

# RENEW TOGETHER: GENESIS

This discussion guide is created to go along with the audible devotionals on the Renew app/podcast. To begin listening, scan the QR code below:



In this Renew Together Series, you'll be going through the book of Genesis over the course of 4 weeks. After listening to the devotionals for the week on your own, use this guide to talk through the corresponding discussion questions when you connect with your group.

*\*Helpful Tip: In the app, use the "Guided Notes" feature to take notes on the teaching section of the devotional. Use the "Take a Note" button to journal about the reflection prompt for each devotional. This will help jog your memory for your discussion time!*

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: Genesis Devotionals 1-5

WEEK 2: Genesis Devotionals 6-10

WEEK 3: Genesis Devotionals 11-15

WEEK 4: Genesis Devotionals 16-20

# WEEK 1 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## GENESIS DEVOTIONALS 1-5

### Genesis #1: THE POWER OF GOD

- Read John 1:1-3: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being."*

Now read Genesis 1:1-3: *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was a formless and desolate emptiness, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light."*

Write down similarities between these two sets of verses. What key truths are highlighted in both passages?

- Read Genesis 1:31: *"And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day."*

According to this verse, what does God say after he creates mankind? How is this different from the other days of creation? What do you think is the significance of this difference?

- Share your answers from this devotional's reflection: *Where in your own life do you doubt God's power? What do you often turn to instead of turning to him? Confess this to God, and reflect on his nature as the all-powerful creator.*

### Genesis #2: THE PURPOSE OF HUMANITY

- Read Genesis 1:28: *"God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"*

Summarize God's command in your own words. What does it look like to live out the callings in this verse today?



## Genesis #4: CONFRONTING SHAME

- Read Genesis 3:9-11: *"Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.' And He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?'"*

Describe God's approach with Adam and Eve after they sin. What does this reveal about God's character?

- Sin's curse separated us from God and others; however, belief in Jesus restores us from the effects of this curse. In light of this reality, how is someone's life transformed when they become a Christian?
- Share your experience with this devotional's reflection prompt: *Identify an area in your life where you often feel shame. In other words, where do you feel like you're not measuring up? Bring this to God in prayer, remembering that his grace covers everything. Who can you share this with that will help you with biblical truth and encouragement?*

## Genesis #5: LIVING BY FAITH

- Both Cain and Abel made offerings to God, but only Abel's was motivated by faith. What could have been some of the reasons for Cain's offering?
- Read Genesis 4:4: *"Abel, on his part also brought an offering, from the firstborn of his flock and from their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering."*  
This verse reveals that Abel offered the best of everything he had. How does faith in God motivate you to give your best?
- Share your response to this devotional's reflection prompt: *Think of one specific way that you can make an offering of faith today. Remember that the root is a heart motivated by belief in God and hope in his promises.*

# WEEK 2 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## GENESIS DEVOTIONALS 6-10

### Genesis #6:LIVING WITH HOPE

- Read Genesis 6:13: *"Then God said to Noah, 'The end of humanity has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of people; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.'"*

In light of the spiritual state of humanity, how do you think they responded to Noah's obedience to God? How would you feel if you were in Noah's situation surrounded by people who doubted you?

- Hebrews 11:7 says, *"By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household."*

What did Noah's obedience reveal about his relationship with God? Apply this principle to your own life.

- Share your response from this devotional's reflection prompt: *Think about an area in your life that is impacted by your hope in Christ and his future return. Take some time to thank God for this hope.*

### Genesis #7:LIVING FOR GOD

- Read Genesis 11:4: *"And they said, 'Come, let's build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let's make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of all the earth.'"*

Why were these people building a tower? What emotion might have been motivating them?

- Read Genesis 11:5: *"Now the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the men had built."*

What does this verse convey about God? What about the people of Babel and their efforts?

- Share your response to this devotional's reflection prompt: *Identify an area in your life where you have been focused on making a name or building up security for yourself. What would it look like for you to instead be motivated by magnifying God's name and building God's kingdom?*

## Genesis #8: BLESSED TO BLESS

- First, reflect on Genesis 12:1-3: *"Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you into a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.'"*

Then, consider Matthew 28:19-20: *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

What similarities do you see between Abram's calling and the calling in Matthew given to believers today?

