GENESIS

DAILY WORD

An 89 Day Workbook for the Whole Church

October 4 through December 31, 2026

Creation • The Fall • The Flood • Babel • Abraham • Moriah

Jacob • Joseph • The Lion of Judah • Bethlehem

Everything in Genesis points to Jesus.

How This Works

One page a day for eighty nine days, starting Sunday, October 4, and ending Thursday, December 31. Each page takes about five minutes to read, and some responses invite you to spend more time later. Each page follows the same pattern.

Read. Look up the day's passage in your Bible. The key verse on the page comes from the English Standard Version.

Reflect. The Daily Word is a short thought to carry into your day.

Follow the thread. The Promise Kept is on every single page. It is the reason this workbook exists. Genesis 3:15 promised a seed who would crush the head of the serpent, and every story in Genesis is God keeping that one sentence. If you read nothing else on the page, read that section.

Pray. Pray the daily prayer in your own words, then take two minutes to be still and listen.

Write. Use the notes lines for anything: what stood out, what you sense God saying, who came to mind, what you want to remember.

The weeks follow our Sunday series through Genesis. Two Sundays stand apart, the election message on November 1 and the Thanksgiving message on November 22, and this workbook keeps the thread alive through both of those weeks. The last two weeks carry you through Christmas and out to New Year's Eve.

This workbook is for every home: a full house, roommates, or a table set for one. If you live with family, do it together. Read the verse at dinner and let the kids answer first. If you live alone, your table still counts.

The Thread

Genesis is not a collection of separate stories. It is one promise being kept.

In Genesis 3:15, standing over a serpent, in front of two people who had just ruined everything, God made a promise. A seed is coming. He will take a wound and He will crush a head.

Everything after that verse is God keeping it.

Genesis 3:15. The seed is promised.

Genesis 6 through 9. The seed is carried through the flood in one ark with one door.

Genesis 12. The seed is sworn to one family, and through that family all the nations of the earth.

Genesis 22. A substitute dies on a mountain and the son walks down alive.

Genesis 28 and 32. The seed runs through a schemer God refused to give up on.

Genesis 37 through 50. The rejected brother is exalted and becomes bread for the ones who sold him.

Genesis 49. The seed is narrowed to one tribe. Judah.

Micah 5:2. One town. Bethlehem.

Luke 2. One manger.

Revelation 5:5. The Lion of the tribe of Judah, who turns out to be a Lamb.

Four thousand years, one sentence, kept in full. That is what you are reading for eighty nine days.

The Calendar

Week One. October 4 through 10. In the Beginning, God.

Daily p. 5 · Life Group pp. 6–9
Week Two. October 11 through 17. The Fall and the Blood on the Ground.

Daily p. 16 · Life Group pp. 17–20
Week Three. October 18 through 24. The Flood and the Ark.

Daily p. 27 · Life Group pp. 28–31
Week Four. October 25 through 31. Babel.

Daily p. 38 · Life Group pp. 39–42
Week Five. November 1 through 7. The Kings of the Earth. Election week.

Daily p. 49 · Life Group pp. 50–53
Week Six. November 8 through 14. The Call of Abram.

Daily p. 60 · Life Group pp. 61–64
Week Seven. November 15 through 21. The Mountain and the Substitute.

Daily p. 71 · Life Group pp. 72–75
Week Eight. November 22 through 28. The Table of Thanksgiving.

Daily p. 82 · Life Group pp. 83–86
Week Nine. November 29 through December 5. Jacob, the Ladder and the Limp.

Daily p. 93 · Life Group pp. 94–97
Week Ten. December 6 through 12. Joseph, Rejected.

Daily p. 104 · Life Group pp. 105–108
Week Eleven. December 13 through 19. Joseph, Exalted.

Daily p. 115 · Life Group pp. 116–119
Week Twelve. December 20 through 26. The Lion of Judah. Christmas week.

Daily p. 126 · Life Group pp. 127–130
Year End. December 27 through 31. Bringing It Home.

Daily p. 137 · Life Group pp. 138–141

Life Group pages appear before each Monday. Each week has a Leader Prep page and a suggested Meeting Outline. These pages are optional resources for groups that use them, not required meeting plans. Groups meet at the front of the week, not the end of it.

DAY 1 Sunday, October 4

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD

Today's Reading

Genesis 1:1–5 (ESV)

Key Verse

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." — Genesis 1:1

Daily Word

The Bible does not open with an argument for God. It opens with a fact. Before there was anything to measure, there was God, and He spoke. Everything you will worry about today came from a mouth that still has authority over it.

The Promise Kept

John says the Word who spoke the light was with God in the beginning, and that Word became flesh. The voice in Genesis 1 has a name, and the name is Jesus.

Daily Prayer

God, You were here before all of it. Speak over what I cannot fix.

Today's Response

Write down the one thing you are carrying into this week. Under it, write Genesis 1:1. Look at both sentences together before you go to bed.

Walking with the Spirit

The Spirit hovered over the waters before a single word of order was spoken. Ask Him to hover over the unformed part of your life this week.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week One Monday, October 5

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 2 THROUGH 7

Daily readers: continue at Day 2, page 10.

The Week Ahead

Your group meets at the front of the week, not the end of it. Your people have read Day 1 and Day 2 and nothing else. You are launching a week, not reviewing one. Everything in this workbook that follows tonight will go the way this meeting goes.

This is also night one of a thirteen week run that ends on December 31. Say that out loud tonight. People commit differently when they know where the road ends.

The Text

Genesis 1:1 through 5 and Genesis 1:26 through 28.

Days 1 and 2 cover these. Read both tonight. The first gives you the authority of God. The second gives you the image of God in people, which is what the rest of Genesis breaks.

The Point

Genesis does not argue for God. It announces Him. And the God who spoke is the same Person who was born in Bethlehem.

