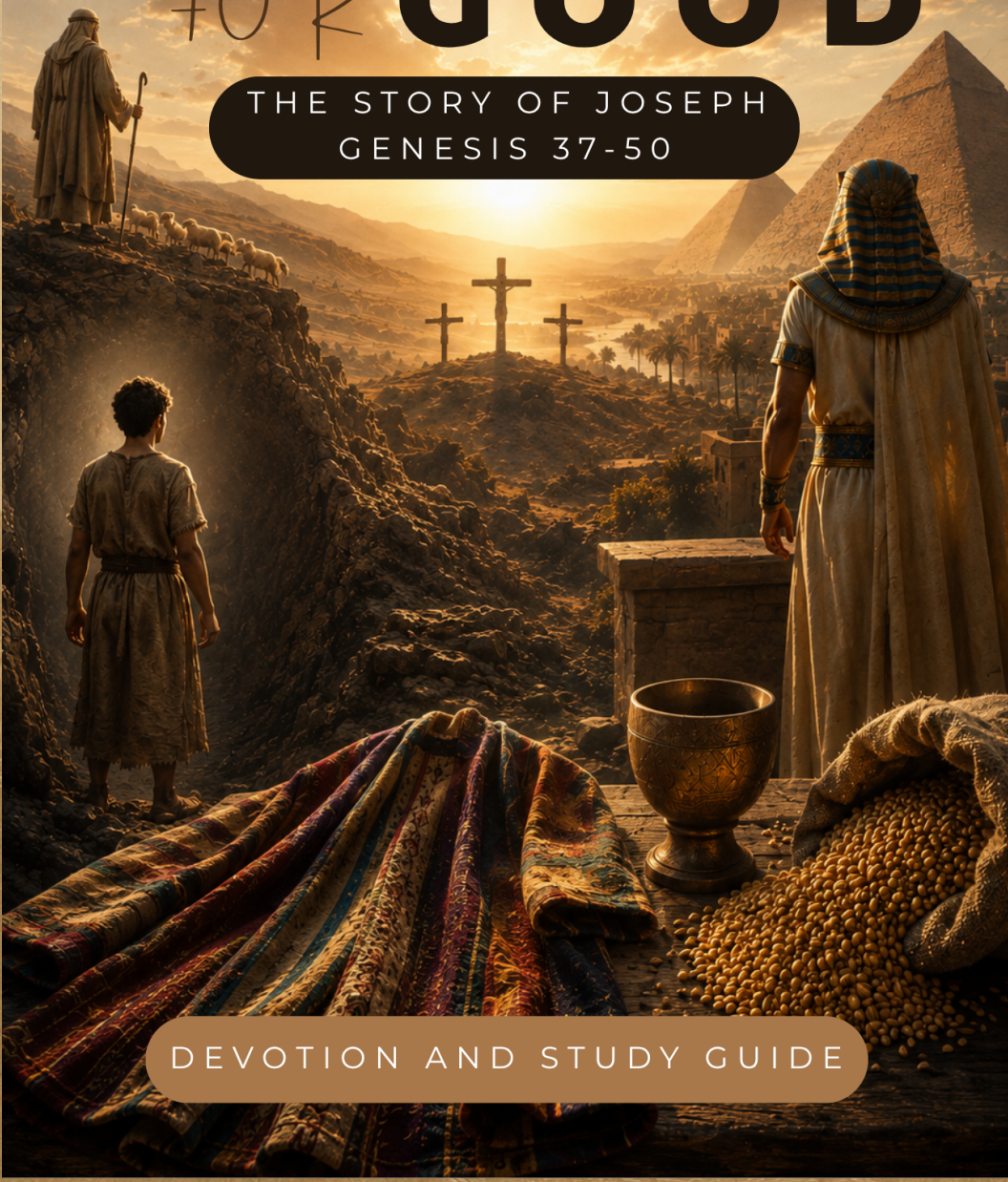




MEANT FOR GOOD

THE STORY OF JOSEPH
GENESIS 37-50



DEVOTION AND STUDY GUIDE

Introduction

Joseph's story begins with a coat and ends with a coffin. In between are dreams, jealousy, betrayal, slavery, temptation, prison, power, famine, forgiveness, and reunion. Nearly every chapter contains something we recognize: a family that hurts one another, plans that fall apart, long seasons of waiting, old guilt that resurfaces, and the question of whether God is still at work when life looks nothing like we expected.

But Joseph's story does not begin in Genesis 37. Long before Joseph was born, God had made a promise. After sin entered the world, God promised Adam and Eve that evil would not have the final word. Then, He called Abraham and promised to make of him a great nation, to give his descendants a land, and through his offspring to bless all the families of the earth. That promise passed through Isaac to Jacob (later renamed Israel) and then into this family.

So, when Joseph is sold into Egypt, more is at stake than one young man's future. The family carrying God's promise is tearing itself apart. A famine will soon threaten its survival. The promise of God, from a human perspective, appears remarkably fragile.

And yet, what appears fragile in human hands remains secure in God's. Joseph's story teaches us that God is still at work even when He seems least visible. Joseph is sold, but the Lord is with him. Joseph is falsely accused, but the Lord is with him. Joseph is forgotten, but he is not forgotten by God. Years later, Joseph can finally look back and tell his brothers, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20). He does not call their evil good. He confesses that their evil was never strong enough to overthrow God's saving purposes.

There is another story unfolding alongside Joseph's. Judah begins as the brother who suggests selling Joseph. Genesis 38 exposes his own sin. Later, however, Judah steps forward and offers himself in place of Benjamin. By Genesis 49, Jacob announces that the royal line will come through Judah. Joseph may stand at the center of these chapters, but the promised King will come through the line of Judah.

That King is Jesus! This study, therefore, is not an invitation simply to admire Joseph or Judah. It is an invitation to watch God keep His promises through deeply imperfect people and painfully complicated circumstances. As we read Genesis 37–50, we will ask what Joseph's story says about betrayal, faithfulness, waiting, guilt, repentance, forgiveness, and providence. Above all, we will keep asking where this story leads us to Christ—the One in whom God's promises are finally and fully kept.

How to Use This Study

Each week has two parts: **your small-group gathering and your at-home devotions.** During your small-group gathering, you will read selected portions of Scripture together, read a brief summary, discuss what the text reveals about God and our lives, and close in prayer. During the week, you will have two short At Home Devotions. The first helps you reflect more deeply on what your group just discussed. The second begins moving the story forward and prepares you for what your group will explore the next time you meet. Together, the small-group readings and at-home devotions will carry you through the story of Joseph in Genesis 37–50, while also connecting Joseph's story to the larger story of Scripture and ultimately to Jesus. The goal is to let God's Word stay with you throughout the week—in your home, your conversations, your prayers, and your everyday life.