- What do these similarities teach us about God's values?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Share your thoughts from this devotional's reflection prompt: *God blesses us that we might bless others. Think about the ways God has blessed you. Pray about how you can use your blessings to bless someone else today.*

## Genesis #9: GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

- Read Genesis 15:6: *"Then he believed in the Lord; and He credited it to him as righteousness."*  
What was the cause of Abraham's righteousness, or his good standing before God? Why does God employ this means as opposed to Abram's faithfulness or good works?

*\*See Ephesians 2:8-9 for additional insight: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast."*

- Read Genesis 15:17: *"Now it came about, when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, a smoking oven and a flaming torch appeared which passed between these pieces."*  
What comes to mind when you think about the element of fire? Why might God use fire to represent himself?
- Share your experience with this devotional's reflection prompt: *Pray and thank God for specific instances where your sin was met with His forgiveness and continued faithfulness. Meditate on or journal about the comfort that God's unconditional faithfulness brings.*

## Genesis #10: TRUSTING IN GOD'S PROMISES

- Abram and Sarah took matters into their own hands because they felt that they were too old to have a baby and that God was taking too long. What contributing factors often lead us to take things into our hands?
- Romans 4:28&31 say, *"You, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise. So then, brothers and sisters, we are not children of a slave woman, but of the free woman."*

As Christians, why is it a freeing reality to be saved by faith instead of works?

- Share your experience with this devotional's reflection prompt: *Where in your life are you currently doubting God? Where are you feeling impatient with his timing? Identify a promise in the Bible that speaks to your current situation. Then, pray and ask God to help you trust in this promise instead of relying on yourself.*

# WEEK 3 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## GENESIS DEVOTIONALS 11-15

### Genesis #11: SET APART

- Read God's words to Abram in Genesis 17:5: *"No longer shall you be named Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."*  
A name change in the Bible oftentimes represents a change in identity. The name "Abraham" means "father of many."

How does this name reflect God's promise to Abraham? What does the name change tell us about the nature of God's promise?

- Read Genesis 17:10: *"This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised."*  
The physical sign of circumcision would serve as a reminder to Abraham and his family that they were set apart as God's chosen people.

How might this reminder of their distinction from others help them live more transformed lives?

- Share your response to this devotional's reflection prompt: *Think about what it would look like for more of your life to be transformed by your relationship with God. What specific areas come to mind? Pray and ask God to help you commit these areas to him.*

### Genesis #12: OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

- Read Genesis 19:16: *"But [Lot] hesitated. So the men grasped his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, because the compassion of the Lord was upon him; and they brought him out and put him outside the city."*

Note the action words in this verse. To what or who do they draw your attention?

- Read Genesis 19:26: *"But Lot's wife, from behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt."*

What is an example of "looking back" at a temptation in your own life?

- Share your experience with the devotional's reflection prompt: *Identify a temptation you are facing right now. Reflect on God's compassionate desire to deliver you. Pray and ask him to give you power to resist this temptation.*

## Genesis #13: FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE

- After God tells Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, we see Abraham's response in Genesis 22:3: *"So Abraham got up early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place of which God had told him."*

How would you describe Abraham's attitude in these verses?

- When Isaac asks Abraham where the sacrifice is, Abraham replies in Genesis 22:8: *"God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."* Many years later when Jesus comes to Earth, he is called "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

What does Genesis 22:8 foreshadow in regard to Jesus?

- Share your experience with this devotional's reflection prompt: *Think about a specific way God calls you to obey him that doesn't make sense to you. Say or journal a prayer expressing your struggle to God. Then, ask God to give you the ability to obey him through His Spirit.*

## Genesis #14: GOD'S WORK

- Read Genesis 25:21: *"Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children; and the Lord answered him, and his wife Rebekah conceived."*

According to this verse, what causes Sarah to conceive? What does this teach us about prayer?

- Read Romans 9:11-12: *"For though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, 'The older will serve the younger.'"*

According to this verse, what was not the reason for God's choice of the younger brother? How does this make you feel about God?