What the Passage Actually Says

Genesis 1:1 makes no case. It states a fact and moves on. Notice what is missing: no defense, no evidence, no comparison to other gods. The tone is the argument.

In verse 26 the language shifts. Everything else was spoken into being. Man is deliberated over. Let us make man in our image. Then verse 27 says male and female He created them, and the image belongs to both.

John 1:1 takes the first three words of Genesis and puts Jesus inside them. That is not poetry. That is a claim. The Word who spoke the light is the Word who became flesh. Read John 1:1 through 3 next to Genesis 1:1 tonight and let the room see it for themselves.

Where the Room Will Go

Two ditches. The first is the age of the earth. Someone will take it there in the first ten minutes. Name it, say the text is about the Creator and not the mechanics, and move. Do not spend forty minutes there. You will lose the whole series.

The second is abstraction. Creation is easy to discuss and costs nothing. The moment it stays theoretical, ask for a name. Who did you treat this week like they were not made in the image of God?

Before You Start

Have your own answer ready for the question about the person you have written off. You cannot ask a room to do what you have not done. Bring the thirteen week calendar and hand it out.

LIFE GROUP Week One The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 2, page 10.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

What is the one thing you would ask God to speak over if you knew He was listening tonight?

Do not rush this and do not let it run long. It tells you what every person in the room is carrying into a series about a God who speaks.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 1:1 through 5. Have someone read it out loud, slowly. Then have a second person read John 1:1 through 3 immediately after, with no comment in between. Let the room sit with it.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. Genesis makes no argument for God's existence. Why do you think it starts that way, and what does that do to how you are supposed to read the rest of the book?

2. God spoke and what was not became what is. Where in your life do you need Him to speak like that right now?

3. Man is the only thing God deliberated over before making. What difference should the image of God make in how you treated someone this week?

4. John says the Word who created is the Word who became flesh. If that is true, what does it mean that the Creator ended up in a manger?

5. Day 5 says God rested to show the work was finished. Who in this room cannot stop working, and what are you actually afraid of?

6. Name the person you have quietly written off. Not the hardest one. The one you would rather not say out loud.

Apply 15 minutes

Nobody leaves without two things written down. One hour on the calendar with nothing in it, and one name from question six.

Day 7 asks them to share a meal outside their household and say one thing God did this week. That is Saturday. Tell them tonight so they can plan it.

Pray 20 minutes

Break into twos or threes. Each person prays out loud, by name, for the person they named in question six. Ask for one thing only: eyes to see them the way God made them.

Close the whole group with Day 1's prayer. God, You were here before all of it. Speak over what I cannot fix.

Send Them Into the Week

Days 3 through 7 carry them to Saturday. Day 3 puts Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1 side by side. Day 6 sends them outside with no phone. Text the group Thursday with one question. Did you take the hour?

DAY 2 Monday, October 5

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD

Today's Reading

Genesis 1:26–31 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." — Genesis 1:26

Daily Word

Every person you will deal with today was stamped with the image of God. The cashier, the coworker who annoys you, the one who voted against you. You do not get to decide which images count.

The Promise Kept

Colossians calls Jesus the image of the invisible God. The likeness we broke, He wore perfectly, and He is remaking it in everyone who follows Him.

Daily Prayer

Father, let me see people the way You made them and not the way they irritate me.

Today's Response

Name one person you have written off. Do one concrete thing for them today, and do not announce it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to interrupt you the moment you start reducing a person to a category.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 3 Tuesday, October 6

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD

Today's Reading

John 1:1–5 (ESV)

Key Verse

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." — John 1:1

Daily Word

John opens his Gospel with the first three words of Genesis on purpose. He is telling you that the One in the manger was the One in the beginning. Christmas did not start the story. It kept a promise.

The Promise Kept

This is the whole series in one verse. Genesis is not the warm up act. Genesis is Jesus before Bethlehem.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You were never a late arrival. Teach me to find You in the old pages.

Today's Response

Read Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1 back to back out loud. If there are others in the house, have someone else read the second one.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to show you one place in the Old Testament this week where Jesus is standing in plain sight.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 4 Wednesday, October 7

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD

Today's Reading

Colossians 1:15–20 (ESV)

Key Verse

"For by him all things were created" — Colossians 1:16

Daily Word

Paul says all things were created by Him and for Him, and that in Him all things hold together. Not held together once. Holding together right now, including the parts of your life that feel like they are coming apart.

The Promise Kept

The Creator and the Savior are the same Person. The hands that flung the stars are the hands that took the nails.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, hold together what I cannot. I am not the one keeping this up.

Today's Response

Identify the area where you are white knuckling control. Say out loud that it belongs to Him, then do one thing today you have been putting off because you were afraid.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to loosen your grip where you have been doing His job.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 5 Thursday, October 8

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD

Today's Reading

Genesis 2:1–3 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done." — Genesis 2:2

Daily Word

God was not tired. He rested to set a rhythm and to show that the work was finished. A person who cannot stop working usually does not believe the work is in God's hands.

The Promise Kept

At the cross Jesus said it is finished. The rest God modeled in Genesis, He purchased at Calvary.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I am not the one holding the world up. Teach my body to believe it.

Today's Response

Block one hour this week with nothing in it. No phone, no errand, no catching up. Put it on the calendar tonight.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to show you what you are trying to earn.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 6 Friday, October 9

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD

Today's Reading

Psalm 19:1–6 (ESV)

Key Verse

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork." — Psalm 19:1

Daily Word

Creation preaches every day without a microphone. Most people miss it because they never look up long enough. Five minutes outside is a sermon nobody has to schedule.

The Promise Kept

The same glory the sky announces from a distance walked into a room in Nazareth and ate dinner with people.

Daily Prayer

Father, open my eyes. You have been talking all along.