Week 1

The Beloved Son

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 37:18–28

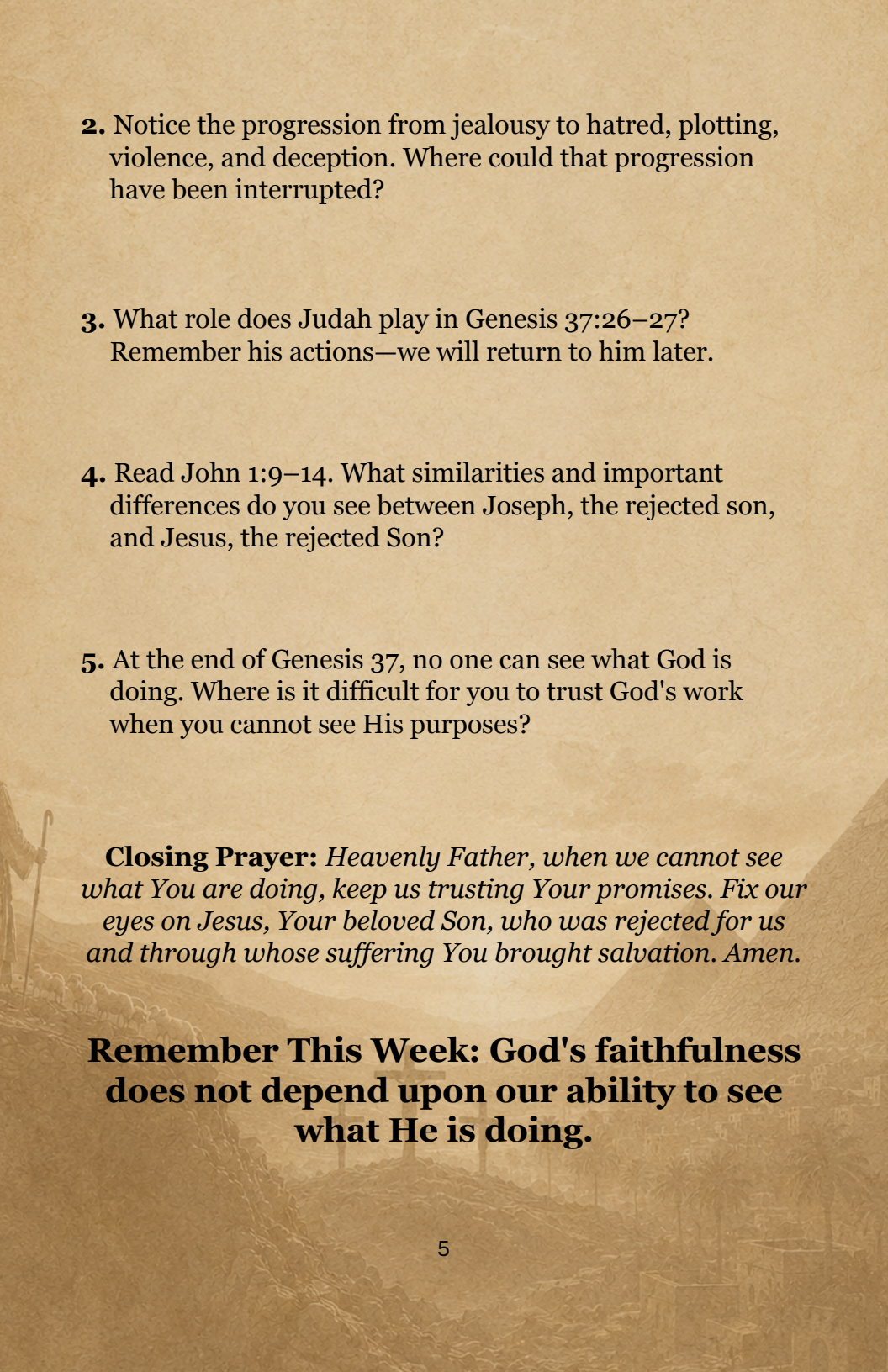
Weekly Summary

Joseph is favored by Jacob, hated by his brothers, stripped of his robe, thrown into a pit, and sold into slavery. Yet the family tearing itself apart is still the family through whom God has promised to bless the world.

Opening Conversation: Have you ever experienced something that seemed like a terrible detour at the time but later became an important part of your story? What made it difficult to see anything good in it while you were living through it?

Discuss

1. What problems are already present in Jacob's family before Joseph is thrown into the pit? How do jealousy and favoritism contribute to what follows?

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2. Notice the progression from jealousy to hatred, plotting, violence, and deception. Where could that progression have been interrupted?
 3. What role does Judah play in Genesis 37:26–27? Remember his actions—we will return to him later.
 4. Read John 1:9–14. What similarities and important differences do you see between Joseph, the rejected son, and Jesus, the rejected Son?
 5. At the end of Genesis 37, no one can see what God is doing. Where is it difficult for you to trust God's work when you cannot see His purposes?

Closing Prayer: *Heavenly Father, when we cannot see what You are doing, keep us trusting Your promises. Fix our eyes on Jesus, Your beloved Son, who was rejected for us and through whose suffering You brought salvation. Amen.*

Remember This Week: God's faithfulness does not depend upon our ability to see what He is doing.

Week 1 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: When You Can't See What God Is Doing

Read: Genesis 37:29–36 | Romans 8:31–32

Joseph's story has barely begun, and already everything seems to have gone wrong. His brothers strip away his robe. They throw him into a pit and sell him.

But the story gets even darker. The brothers dip Joseph's robe in blood and bring it to their father. Jacob recognizes it and reaches the only conclusion that seems possible: *“Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces.”* He mourns for his son and refuses to be comforted.

Jacob believes he knows what has happened. But Jacob cannot see the whole story. Joseph is not dead. Verse 36 quietly tells us that while Jacob is mourning in Canaan, Joseph has arrived in Egypt. Jacob sees only loss. The reader knows there is more to the story. We often live where Jacob does. We see what is in front of us, but we cannot see what God is doing beyond it, but when we cannot see what God is doing, the cross shows us the God who is doing it.

Talk About It

- Where in your life do you most wish God would show you what He is doing? How does the cross give you something to hold onto even when you don't understand?

Pray: *Father, when we cannot see what You are doing, remind us of what You have already done for us in Jesus. Amen.*

Devotion 2: An Unexpected Chapter

Read: Genesis 38:24–30

If you were writing Joseph's story, you probably would not put Genesis 38 here; it feels like an interruption. Joseph has just been sold into Egypt. Joseph has just disappeared down the road toward Egypt, and suddenly Scripture turns our attention to Judah—the brother who suggested selling him—and it isn't a flattering story.

Judah, who helped sell Joseph, is confronted with his own sin. When the truth finally comes out, he says of Tamar, 'She is more righteous than I.' It is a small sentence, but it may mark the beginning of something important. Judah is beginning to see himself truthfully.

Judah's sin has been exposed, and for perhaps the first time he is forced to stop looking at someone else's sin and acknowledge his own: "She is more righteous than I." Don't rush past that sentence. And don't assume Judah's story is finished. Remember the man you met in Genesis 37, and keep watching him. Before Joseph's story ends, Judah will stand before his brother again—and he will be a very different man.

Talk About It

- Why might Genesis want us to keep watching Judah alongside Joseph? What do you think it takes for God to change someone over time?

Pray: *Merciful God, show us our sin and lead us to repentance. Thank You for forgiving and changing sinners through Christ. Amen.*