- Share your response to the devotional's reflection prompt: *Where in your life are you relying on your own competencies and abilities instead of God? How might you reorient your focus to God's work and God's power rather than your own?*

## Genesis #15: CONNECTING WITH GOD

- Read Genesis 28:14: *"Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed."*

To whom does God's blessing on Jacob ultimately reach? What does this tell us about God's values?

- Genesis 28:17 describes the place where Jacob met with God. Jacob says, *"How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"*

For believers today, Jesus is now the means by which we meet with God. Like Jacob, are you in awe of the ability to meet with God through Christ? Why or why not?

- Share your response to the devotional's reflection prompt: *The devotional discussed three key truths:*
  1. *That God has revealed himself as the one true God in control of everything.*
  2. *That God promises to make us into a people that will bring blessing and restoration into the world.*
  3. *That God assures us that he is personally committed to watching over us.*

*Which truth stands out to you the most? What specific circumstance in your life can you apply this truth to?*

# WEEK 4 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## GENESIS DEVOTIONALS 16-20

### Genesis #16: DEPENDENCE ON GOD

- Read Genesis 32:24-25: *"Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was dislocated while he wrestled with him."*

God wrestles with Jacob all night even though he has the power to win with just one touch. What does this tell us about the character of God and his relationship with his people?

- Read Genesis 32:30: *"So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared."*

What does Jacob imply his interaction with God could have led to? In light of God's power, how does His being on your side increase your confidence in uncertain circumstances?

- Share your response to this devotional's reflection prompt: *Think about a stressful or scary circumstance in your life right now. Reflect on the ways in which you are depending on your strength and your abilities. Say a prayer surrendering this circumstance to God, and ask him to help you depend on him.*

### Genesis #17: GOD USES BROKEN PEOPLE

- In this passage, we see familial mistreatment, prostitution, and moral hypocrisy. What is your natural reaction when you see these things displayed in someone else's life? What does it teach you about God, seeing as he uses people like this in his plan?

- Read Luke 19:10: *"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

How does this New Testament verse further shed light on the type of people God uses in his plan?

- Share your response to this devotional's reflection prompt: *What part of your life would you call broken? How have you seen God at work, bringing good from this area? Say a prayer asking God to showcase his grace and redemption in your brokenness.*

## Genesis #18: GOD'S PRESENCE

- Read Genesis 39:2: *"And the Lord was with Joseph, so he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian."*

Later, in Genesis 45:5, Joseph says that he was sold into slavery because of God's plan for his life. According to these verses, God is behind both Joseph's success and his slavery.

What does this tell you about the way God works?

- Philippians 4:12-13 says, *"I know how to get along with little, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."*

Paul contrasts two types of scenarios in these verses. What are they? What role does God's strength play in each scenario?

- Share your thoughts from this devotional's reflection prompt: *Think back on your life (you could go back a few weeks, months or years) and reflect on all the change that has occurred. How did you experience God's presence in these circumstances? Thank God for his constant, loving presence with you.*

## Genesis #19: EMPOWERED TO FORGIVE

- Read Joseph's words to his brothers in Genesis 50:19-21: *"But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to keep many people alive. So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.' So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them."*

What message does Joseph reiterate to his brothers? What does this tell us about Joseph's heart for his brothers?

- In your own life, how have you seen God using evil for good?
  
- Share your experience with this devotional's reflection prompt: *Tell God about a situation in which you have been hurt. Then, ask God to help you be freed from any resentment you might be holding onto.*

#### Genesis #20: HOPING IN GOD'S PROMISES

- Read Jacob's words in Genesis 49:25: *"From the God of your father who helps you, And by the Almighty who blesses you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb."*

What word is repeated in this verse? In light of God's original promise to Abraham to bless him, why do you think Jacob emphasizes this aspect of Joseph's life?

- In Luke 24:44 Jesus says, *"These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all the things that are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."*

According to this verse, Jesus fulfilled the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament. How does this reality bring glory to God? What does it mean for your life today?

- Share your experience with this devotional's reflection prompt: *Spend some time meditating on God's faithfulness. Praise him for how he demonstrates this through Genesis. Praise him for his faithfulness displayed in Jesus's life, death and resurrection. Then, ask God to give you confident hope in his future faithfulness.*