Today's Response

Go outside today with no phone and stay there five minutes. Write down one thing you noticed.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to give you back your wonder. Familiarity has cost you more than doubt has.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 7 Saturday, October 10

WEEK ONE • IN THE BEGINNING, GOD

Today's Reading

Genesis 2:7, 15–17 (ESV)

Key Verse

"then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" — Genesis 2:7

Daily Word

God knelt in dirt and made a man with His hands. He could have spoken you into being the way He spoke the stars. He did not. He got close, and He breathed.

The Promise Kept

In John 20, the risen Jesus breathed on His disciples and said receive the Holy Spirit. The same breath, the second time.

Daily Prayer

God, You made me on purpose and up close. Breathe on me again.

Today's Response

Share a meal today with someone outside your household and tell them one thing God has done for you this week. Keep it short and true.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to fill you fresh this morning. Yesterday's breath will not carry today.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 8 Sunday, October 11

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND

Today's Reading

Genesis 3:1–7 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Did God actually say" — Genesis 3:1

Daily Word

The serpent did not start with a lie. He started with a question. First he made her doubt the word of God, then he made her doubt the goodness of God. That order has not changed in six thousand years.

The Promise Kept

In the wilderness, Satan opened with the same move and Jesus answered every time with it is written. Where the first Adam negotiated, the last Adam quoted.

Daily Prayer

Lord, when the question comes, put Your word in my mouth.

Today's Response

Memorize one verse this week. One. Say it out loud three times today.

Walking with the Spirit

The Spirit brings to remembrance what you have put in. Give Him something to work with.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Two Monday, October 12

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 9 THROUGH 14

Daily readers: continue at Day 9, page 21.

The Week Ahead

This is the hinge week of the entire series. Genesis 3:15 is the spine of the book and it lands on Day 10, which is Tuesday. If your people only carry one verse out of thirteen weeks, it is this one.

Two stories are in this week because the Sunday message preached them as one movement. Sin enters, then sin spreads. Do not treat Cain as an add on. It is the proof that the garden problem got into the family in a single generation.

The Text

Genesis 3:1 through 15, with Genesis 4:1 through 10 in view.

Read Genesis 3 verses 1 through 7 and 14 through 15 out loud tonight. Have Genesis 4:7 ready to read when the conversation turns to temptation.

The Point

Before God handed out one consequence, He made a promise. Genesis 3:15 is the first gospel, and it was preached in front of two guilty people who had just ruined everything.

What the Passage Actually Says

The serpent opens with a question, not a lie. Did God actually say. He goes after the word of God first and the goodness of God second, and that order is worth naming out loud because it is still the order.

Watch the sequence after they eat: eyes opened, shame, hiding, blame. Adam blames the woman and then blames God for giving her to him. Nobody in the passage says I did it.

Then verse 15 arrives, and God is not talking to the man or the woman. He is talking to the serpent. The first gospel is announced over the head of the enemy while the guilty parties stand there listening. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

Genesis 3:21 is the other one to catch. They made coverings of leaves. God made garments of skins. The skins suggest an animal died, though the verse does not narrate how. Christians can see in that costly covering a picture of the sacrifice Christ would make.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is the serpent. Someone will want to talk about whether it was a literal snake, or about the devil generally. That conversation is entertainment. Pull it back to the tactic: he questions the word first.

The second is blame. The passage is about a man who would not own it, and half the room is in a conflict right now where they are the one not owning it. Watch for the story that is told entirely in the third person.

Be ready for Cain to raise a hard one. Someone will ask why God accepted Abel's offering and not Cain's. The text does not fully explain it. Say that plainly. What it does say is that God warned Cain before Cain acted, and that is mercy.

Before You Start

Know your own answer to question six before you walk in. Somebody will go first and it should probably be you.

LIFE GROUP Week Two The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 9, page 21.

Open 10 minutes

Invite brief responses from anyone who wants to share.

What is the first thing you hide when you get caught?

It sounds light and it is not. It puts the whole room inside Genesis 3 before anyone opens a Bible.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 3:1 through 7, then jump to verses 14 and 15. Have one person read the first part and a second person read verse 15 by itself, twice.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. The serpent starts with a question, not a lie. Where has that question shown up in your life this year: did God actually say?

2. After the fruit comes shame, hiding, and blame, in that order. Which of those three are you living in right now?

3. God asked where are you when He already knew. Why do you think He asked instead of just telling him?

4. Genesis 3:15 was spoken before any punishment was handed out. What does it tell you about God that the promise came first?

5. God replaced their fig leaves with skins, which suggests an animal died. What fig leaf are you still wearing that you would rather manage than take off?

6. Genesis 4:7 says sin is crouching at the door. Name your door. The specific one, with a time of day attached to it.

Apply 15 minutes

Everyone writes down Genesis 3:15 tonight and puts it somewhere they will see it every day through December 20. This one verse is the whole series.

Day 13 invites them to consider a family call. Let each person decide whether to name a relationship aloud, reflect privately, or take a step that does not require contact, especially where contact would be unsafe.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray for the family relationships people choose to share. Honor those who keep their response private; do not press for a call where contact would be unsafe.

Close the whole group together with Day 14's prayer. Jesus, quiet the voice that accuses me. I am listening to Yours.

Send Them Into the Week

Day 14 is Saturday and it lands on Hebrews 12:24. The blood of Jesus speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. Text the group Friday with the verse and an invitation to reflect on a safe next step.

DAY 9 Monday, October 12

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND

Today's Reading

Genesis 3:8–13 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Where are you?" — Genesis 3:9

Daily Word

God asked a question He already knew the answer to. He was not looking for information. He was giving a hiding man a chance to come out. Adam blamed his wife, his wife blamed the serpent, and nobody said I did it.

The Promise Kept

God came walking in the garden looking for the ones who ran. He has never stopped. That walk ends at a cross.

Daily Prayer

Father, I am done hiding. Here is the part I have been covering.