Week 2

The Lord Was With Joseph

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 39:6–23

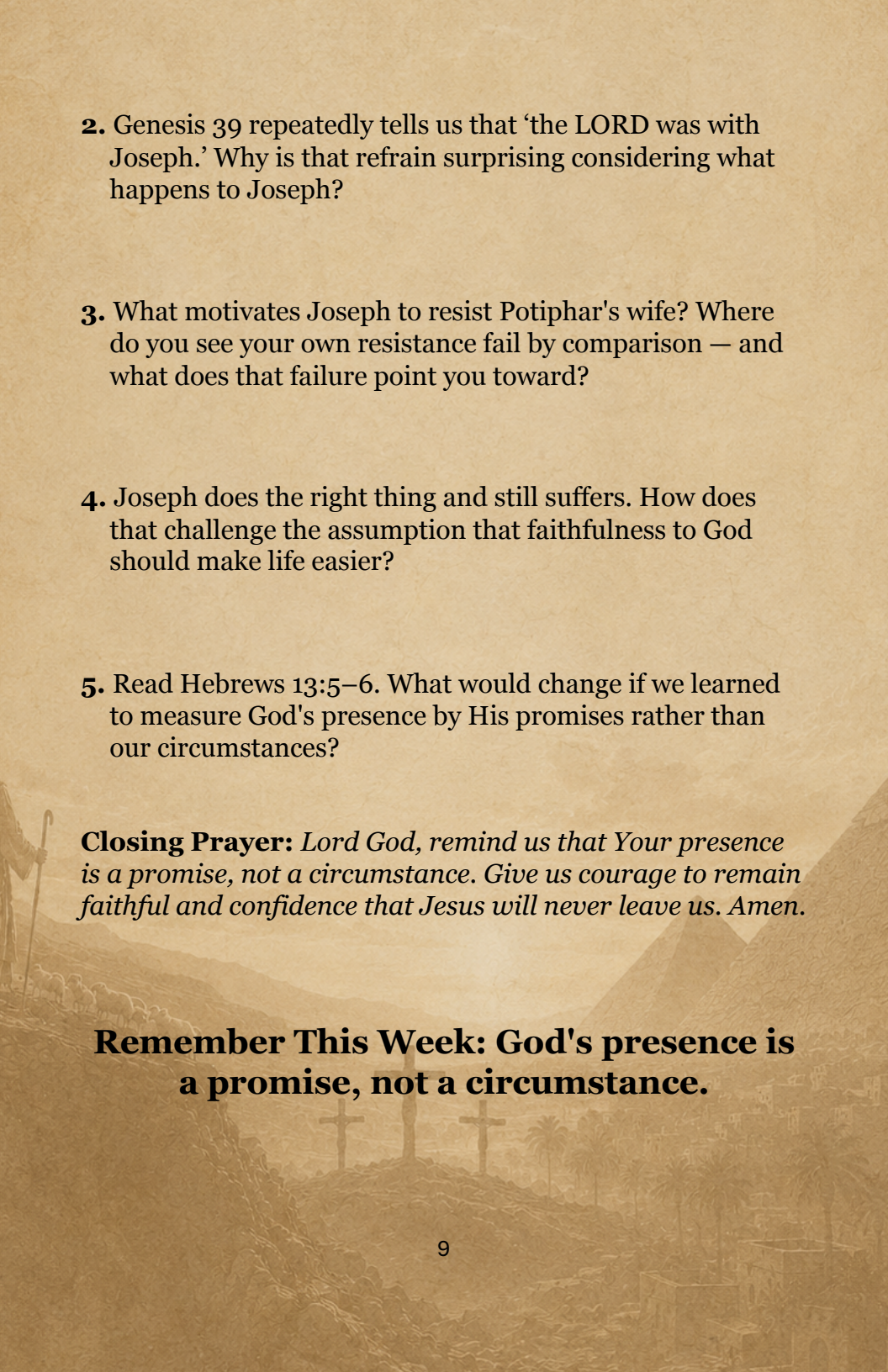
Weekly Summary

Genesis 38 exposes Judah's sin and begins a story of change that will matter later. Genesis 39 returns to Joseph, where the repeated promise is clear: "the LORD was with Joseph." Joseph remains faithful, yet still suffers unjustly—reminding us that God's presence is known by His promise, not by easy circumstances.

Opening Conversation: When have you done what you believed was right even though you knew it might cost you something?

Discuss

1. Genesis 38 interrupts Joseph's story with the uncomfortable story of Judah and Tamar. What does Judah's admission in 38:26 begin to reveal about him?

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2. Genesis 39 repeatedly tells us that ‘the LORD was with Joseph.’ Why is that refrain surprising considering what happens to Joseph?
 3. What motivates Joseph to resist Potiphar's wife? Where do you see your own resistance fail by comparison — and what does that failure point you toward?
 4. Joseph does the right thing and still suffers. How does that challenge the assumption that faithfulness to God should make life easier?
 5. Read Hebrews 13:5–6. What would change if we learned to measure God's presence by His promises rather than our circumstances?

Closing Prayer: *Lord God, remind us that Your presence is a promise, not a circumstance. Give us courage to remain faithful and confidence that Jesus will never leave us. Amen.*

Remember This Week: God's presence is a promise, not a circumstance.

Week 2 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: With You Here Too

Read: Genesis 39:19–23; Matthew 28:18–20

Joseph is in prison. And Scripture says, ‘The LORD was with Joseph.’ Two things are true at the same time: Joseph is suffering, and God is with Joseph.

We often assume God's presence should produce better circumstances. Joseph's story challenges that assumption. God does not promise that His people will avoid disappointments, losses, or suffering. He promises something better: Himself.

Jesus sends His disciples into a difficult world and says, ‘*Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*’ God's promise of His presence is found in the fact that He has joined us to Christ in Baptism, speaks His promises to us in His Word, and gives us Christ's own body and blood. You may not always be able to look at your circumstances and conclude, ‘God must be with me.’ Instead, look to His promise. Jesus says He is.

Talk About It

- Where has God actually given you His promise that you belong to Him?
- What difference is there between saying ‘God will get me out of this’ and ‘God will be with me in this’?

Pray: *Lord Jesus, when life is difficult, help us trust Your promise that You are with us always. Amen.*

Devotion 2: Remember Me

Read: Genesis 40:1–15

Joseph helps the cupbearer. Then Joseph asks him to do something for him: remember me.

The dream comes true. The cupbearer is restored to his position before Pharaoh. It seems like this might finally be Joseph's way out of prison. But the chapter ends with these painful words: *"Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him."* And Joseph waits. Nothing changes. No explanation comes. The prison door stays closed. And Genesis gives us no immediate explanation.

We know that feeling. We pray, hope something will change, and wonder why God has not acted. It can feel as though we have been forgotten. Sometimes the hardest part of faith isn't suffering itself. It's waiting when nothing seems to be happening.

Talk About It

- What makes waiting without an explanation especially difficult?

Pray: *Faithful Father, when we feel forgotten, remind us that You know us and hear us. Give us patience to trust Your timing. Amen.*