Today's Response

Name one thing to God plainly today with no explanation attached to it. No context, no blame, no comparison.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to convict you specifically. Vague guilt is not from Him.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 10 Tuesday, October 13

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND

Today's Reading

Genesis 3:14–15 (ESV)

Key Verse

"he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." — Genesis 3:15

Daily Word

This is the hinge of the whole book. Before God handed out a single consequence, He made a promise. A seed is coming. He will take a wound and He will crush a head. Everything after this verse is God keeping this verse.

The Promise Kept

This is the first gospel, preached to a serpent, in front of two guilty people, by a God who was already planning a rescue.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You took the heel wound that crushed the head of the enemy. Thank You.

Today's Response

Write Genesis 3:15 somewhere you will see it every day for the rest of this series. The whole thing hangs here.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to keep this one sentence in front of you for twelve weeks.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 11 Wednesday, October 14

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND

Today's Reading

Genesis 3:20–24 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them." — Genesis 3:21

Daily Word

They covered themselves with leaves. God covered them with skins. The skins suggest an animal died. God provided a covering they could not make.

The Promise Kept

Isaiah calls it the robe of righteousness. Fig leaves are what you make. Christians can see here a picture of Jesus' sacrifice for us.

Daily Prayer

Lord, take my fig leaves. I will wear what You provide.

Today's Response

Identify one fig leaf you are wearing, an image you manage, a version of yourself you sell. Tell one trusted person about it this week.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to show you where you are performing instead of resting.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 12 Thursday, October 15

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND

Today's Reading

Genesis 4:1–7 (ESV)

Key Verse

"sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." — Genesis 4:7

Daily Word

God warned Cain before Cain did anything. That is mercy. Sin was crouching at the door, and God narrated it out loud so the man could not say he was ambushed. You usually get a warning too.

The Promise Kept

Where Cain would not rule over it, Jesus ruled over it perfectly, and then gave the ruling to us.

Daily Prayer

God, I hear the warning. Help me stop at the door.

Today's Response

Name the door in your life. The app, the drive home, the second drink, the tone you take at 9 PM. Put one specific barrier in front of it today.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to speak before the moment, not after it.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 13 Friday, October 16

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND

Today's Reading

Genesis 4:8–16 (ESV)

Key Verse

“The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.” — Genesis 4:10

Daily Word

Sin got out of the garden and into the family in one generation. Worship went wrong and a brother died. What we do at church and what we do at the kitchen table are connected.

The Promise Kept

Hebrews says the blood of Jesus speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. Abel's blood cried for justice. His blood cries mercy over the same ground.

Daily Prayer

Father, let the better word be the one that speaks over my family.

Today's Response

If it is safe and wise, make the family call you have been avoiding. You do not have to resolve it today. If contact is unsafe, write a private prayer or choose another step that protects the boundary.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to name the relationship you have quietly given up on.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 14 Saturday, October 17

WEEK TWO • THE FALL AND THE BLOOD ON THE GROUND

Today's Reading

Hebrews 12:22–24 (ESV)

Key Verse

"and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." — Hebrews 12:24

Daily Word

Two voices come up from the ground in Scripture. One demands. One forgives. If you are still hearing the first one about your own past, you are listening to the wrong blood.

The Promise Kept

The seed promised in Genesis 3:15 is the mediator named here. The promise and the payment are the same Person.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, quiet the voice that accuses me. I am listening to Yours.

Today's Response

Eat a meal with people today and read Hebrews 12:24 out loud before you start.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to tell you the difference between conviction and condemnation, and to shut down the second one.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 15 Sunday, October 18

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK

Today's Reading

Genesis 6:5–8 (ESV)

Key Verse

"But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD." — Genesis 6:8

Daily Word

Verse 6 says God was grieved in His heart. He is not indifferent to what we do to each other. And before Noah built a single board, he had favor. Grace came first. The obedience followed it.

The Promise Kept

We do not build our way into God's favor. We build because we already have it, and the ark itself was God's idea, not Noah's.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I am not earning this. Thank You for the favor I did not build.

Today's Response

Do one act of obedience today that nobody will see or reward.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to break the habit of trying to purchase what has already been given.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Three Monday, October 19

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 16 THROUGH 21

Daily readers: continue at Day 16, page 32.

The Week Ahead

Week three is where a thirteen week series usually loses people. The novelty is gone and Christmas is far away. Expect a smaller room tonight and do not comment on it from the front.

This week's theme is doing the long obedience with no visible result, which is exactly what your thinning attendance is about. Preach it to the room you have.

The Text

Genesis 6:5 through 8 and 6:22, with Genesis 7:16.

Three short pieces. Grace before obedience, a century of building, and God shutting the door.

The Point

Noah found favor before he built anything. Grace came first, the obedience followed it, and God Himself shut the door.

What the Passage Actually Says

Genesis 6:6 says God was grieved in His heart. Do not skip that. The flood is not a story about a God who is indifferent. It is a story about a God who feels what we do to each other.

Verse 8 comes before a single instruction. Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord, and then chapter 6 verse 22 says he did all that God commanded him. The order is grace, then obedience. Reverse it and you have religion.

Genesis 7:16 is the sentence most people have never noticed. And the Lord shut him in. Noah did not close the door on the ark. God did. Your assurance rests on the hand that shut it.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is science. Global flood, local flood, how the animals fit. Someone will want to litigate it. Give it two minutes of respect and then say the text is about one door and one way through, and move.

The second is the fairness of judgment. That one deserves real time. Do not defend God too quickly. Let the room feel the weight, then take them to 2 Peter 3:9 and to the fact that Noah preached while he built.

Someone in your group is in year five of an obedience with nothing to show for it. They will be quiet tonight. Find them.

Before You Start

Have your own dry field ready to talk about. The thing you are still doing that has produced nothing. Say it first and the room will follow.