Week 3

Forgotten

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 40:20–23

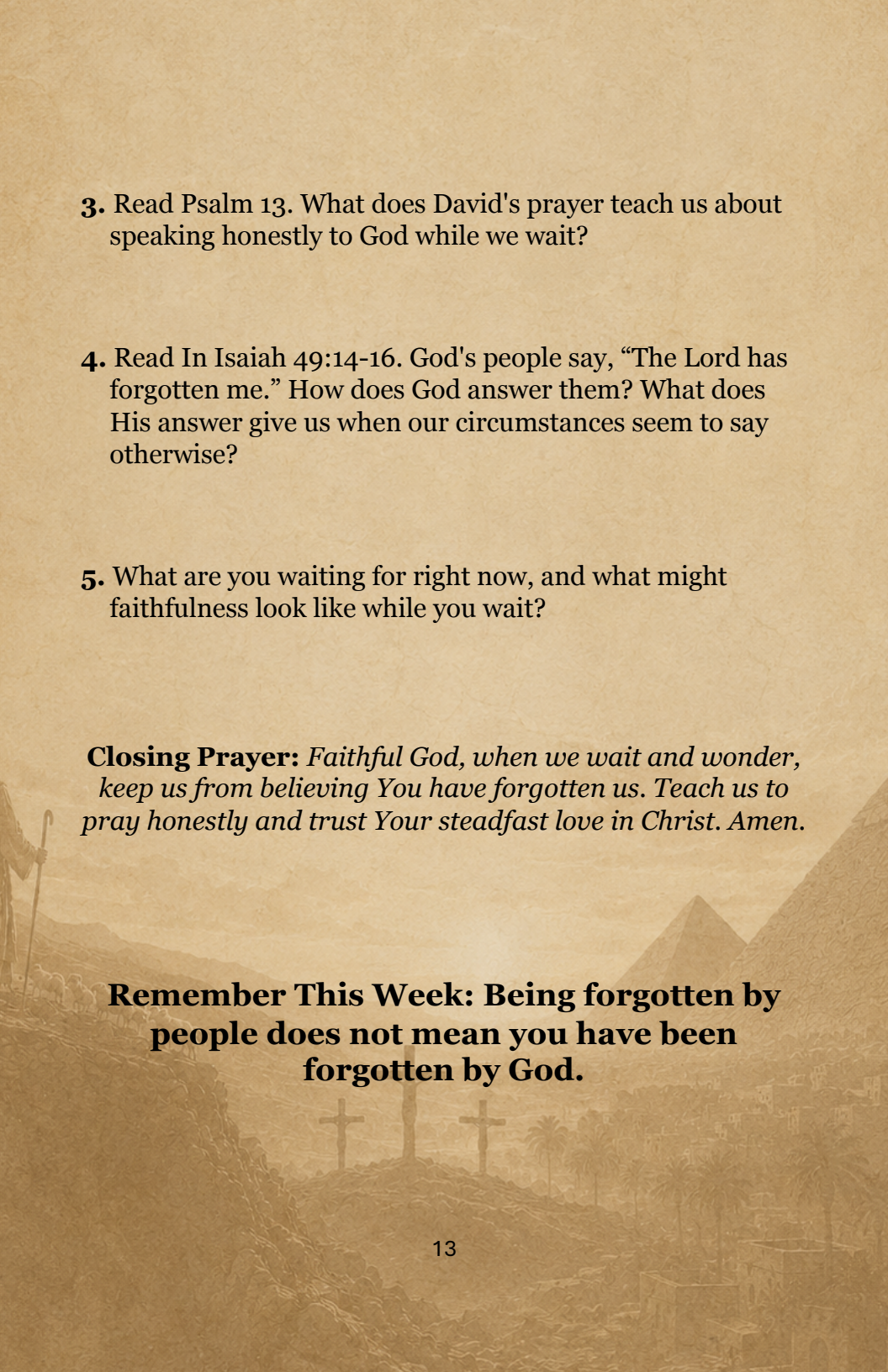
Weekly Summary

Joseph interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker and asks the cupbearer to remember him. Instead, Joseph is forgotten and left waiting. People may forget, but God does not, and Psalm 13 teaches us that faith can honestly ask "How long?" while still trusting God's steadfast love.

Opening Conversation: What's something you're still waiting on an answer for?

Discuss

1. What do you notice about Joseph's concern for the cupbearer and baker even while he remains imprisoned?
2. Joseph asks the cupbearer to remember him, but the chapter ends, 'Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.' Why are those words so painful?

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3. Read Psalm 13. What does David's prayer teach us about speaking honestly to God while we wait?
4. Read In Isaiah 49:14-16. God's people say, "The Lord has forgotten me." How does God answer them? What does His answer give us when our circumstances seem to say otherwise?
5. What are you waiting for right now, and what might faithfulness look like while you wait?

Closing Prayer: *Faithful God, when we wait and wonder, keep us from believing You have forgotten us. Teach us to pray honestly and trust Your steadfast love in Christ. Amen.*

Remember This Week: Being forgotten by people does not mean you have been forgotten by God.

Week 3 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: Engraved on His Hands

Read: Isaiah 49:14–16

Joseph has been forgotten by the cupbearer. And sometimes being forgotten by another person can make us wonder whether God has forgotten us too.

Israel once asked that very question: *“The LORD has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me.”* Notice that God does not shame His people for feeling that way. He answers them with a promise: *“I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.”*

Our feelings can tell us that God is distant. Our circumstances can make it appear that He is absent. But neither gets the final word. God’s promise does. For us, that promise becomes even more certain in Jesus. The hands of our Savior were pierced for us. Whatever else we may not understand about what God is doing, the cross tells us that we have not been forgotten.

Talk About It

- What circumstances are most likely to make you wonder whether God has forgotten you?
- Why is God’s promise more trustworthy than what you can see or feel?

Pray: *Faithful Father, when we feel forgotten, turn us again to Your promises and to the pierced hands of Jesus. Keep us trusting that we are known, loved, and remembered by You. Amen.*

Devotion 2: Two Years Later

Read: Genesis 41:1–16

Genesis 41 begins with three words easy to overlook: *‘After two whole years...’* Two years. Joseph had asked to be remembered, and then nothing happened.

Until one night Pharaoh dreamed. Suddenly the cupbearer remembered. Suddenly Joseph was summoned. Suddenly everything began changing.

And yet, he does not tell Pharaoh how much he has grown during his years in prison. He points away from himself: *“It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.”* Whatever those years have done to Joseph, the emphasis remains on God's faithfulness rather than Joseph's development. Waiting does not always come with an explanation. But even while Joseph waits, God's promise has not failed.

Talk About It

- What does Joseph's answer to Pharaoh reveal about where his confidence rests after years of waiting?

Pray: *Lord, when we do not understand Your timing, keep our confidence in You rather than ourselves. Keep us faithful to Your Word while we wait. Amen.*

Week 4

From Prison to Palace

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 41:14–16, 37–43

Weekly Summary

After years in prison, Joseph is suddenly brought before Pharaoh, and God gives him wisdom to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. Joseph is elevated to authority not simply for his own benefit, but so that lives can be preserved during famine.

Opening Conversation: When has someone else's success or authority ended up benefiting you directly?

Discuss

1. After years of waiting, Joseph's circumstances change remarkably quickly. What does this chapter reveal about God's timing compared with ours?
2. Joseph tells Pharaoh, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer." Where does Joseph locate

the source of his wisdom and ability? What does that reveal about his faith?

3. Joseph is elevated not simply for his own benefit but to preserve others. Where has God given you a position, ability, relationship, or resource that can be used for someone else's good?
4. Read Philippians 2:5–11. Where do you see a similar movement from humiliation to exaltation in Joseph and Jesus?
5. Where does the comparison end? Why do we ultimately need a Savior greater than Joseph?

Closing Prayer: *Gracious God, thank You for the gifts and places You have entrusted to us. Keep us humble and use us to bless our neighbors, through Jesus Christ. Amen.*

Remember This Week: God's blessings are often given through us, not merely to us.

Week 4 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: Blessed for Someone Else

Read: Genesis 41:46–49, 53–57; 1 Peter 4:10

Joseph receives extraordinary authority. But notice what he does with it. He prepares, gathers grain, organizes, plans for famine, and when the famine does come the storehouses are opened. None of those tasks looks especially “religious.” Yet God uses Joseph's ordinary work to preserve his neighbor's life. This is one of the beautiful truths of Christian vocation: God often cares for other people through the ordinary work He gives us to do.

Joseph's position becomes God's way of preserving countless lives. We often think about God's blessings in terms of what they mean for us. Scripture repeatedly asks another question: Who can be served through what God has given me?

Peter writes, *‘As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another.’* God's gifts don't stop with us. They move through us toward our neighbor.

Talk About It

- What has God placed in your hands right now—time, experience, money, relationships, abilities, influence—that could bless someone else?

Pray: *Generous God, show us how to use what You have given us for the good of our neighbors. Amen.*

Devotion 2: The Dreams Come Back

Read: Genesis 42:1–9

Years have passed since Joseph dreamed that his brothers would bow before him. Now they do. They arrive in Egypt desperate for food and bow before the governor of the land. They have no idea who he is.

But Joseph recognizes them, and Scripture tells us: *‘Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them.’* The past has suddenly entered the room.

For decades, the brothers have lived with what they did to Joseph buried somewhere in their past. But buried sin has a way of remaining with us. God is about to begin dealing with their hearts.

Talk About It

- Why do you think guilt can remain with us long after everyone else may have forgotten what happened?
- What's the difference between hiding the past and actually being free from it?

Pray: *Merciful Father, bring our sins into Your light and prepare us to receive the forgiveness Christ has won for us. Amen.*

Week 5

Reunited – When the Past Comes Back

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 42:18–24

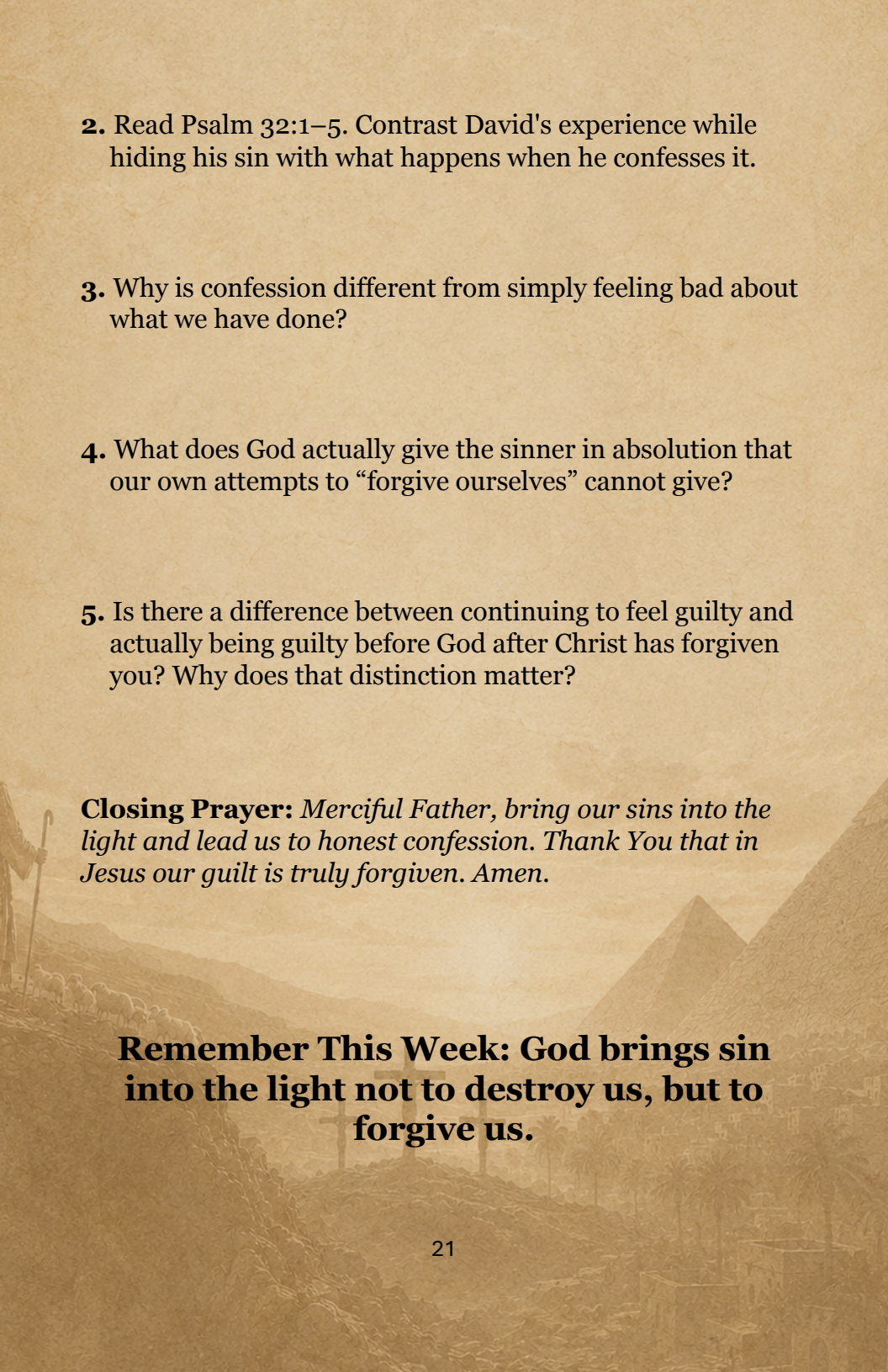
Weekly Summary

The famine brings Joseph's brothers to Egypt, where they unknowingly bow before the brother they betrayed. Their circumstances awaken an old confession: "In truth we are guilty concerning our brother." God brings hidden sin into the light not merely to expose sinners, but to lead them toward confession and forgiveness.

Opening Conversation: Why do memories of things we regret sometimes return years after they happened?

Discuss

1. When trouble comes, the brothers immediately remember what they did to Joseph years earlier. What does that tell us about unresolved guilt?

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2. Read Psalm 32:1–5. Contrast David's experience while hiding his sin with what happens when he confesses it.
 3. Why is confession different from simply feeling bad about what we have done?
 4. What does God actually give the sinner in absolution that our own attempts to “forgive ourselves” cannot give?
 5. Is there a difference between continuing to feel guilty and actually being guilty before God after Christ has forgiven you? Why does that distinction matter?

Closing Prayer: *Merciful Father, bring our sins into the light and lead us to honest confession. Thank You that in Jesus our guilt is truly forgiven. Amen.*

Remember This Week: God brings sin into the light not to destroy us, but to forgive us.

Week 5 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: When Guilt Speaks

Read: Genesis 42:18–24; 1 John 1:8–9

The brothers don't know Joseph can understand them. They begin talking about the past: *'In truth we are guilty concerning our brother.'* More than twenty years have passed, yet they remember.

Guilt has a long memory. But the Christian answer to guilt is not denial. John says, *'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.'* The answer to real guilt is real forgiveness.

Jesus does not tell guilty sinners to pretend. He takes their guilt Himself. You may still remember forgiven sin. You may even still feel guilty about forgiven sin. But God's Word gets the final word. In Christ, forgiven means forgiven.

Talk About It

- Why is confessing a sin often more freeing than continuing to explain or excuse it?
- When feelings of guilt remain, where can we look for something more certain than our feelings?

Pray: Lord Jesus, we confess our sin and trust Your forgiveness. Let Your Word speak louder than our lingering guilt. Amen.

Devotion 2: I Will Be His Safety

Read: Genesis 43:1–10

The famine has not ended, and the food from Egypt is gone. Jacob has no choice but to send his sons back—but the Egyptian governor made one condition: they cannot return without Benjamin. Jacob resists. He has already lost one son from Rachel; he will not risk the other.

It is Judah who finally speaks the words that move his father: "I myself will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever." This is the same Judah who once said, *"What profit is it if we kill our brother?"* and then sold him for silver. Now he offers himself as collateral.

This is the first time Judah makes this offer. He will make it again, more fully, in front of Joseph himself in Genesis 44. But it starts here, quietly, in a conversation with his father that no one else witnesses.

Judah's pledge is a shadow of something greater. Hebrews calls Jesus "the guarantor of a better covenant" (Hebrews 7:22). Judah promised to bear the blame forever if he failed—and he might have failed. Jesus did not promise to bear our blame; He bore it, completely, and did not fail. Judah gives his word. Jesus gives Himself.

Talk About It

- How does knowing Jesus is your safety change the promises you're willing to make for someone else?

Pray: *Lord Jesus, thank You for standing in for us, bearing what we could never repay. Teach us to give ourselves for others as You have given Yourself for us. Amen.*