LIFE GROUP Week Three The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 16, page 32.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

What is the longest you have ever kept doing something with no evidence it was working?

Let it be about a job, a marriage, a kid, a diet, anything. It gets the room honest before you get to a hundred years of boat building.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 6:5 through 8, then Genesis 7:16 by itself. Read verse 16 twice and let it sit before you say anything.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. Verse 6 says God was grieved in His heart. How does that change the picture of God you grew up with?

2. Noah found favor before he was given a single instruction. Where are you still trying to earn something you have already been given?

3. A hundred years of building with no rain and no crowd. What has God asked you to keep doing that has produced nothing yet?

4. The Lord shut him in. Whose hand do you actually believe is holding you, yours or His?

5. In Genesis 8, the waiting goes on long after the rain stops. Who in this room is in the slow part right now?

6. The first thing Noah did on dry ground was build an altar before he built a house. What would that look like in your next season?

Apply 15 minutes

Every person names one next step on their dry field obedience and takes it this week. Small and specific.

Day 19 asks them to give something away that costs them. Set the amount tonight, out loud, and send it before Sunday.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray for endurance, not excitement, for each person's dry field.

Close the whole group together with Day 17's prayer. Jesus, You are the door. Thank You that You shut it and I cannot fall out.

Send Them Into the Week

Day 21 lands on Matthew 24:37 and sends them to a table with someone outside their walls. Text the group Thursday. Did you take the step?

DAY 16 Monday, October 19

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK

Today's Reading

Genesis 6:13–22 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him." — Genesis 6:22

Daily Word

One sentence covers about a hundred years of work. No crowd, no evidence, no rain. He kept building a boat in a dry field because God said so. Most obedience looks stupid before it looks brilliant.

The Promise Kept

Jesus said as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be. The ark is not just history. It is a picture of the one place that is safe.

Daily Prayer

God, I will keep building. Give me the nerve to look foolish.

Today's Response

Take the next step on the thing God told you to do that has produced nothing yet. One step today.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit for endurance and not just excitement.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 17 Tuesday, October 20

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK

Today's Reading

Genesis 7:1–10, 16 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And the LORD shut him in." — Genesis 7:16

Daily Word

Noah did not close the door. God did. That matters when the rain starts and you wonder whether you are really in. Your security is in the hand that shut the door, not in the strength of your grip.

The Promise Kept

Jesus said I am the door. One ark, one door, one way through the judgment, and He is it.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You are the door. Thank You that You shut it and I cannot fall out.

Today's Response

Write down the thing you are afraid of losing. Then write the words He shut him in beside it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to settle your assurance today.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 18 Wednesday, October 21

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK

Today's Reading

Genesis 8:1–12 (ESV)

Key Verse

"But God remembered Noah" — Genesis 8:1

Daily Word

They were in that boat long after the rain stopped. The water went down slowly. God remembering does not always mean God rushing. The waiting is not evidence that you were forgotten.

The Promise Kept

On the cross a thief asked to be remembered and Jesus answered him the same day. He remembers the ones stuck in the middle of the story.

Daily Prayer

Father, I am still waiting. Remember me.

Today's Response

Text one person who is in a long wait. Tell them you are praying and then actually do it before you put the phone down.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to keep your heart soft in the delay.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 19 Thursday, October 22

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK

Today's Reading

Genesis 8:20–22 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma" — Genesis 8:21

Daily Word

The first thing Noah did on dry ground was build an altar. Not a house. Not a business. He gave back before he settled in. What you do first with a new season tells you who you think saved you.

The Promise Kept

Paul says Christ gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering. The aroma that satisfied God forever came from a cross.

Daily Prayer

Lord, before I build anything else, here is my thanks.

Today's Response

Give something away this week that costs you. Decide the amount today and send it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make gratitude your first reflex and not your last resort.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 20 Friday, October 23

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK

Today's Reading

Genesis 9:8–17 (ESV)

Key Verse

"I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant" — Genesis 9:13

Daily Word

God hung up His weapon. A bow pointed away from the earth. The sign of the covenant was not something Noah did. It was something God put in the sky where He could see it and remember.

The Promise Kept

Again and again in Scripture, God takes the lead in making promises. Jesus spoke of a new covenant in His blood.

Daily Prayer

God, You keep Your word when I do not keep mine. Thank You.

Today's Response

Keep one small promise today that you could get away with breaking.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make you a person whose word costs something.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 21 Saturday, October 24

WEEK THREE • THE FLOOD AND THE ARK

Today's Reading

Matthew 24:36–39 (ESV)

Key Verse

"As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." — Matthew 24:37

Daily Word

Jesus said they were eating and drinking and marrying and they did not know until the flood came. The problem was not wickedness in that sentence. It was obliviousness. Busy is its own kind of lost.

The Promise Kept

He told us about the door so we would not be outside of it. Warning is a form of love.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, wake me up. I do not want to be comfortable and unprepared.

Today's Response

Share a meal today with someone beyond your own walls. Ask them one real question and listen to the whole answer.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to put one name on your heart and to give you the nerve to say come and see.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 22 Sunday, October 25

WEEK FOUR • BABEL

Today's Reading

Genesis 11:1–4 (ESV)

Key Verse

“let us make a name for ourselves” — Genesis 11:4

Daily Word

Four words explain most of human history and a good bit of your own week. They had unity, they had technology, they had ambition. What they did not have was a reason to build that was bigger than themselves.

The Promise Kept

Abram never asked for a name. In the next chapter God says I will make your name great. What Babel grabbed at, God gives away.

Daily Prayer

Father, I do not need a name. I need Yours.

Today's Response

Do one good work today and tell nobody. If you feel the pull to mention it, that is the assignment working.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to expose the places where you are building a tower and calling it ministry.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Four Monday, October 26

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK FOUR • BABEL | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 23 THROUGH 28

Daily readers: continue at Day 23, page 43.