Week 6

A Changed Brother

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 44:18–34

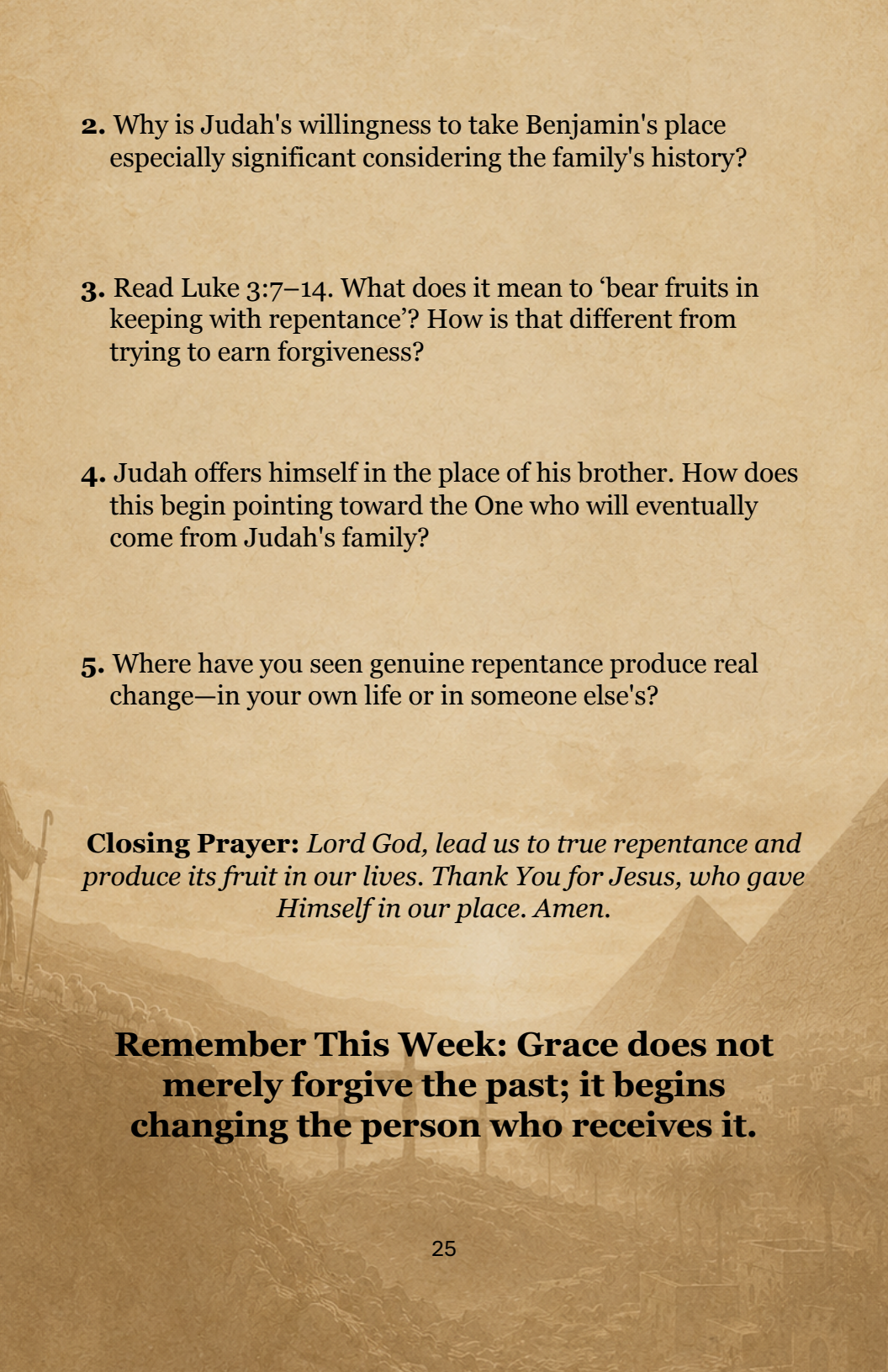
Weekly Summary

Joseph places the brothers in a situation that echoes their betrayal of him, but this time Judah responds differently. The brother who once suggested selling Joseph now offers himself in Benjamin's place. His changed actions show the fruit of repentance and point ahead to Jesus, the descendant of Judah who truly gives Himself in the place of sinners.

Opening Conversation: How can you tell when someone is genuinely sorry rather than simply sorry that there were consequences?

Discuss

1. Compare Judah in Genesis 37:26–27 with Judah in Genesis 44:30–34. What has changed?

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2. Why is Judah's willingness to take Benjamin's place especially significant considering the family's history?
 3. Read Luke 3:7–14. What does it mean to 'bear fruits in keeping with repentance'? How is that different from trying to earn forgiveness?
 4. Judah offers himself in the place of his brother. How does this begin pointing toward the One who will eventually come from Judah's family?
 5. Where have you seen genuine repentance produce real change—in your own life or in someone else's?

Closing Prayer: *Lord God, lead us to true repentance and produce its fruit in our lives. Thank You for Jesus, who gave Himself in our place. Amen.*

Remember This Week: Grace does not merely forgive the past; it begins changing the person who receives it.

Week 6 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: In My Place

Read: Genesis 44:32–34; Mark 10:45

Judah says, ‘Let your servant remain instead of the boy.’ Instead. That is one of the great words of the Gospel.

Judah offers to become a slave so Benjamin can go free. Centuries later, Jesus describes His own mission: *‘The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’*

Jesus stands where we should stand. He carries what we should carry. He receives what our sins deserve. And we receive what belongs to Him: forgiveness, righteousness, life, and peace with God. Judah gives us a glimpse. Jesus gives us the reality.

Talk About It

- What does it mean to you personally that Jesus took your place rather than simply showing you how to live better?

Pray: *Lord Jesus, thank You for giving Your life in our place. Teach us to rest in what You have done for us. Amen.*

Devotion 2: An Unexpected Welcome

Read: Genesis 45:1–8

Joseph finally says the words his brothers never expected to hear: *“I am Joseph.”* The brothers are terrified. The brother they betrayed is alive, powerful, and standing directly in front of them. They have every reason to wonder what Joseph will do to them.

Joseph does not pretend their sin never happened. He tells the truth about what they did: *“You sold me here.”* Yet their sin is not the only thing Joseph sees. Looking back, he can also see that God has been at work preserving life through everything that happened.

But then he does something they could never have expected: *“Come near to me, please.”*

The brothers come expecting that their past may finally catch up with them. What will Joseph do with the people who hurt him now that they are completely at his mercy?

Talk About It

- Why do you think Joseph's brothers were terrified when they discovered who he was?
- What is surprising about Joseph's invitation, “Come near to me”?

Pray: *Gracious Father, when guilt makes us hide, draw us near through Jesus and assure us of Your mercy. Amen.*

Week 7

Forgiveness – “I Am Joseph”

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 45:1–15

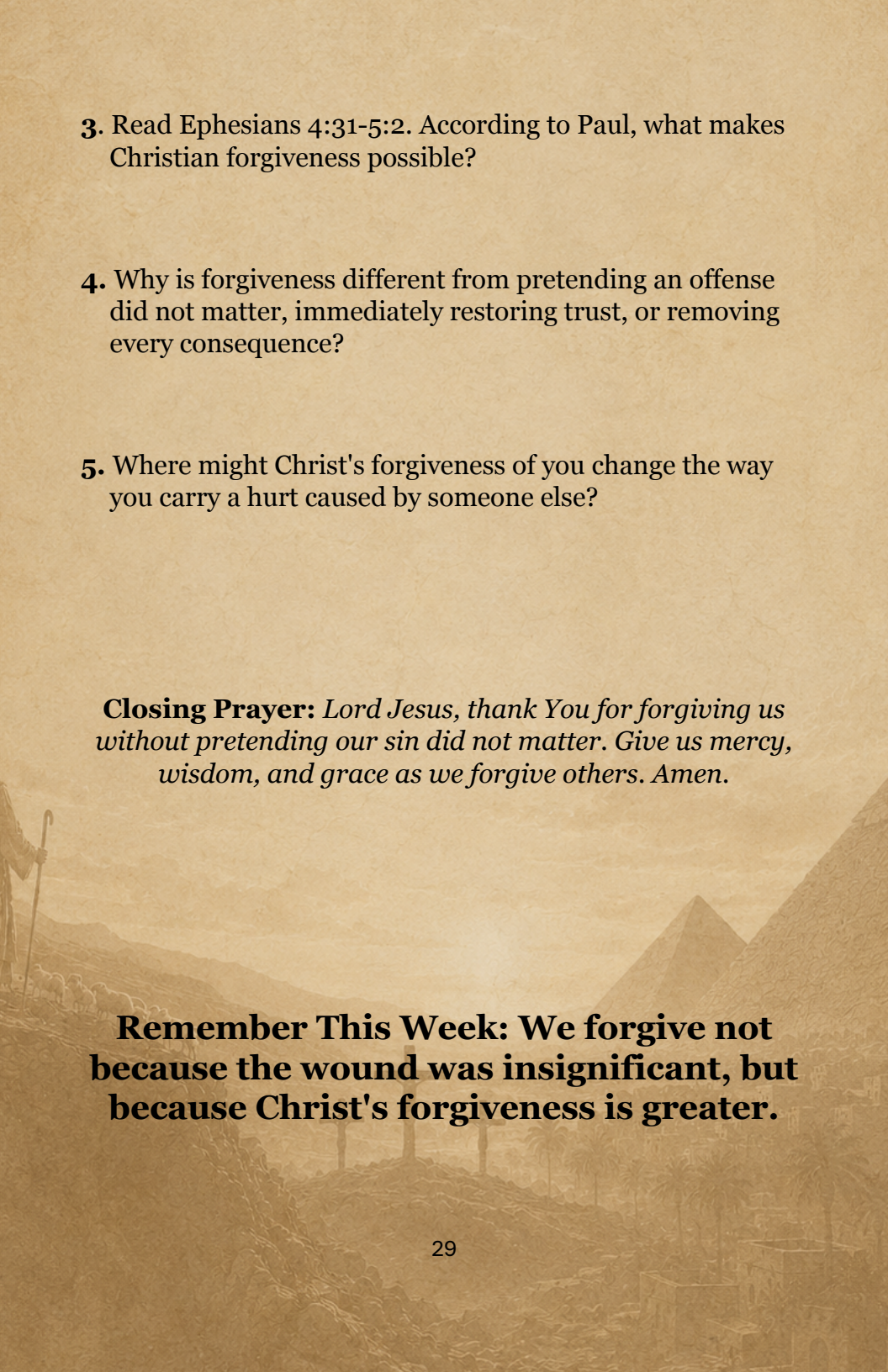
Weekly Summary

Joseph finally reveals himself to his terrified brothers. He does not deny their sin—“you sold me here”—but he also sees that God has been at work to preserve life.

Opening Conversation: Why can receiving forgiveness sometimes be almost as difficult as offering it?

Discuss

1. Imagine hearing ‘I am Joseph’ from the brother you sold into slavery and who now has authority over you. What do you think the brothers expected to happen next?
2. Joseph can say both ‘you sold me’ and ‘God sent me.’ What does that teach us about forgiveness and honestly naming what happened?

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- The background of the page is a sepia-toned illustration of an ancient Egyptian desert landscape. In the distance, the Great Pyramids of Giza are visible under a hazy sky. In the foreground, a shepherd in traditional robes and a turban stands on the left, holding a long staff. A flock of sheep is gathered around him. The overall tone is warm and historical.
3. Read Ephesians 4:31-5:2. According to Paul, what makes Christian forgiveness possible?
4. Why is forgiveness different from pretending an offense did not matter, immediately restoring trust, or removing every consequence?
5. Where might Christ's forgiveness of you change the way you carry a hurt caused by someone else?

Closing Prayer: *Lord Jesus, thank You for forgiving us without pretending our sin did not matter. Give us mercy, wisdom, and grace as we forgive others. Amen.*

Remember This Week: We forgive not because the wound was insignificant, but because Christ's forgiveness is greater.

Week 7 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: Forgiveness Without Pretending

Read: Matthew 18:21–35

Joseph does something important when he forgives his brothers. He tells the truth: ‘You sold me here.’ He does not say it wasn’t a big deal or pretend it never happened.

Christian forgiveness does not depend upon convincing ourselves that what happened didn’t matter. It matters enough that Jesus went to the cross for sin. Our ability to forgive comes from somewhere else: *‘As the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.’*

Forgiveness does not mean that hurt disappears immediately. Healing may take time. Appropriate boundaries may remain. Trust may need to be rebuilt slowly. But the wound no longer has to be carried alone. We place it into the hands of the One who carried our sins in His own body.

Talk About It

- Why is forgiveness stronger—not weaker—when it can tell the truth about what happened?

Pray: *Lord Jesus, teach us to forgive as You have forgiven us. Give us wisdom, mercy, and healthy boundaries where they are needed. Amen.*

Devotion 2: Joseph is Still Alive

Read: Genesis 45:25–28

Jacob had spent years believing his son was dead. So when his sons return from Egypt and announce, “*Joseph is still alive,*” Jacob cannot believe them. Then he sees the wagons Joseph has sent. Something changes. Scripture says, “*The spirit of their father Jacob revived.*” Jacob responds, “*It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.*”

Jacob has not seen Joseph. He has not arrived in Egypt. What has changed is that he has received good news. Someone has told him something he could never have discovered on his own: the son he thought was dead is alive.

The Gospel, too, is good news outside ourselves. It announces what God has done in Christ: Jesus who was dead is alive. Faith hears that promise and says, even before seeing its fulfillment with our own eyes, “It is enough.”

Talk About It

- Why does Jacob have difficulty believing the news at first?
- What is the difference between trying to create hope within ourselves and receiving the good news of what God has done?

Pray: *Lord Jesus, when our hearts struggle to believe, turn us again to the good news of what You have done. Keep us trusting Your Word until faith gives way to sight. Amen.*

Week 8

God Provides

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 46:1–7
- 2 Corinthians 1:18–20

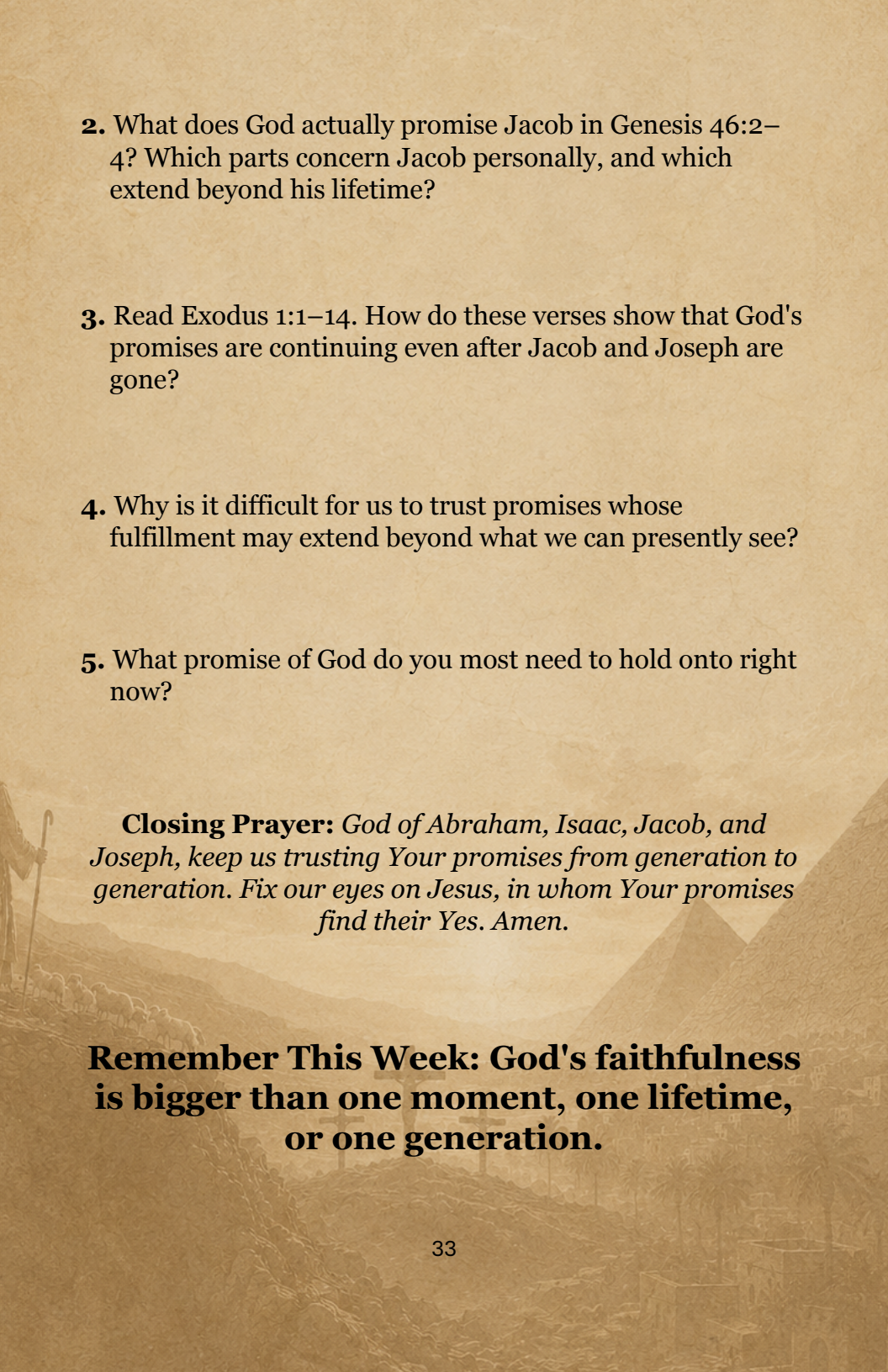
Weekly Summary

Jacob and his family leave Canaan for Egypt, and God promises to go with them. What looks like a move away from the Promised Land becomes part of God's larger plan to preserve the family and form a nation. God's faithfulness is bigger than one moment or generation.