The Week Ahead

This is the last normal week before the election message. Next Sunday the series pauses and your group meets on the Monday after, which is November 2, the night before Election Day. Babel is the best possible setup for that week, so do the work tonight.

The theme is making a name for yourself, and it will hit closer to home than your people expect.

The Text

Genesis 11:1 through 9, with Philippians 2:5 through 8 and Acts 2:1 through 11.

Babel goes up, Jesus comes down, and the Spirit gathers what pride scattered.

The Point

Man builds upward. God comes down. The scattering was mercy, and Pentecost is Babel run backward.

What the Passage Actually Says

Let us make a name for ourselves. That is the motive, stated plainly in the text. Not survival, not worship. Reputation. They also said lest we be dispersed, which means they were disobeying the command to fill the earth.

Verse 5 is quietly funny. They built the tallest thing they could conceive and the Lord came down to see it. Scripture is making a point about scale.

The scattering reads like judgment and functions like mercy. Unified rebellion accelerates. God slowed them down by taking away their ability to coordinate.

Acts 2 is the deliberate reversal. At Babel God confused language and scattered people. At Pentecost He filled language and gathered people. Revelation 7:9 is the finished version.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is politics. Babel plus one week before an election is a live wire. Someone will make it about a party. Do not let that happen tonight. Keep the question on personal name building.

The second is other people's towers. It is easy to discuss celebrity pastors and ambitious coworkers. Every time it drifts outward, bring it back with one question. What are you building?

Watch for the person who has confused ambition with calling and has never been asked about it.

Before You Start

Decide now that you will name your own tower in the meeting. Reputation, being needed, being right. A leader who will not go first gets a room full of generalities.

LIFE GROUP Week Four The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK FOUR • BABEL | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 23, page 43.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

What do you most want to be known for, and who is it you want to hear say it?

The second half of that question is the one that does the work. Wait for it.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 11:1 through 9. Then have a second person read Philippians 2:5 through 8 immediately after. Up and down, back to back.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. Let us make a name for ourselves. What are you building right now that is really about a name?

2. They said lest we be dispersed, which was the opposite of what God told them to do. Where is fear driving your ambition?

3. God came down to look at the tallest thing humans could build. What does that do to your sense of scale?

4. Babel went up and Jesus went down. Which direction has your last year been going?

5. The scattering was mercy. What has God scattered in your life that you are still calling a loss?

6. Acts 2 gathers what Babel scattered. Who is in your life that you would never naturally sit down with, and what would it take?

Apply 15 minutes

Everyone names one thing this week they will do for someone with no possibility of credit. Nobody announces it afterward.

Next Sunday is the election message and the Genesis arc pauses. Tell them the group still meets Monday, November 2. Say it twice.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Each person prays that God would tear down the tower they just named and establish what He is actually building.

Close the whole group together with Day 27's prayer. Lord, I am running into Your name and out of my own.

Send Them Into the Week

Day 28 lands on Acts 4:12 and asks them to say the name of Jesus out loud to one person. Text the group Friday. Did you say it?

DAY 23 Monday, October 26

WEEK FOUR • BABEL

Today's Reading

Genesis 11:5–9 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower" — Genesis 11:5

Daily Word

They built the tallest thing they could imagine and God still had to come down to look at it. Scripture has a sense of humor. Then He scattered them, and the scattering was mercy. Unified rebellion would have destroyed them faster.

The Promise Kept

Man builds up and God comes down. That is the pattern of the whole Bible. At Christmas, the Son came to live among us.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I stop climbing. Come down and meet me here.

Today's Response

Cancel or refuse one thing this week that exists only to make you look bigger.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to show you the difference between ambition and calling.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 24 Tuesday, October 27

WEEK FOUR • BABEL

Today's Reading

Philippians 2:5–8 (ESV)

Key Verse

"he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death" — Philippians 2:8

Daily Word

Babel went up. Jesus went down. He emptied Himself, took the form of a servant, and obeyed all the way to a cross. The only ladder that ever worked went the other direction.

The Promise Kept

The One who came down is the One God exalted. Descent is the road up in the kingdom, and He walked it first.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, give me Your mind. Lower is where You are.

Today's Response

Take the lowest job in the room today. Clean something, carry something, serve someone who cannot return it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make serving feel like family resemblance and not like a chore.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 25 Wednesday, October 28

WEEK FOUR • BABEL

Today's Reading

Acts 2:1–11 (ESV)

Key Verse

"we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." — Acts 2:11

Daily Word

At Babel God confused the languages and scattered the people. At Pentecost He filled the languages and gathered the people. The Spirit did not undo the diversity. He redeemed it.

The Promise Kept

What sin fractured, Jesus gathers. Pentecost is Babel run backward by the power of the Spirit.

Daily Prayer

Holy Spirit, gather what my pride has scattered.

Today's Response

Start a conversation today with someone whose background is nothing like yours. Ask about their life and do not steer it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit for boldness to speak about Jesus in language the person in front of you actually uses.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 26 Thursday, October 29

WEEK FOUR • BABEL

Today's Reading

Revelation 7:9–10 (ESV)

Key Verse

"a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation" — Revelation 7:9

Daily Word

The end of the story is the crowd Babel could not build. Every nation, tribe, people and language in one room, and nobody is making a name for himself. One name is on the throne.

The Promise Kept

Genesis 12:3 promised that all the families of the earth would be blessed. Revelation 7 is the receipt.

Daily Prayer

Father, put me in that crowd and put my neighbors in it too.

Today's Response

Pray by name today for one person group or one missionary your church supports. Give to them if you can.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to enlarge what you pray about beyond your own street.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 27 Friday, October 30

WEEK FOUR • BABEL

Today's Reading

Proverbs 18:10–12 (ESV)

Key Verse

"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe." — Proverbs 18:10

Daily Word

There are only two towers. The one you build and the one you run into. One requires constant maintenance and still falls. The other was standing before you got there.