Opening Conversation: Have you ever been led somewhere that initially seemed like the opposite direction from where you thought you were supposed to go?

Discuss

1. If Canaan is the land God promised Abraham, why might Jacob have been afraid or hesitant to leave it for Egypt?

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2. What does God actually promise Jacob in Genesis 46:2–4? Which parts concern Jacob personally, and which extend beyond his lifetime?
 3. Read Exodus 1:1–14. How do these verses show that God's promises are continuing even after Jacob and Joseph are gone?
 4. Why is it difficult for us to trust promises whose fulfillment may extend beyond what we can presently see?
 5. What promise of God do you most need to hold onto right now?

Closing Prayer: *God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, keep us trusting Your promises from generation to generation. Fix our eyes on Jesus, in whom Your promises find their Yes. Amen.*

Remember This Week: God's faithfulness is bigger than one moment, one lifetime, or one generation.

Week 8 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Read: Exodus 3:1–8, 13–15

Joseph's story is over. He has died, and generations have passed. The family God preserved through Joseph has grown into a people—but now those people are suffering as slaves in Egypt.

Then God speaks to Moses: *“I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”* Joseph may be gone, but the promise continues. God has not forgotten the family He preserved through Joseph or the promises that brought them to Egypt in the first place.

God tells Moses, *“I have surely seen the affliction of my people...and I have heard their cry.”* The story is moving into a new generation, but the God of the story has not changed. Joseph's life was one chapter in God's much larger work of keeping His promises—a work that will ultimately lead to Jesus.

Talk About It

- How does Exodus 3 help us see Joseph's story as part of something larger?
- What does this teach us about God's faithfulness from one generation to the next?

Pray: *Faithful God, thank You for keeping Your promises from generation to generation. Keep us trusting the promise You have fulfilled for us in Jesus. Amen.*

Devotion 2: The Lion Comes from Judah

Read: Genesis 49:8–12; Revelation 5:1–5

If you were choosing the brother through whom the promised King would come, would you choose Judah? Judah helped sell Joseph. Genesis 38 exposes his sin. Yet over time we see something change.

Now Jacob says something remarkable: ‘The scepter shall not depart from Judah.’ Kings will come from Judah. David will come from Judah. Ultimately Jesus will come from Judah.

Revelation calls Him *‘the Lion of the tribe of Judah.’* God’s plan does not advance because He finds flawless people. It advances because He is faithful to sinners. Judah’s story isn’t ultimately, ‘Look how good Judah became.’ It is: Look how gracious God is.

Talk About It

- What does Judah’s story teach us about the kind of people God can redeem and use?
- Why is it good news that God’s promises depend more upon His faithfulness than ours?

Pray: *Faithful God, thank You that Your grace is greater than our failures. Keep us looking to Jesus, the Lion of Judah. Amen.*

Week 9

Meant for God

Read Together (Before the Summary)

- Genesis 50:15–26

Weekly Summary

Joseph looks back on his brothers' betrayal and says, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good." Their actions remain evil, yet evil cannot overturn God's saving purposes. Genesis ends with Joseph in a coffin, still trusting God's promise.

Opening Conversation: Looking back over these nine weeks, where in Joseph's story can you now see God's hand most clearly—and where might that help you trust God's hand in your own story?

Discuss

1. Joseph says, 'You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.' Why is it important that Joseph still calls his brothers' actions evil?
2. Read Acts 2:22–24. How does the cross become the ultimate example of Genesis 50:20—human evil being used by God to accomplish salvation?

3. Read Genesis 49:8–12. After watching Judah change throughout the story, why is it significant that God's promised King will come through Judah rather than Joseph?
4. Read Hebrews 11:22. Genesis ends with Joseph 'in a coffin in Egypt.' According to Hebrews 11:22, why is Joseph's request concerning his bones actually an expression of faith?
5. Genesis ends with a coffin; the Gospel announces an empty tomb. After these nine weeks, how does Jesus change the way you understand Joseph's story—and your own?

Closing Prayer: *Faithful God, teach us to trust Your providence when we cannot see Your purposes. Keep our eyes on the cross and empty tomb of Jesus, where evil is overcome and Your saving purpose is made sure. Amen.*

Remember This Week: What humanity meant for evil, God used for good—and nowhere is that more clearly seen than at the cross of Jesus Christ.

Week 9 At Home Devotions

Devotion 1: What God Meant for Good

Read: Acts 4:27–28; Romans 8:28–32

Joseph can look backward and say something he could never have said while sitting at the bottom of the pit: *“You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.”* But that does not mean Christians should look at every tragedy and try to explain the good God must be accomplishing through it. Often we simply do not know.

Instead, Scripture takes us somewhere we can know: the cross. Acts tells us that Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel gathered against Jesus. Their actions were sinful and evil. Yet even there, God’s saving purpose was not defeated. Through the worst evil humanity ever committed, God accomplished our salvation. That is why Paul can ask, *“If God is for us, who can be against us?”* Our confidence in God’s providence does not come from being able to explain everything that happens. It comes from the cross. If God did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, then even when His purposes remain hidden, His heart toward us does not.

Talk About It

- What is the difference between trusting God's providence and claiming to know why God allowed a particular suffering?

Pray: *Almighty God, when we cannot understand suffering, turn our eyes to the cross and teach us to trust Your saving purposes. Amen.*

Devotion 2: The Story Ends with Resurrection

Read: Luke 24:1–8; 1 Corinthians 15:20–26

It is a strange ending for such a remarkable story. Joseph has been betrayed, raised to power, reunited with his family, and used by God to preserve countless lives. But eventually Joseph dies too. And that reminds us that Joseph could never be the Savior God's people ultimately needed.

Another beloved Son would come. He too would be rejected, suffer at the hands of sinful people, and placed in a tomb. But His story did not end there.

“He is not here, but has risen.”

Paul calls Jesus *“the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”* His resurrection is not simply a happy ending to Jesus' story. It is God's promise concerning our own ending. The final enemy is death, and Christ has defeated that, too!

Joseph's story teaches us to trust God when we cannot see what He is doing. The resurrection gives us the reason that trust can endure even to the grave. We do not know how every chapter of our earthly lives will unfold. But in Christ, we know how the story ends: resurrection and life with Him.

Talk About It

- After these nine weeks, what part of Joseph's story has changed the way you think about God most?
- How does Christ's resurrection change what it means to trust God when we cannot see what comes next?

Pray: *Risen Lord Jesus, thank You that the tomb is empty. Keep us trusting You in every chapter still ahead. Amen.*

Meant for Good

The Story of Joseph

What do you do when you can't see what God is doing?

This is, in a nutshell, the story of Joseph. He knew betrayal. He knew what it was to be forgotten, falsely accused, and left waiting. His life took turns he never could have expected, and for years Joseph could not see where the story was going.

But God could.

Through every pit, every prison, every disappointment, and every unexpected turn, God was at work. Joseph's own family failed him. Others forgot him. Circumstances seemed to work against him.

But God never abandoned Joseph—and He never abandoned His promises.

Looking back, Joseph could finally say: *“As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.”* (Genesis 50:20)

Remember this as you read Joseph's story: God keeps His promises. And nowhere do we see that more clearly than in Jesus Christ—where what humanity meant for evil, God used for good!