The Promise Kept

The name that saves is not a slogan. It is a Person, and Acts says there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I am running into Your name and out of my own.

Today's Response

Write down the tower you have been maintaining. Reputation, money, being needed, being right. Decide one way to stop feeding it this week.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to show you where safety has become an idol.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 28 Saturday, October 31

WEEK FOUR • BABEL

Today's Reading

Acts 4:8–12 (ESV)

Key Verse

"there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." — Acts 4:12

Daily Word

Peter said this to the men who could jail him, and they did. Some sentences cost you something to say out loud. This is one of them, and it is still true in every room you will walk into.

The Promise Kept

Babel wanted a name. Genesis 3:15 promised a seed. Both roads end at one name, and it is Jesus.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, Your name is enough. Give me the nerve to use it.

Today's Response

Say the name of Jesus out loud to one person today in an ordinary sentence. Not a debate. A sentence.

Walking with the Spirit

Boldness in Acts came from the Spirit and not from personality. Ask Him for it this morning.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 29 Sunday, November 1

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

Today's Reading

Psalm 2:1–6 (ESV)

Key Verse

"He who sits in the heavens laughs" — Psalm 2:4

Daily Word

The nations rage on a four year cycle. Heaven has never once been nervous. You can care deeply about Tuesday and still refuse to be afraid, because the throne is not on the ballot.

The Promise Kept

Psalm 2 ends with a Son installed as King on the holy hill. Every election is a temporary arrangement under a permanent one.

Daily Prayer

Father, my hope was never in a result. Steady me this week.

Today's Response

Before you post, forward, or argue anything political this week, pray for the person you disagree with by name first.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to guard your mouth and your feed for the next seven days.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Five Monday, November 2

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 30 THROUGH 35

Daily readers: continue at Day 30, page 54.

The Week Ahead

Tomorrow is Election Day. You are meeting the night before, which is the hardest and most useful night of the fall to lead a room well. The Genesis arc is paused this week. It resumes November 8 with the call of Abram.

Your job tonight is not to tell anyone how to vote and not to pretend the election does not matter. Your job is to make sure your people walk into Tuesday with their hope in the right place and walk out of Wednesday still able to sit at a table with each other.

The Text

Psalm 2:1 through 6, Daniel 2:20 through 21, and 1 Timothy 2:1 through 4.

Three short texts. Heaven is not nervous, God sets up and removes kings, and we are commanded to pray for the ones in power.

The Point

The throne is not on the ballot. Care deeply, vote honestly, refuse to be afraid, and pray for whoever wins.

What the Passage Actually Says

Psalm 2 opens with the nations raging and the peoples plotting, and then it says He who sits in the heavens laughs. That is not God being dismissive of injustice. It is God being unthreatened. The psalm ends with a Son installed as King.

Daniel said God removes kings and sets up kings while he was living under a pagan king in a country not his own, and he said it as worship. He was not in charge and he slept fine.

1 Timothy 2 is the command most people skip. Paul wrote it under Nero. Pray for kings and all who are in high positions. Not agree with, not approve of. Pray for.

Have Proverbs 21:1 ready. The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord. That verse ends both the panic and the scheming.

Where the Room Will Go

The whole meeting is a ditch tonight, so set the rule at the top and say it out loud. We are not naming candidates or parties tonight. Say it once, kindly, and then enforce it the first time it gets crossed, because if you let the first one go you will lose the room.

The second danger is the opposite ditch. If you make the whole night about calm detachment, the people who are genuinely afraid will feel dismissed. Let someone say they are scared. Then take them to Psalm 2.

Somebody in your group is on the other side from the majority in that room. They will be quiet. Protect them by name if you have to.

Before You Start

Decide before you walk in that you will not disclose your own vote. The moment you do, half the room stops talking. Have 1 Timothy 2:1 through 4 marked and ready.

LIFE GROUP Week Five The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 30, page 54.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences. No candidates and no parties in the answer.

How are you actually feeling going into tomorrow, in one word?

One word each, and no debating anyone's word. It tells you exactly what is in the room before you open a Bible.

Read 5 minutes

Psalm 2:1 through 6, then Daniel 2:20 through 21. Read the line about the heavens laughing twice.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. The nations rage and heaven is not nervous. Where does your peace actually come from this week, honestly?

2. Daniel worshiped God for setting up and removing kings while living under a king he did not choose. What would that look like for you on Wednesday morning?

3. Paul commanded prayer for rulers while writing under Nero. Who is the leader you find it hardest to pray for, and what has that cost you?

4. Proverbs says the king's heart is a stream of water in God's hand. If you believed that this week, what would you stop doing?

5. Philippians says our citizenship is in heaven. Where has your identity quietly moved to a national or political one?

6. Whatever happens Tuesday, who at your table is on the other side, and what will you do Thursday to keep that table?

Apply 15 minutes

Every person commits to one specific prayer for one leader, every day, for the rest of the year. Write it down tonight.

Everyone picks one day this week to turn political media off completely. Name the day out loud.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray for the election, for the country, and for the leader each person finds hardest to pray for. No editorializing inside the prayer.

Close the whole group together. Lord, I pray for whoever wins. Give them wisdom they do not deserve, the same way You gave it to me.

Send Them Into the Week

Days 32 through 35 carry them through the aftermath. Day 35 ends on King of kings. Text the group Wednesday, whatever the result, with one line. The throne was not on the ballot. Genesis resumes Sunday with Abram.

DAY 30 Monday, November 2

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

Today's Reading

Daniel 2:20–23 (ESV)

Key Verse

"he removes kings and sets up kings" — Daniel 2:21

Daily Word

Daniel said this while living under a pagan king in a foreign country, and he said it as praise. He was not in charge of the outcome and he slept fine. So can you.

The Promise Kept

The stone cut without human hands in Daniel 2 fills the whole earth. That kingdom is the one Jesus announced, and it does not get voted out.

Daily Prayer

God, You set up and You remove. I trust the hand and not the headline.

Today's Response

Turn off political media for one full day this week. Pick the day now.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to show you whether your peace this week is coming from Him or from a poll.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 31 Tuesday, November 3

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

Today's Reading

1 Timothy 2:1–4 (ESV)

Key Verse

"that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions" — 1 Timothy 2:1–2

Daily Word

Today is Election Day. Paul wrote this under Nero. He did not say vote for kings, agree with kings, or complain about kings. He said pray for them, all of them, including the one you cannot stand.

The Promise Kept

God desires all people to be saved. That includes the candidate you voted against.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I pray for whoever wins. Give them wisdom they do not deserve, the same way You gave it to me.

Today's Response

Vote. Then pray out loud for both sides by name at your table tonight.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to keep bitterness out of your house tonight, whatever the numbers say.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 32 Wednesday, November 4

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

Today's Reading

Romans 13:1–7 (ESV)

Key Verse

"For there is no authority except from God" — Romans 13:1

Daily Word

The results are in or they are close. This passage does not say the authority is good. It says the authority is permitted. God has used good kings, bad kings, and foreign kings to do exactly what He intended.

The Promise Kept

Pilate had authority for one morning. Jesus told him it was given from above, and then used that morning to save the world.

Daily Prayer

Father, I submit where I can and I obey You where I cannot. Give me the wisdom to tell them apart.

Today's Response

Speak about the outcome today only in sentences you would say if the other side were sitting at your table. Because someone's is.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to show you if your identity moved this week.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 33 Thursday, November 5

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

Today's Reading

Proverbs 21:1–3 (ESV)

Key Verse

"The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will." — Proverbs 21:1

Daily Word

You cannot turn a heart. God does it the way a farmer turns water in a ditch. That should end both your panic and your scheming.

The Promise Kept

He turned Pharaoh, Cyrus, Nebuchadnezzar and Caesar to keep a promise made in a garden in Genesis 3. He can turn this one.

Daily Prayer

God, turn the hearts. I will do the praying and leave the turning to You.

Today's Response

Write one specific prayer for one leader and pray it every day for the rest of the year.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to replace your commentary with intercession.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 34 Friday, November 6

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

Today's Reading

Philippians 3:17–21 (ESV)

Key Verse

"But our citizenship is in heaven" — Philippians 3:20

Daily Word

Paul wrote to a Roman colony, a town full of people who carried the citizenship of a city they had never seen. He told them their real passport was issued somewhere else. So is yours.

The Promise Kept

We await a Savior from there. Not a policy. A Person, and He is coming back.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, my hope is Your return and not the next cycle.

Today's Response

Do one thing today that only makes sense if Jesus is coming back. Forgive someone, give something away, tell somebody the truth.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to loosen your attachment to what is temporary.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 35 Saturday, November 7

WEEK FIVE • THE KINGS OF THE EARTH

Today's Reading

Revelation 19:11–16 (ESV)

Key Verse

"King of kings and Lord of lords." — Revelation 19:16

Daily Word

The week ends where every week ends. A rider on a white horse with a name written on His thigh. Every other authority in your life is a footnote under that title.

The Promise Kept

The seed of the woman who took a heel wound in Genesis 3 rides out as King in Revelation 19. Same Person. Same promise. Finished.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You are King. Nothing on earth outranks You.

Today's Response

Eat with people today and ask one question out loud. What did this week reveal about where my hope actually sits?

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to reset your allegiance before you walk into church tomorrow.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 36 Sunday, November 8

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM

Today's Reading

Genesis 12:1–3 (ESV)

Key Verse

“and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” — Genesis 12:3

Daily Word

God picked a seventy five year old idol worshiper from a pagan city with no children and no resume. He did not call Abram because Abram was impressive. He called him because He had a promise to keep.

The Promise Kept

All the families of the earth. The scope was global from day one, and it runs straight to a manger and out to every nation.

Daily Prayer

Father, You initiate. I am not the reason this works.

Today's Response

Write down the excuse you use for why God would not use you. Put today's date on it and put it in your Bible at Genesis 12.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to kill the lie that you missed your window.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Six Monday, November 9

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 37 THROUGH 42

Daily readers: continue at Day 37, page 65.

The Week Ahead

The series resumes and the back half begins. From here it runs unbroken to Bethlehem except for Thanksgiving week. Tell them that tonight.

The room may still be carrying last week. Give it ninety seconds at the top and then move into Abram, because the cure for political anxiety is a God who has been keeping one promise for four thousand years.

The Text

Genesis 12:1 through 4 and Genesis 15:1 through 6.

The call and the credit. God initiates, Abram goes, Abram believes, God counts it.

The Point

God initiates. Abram had no resume, no map, and no child. The promise carried the weight, not the man.

What the Passage Actually Says

Abram was seventy five and from Ur, a pagan city. Joshua 24:2 says his family served other gods. God did not recruit a qualified candidate. He created one.

The blessing in 12:3 is global from the first sentence. In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. This is the line Paul calls the gospel preached beforehand in Galatians 3:8.

Genesis 12:4 is five words long. So Abram went. No map, no timeline, no explanation. Hebrews 11 says he went out not knowing where he was going.

In Genesis 15, God takes a childless man outside to count stars, and verse 6 says he believed and it was counted to him as righteousness. That verse carries the doctrine of justification by faith.

If your group can handle it, walk them through Genesis 15:17. God passed between the pieces while Abram slept. His promise rested on His faithfulness. Christians see that faithfulness at the cross, where Jesus gave His life for sinners.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is the geopolitical. Somebody will steer into Israel and the Middle East. There is a real conversation there and tonight is not it. Say so and redirect to the promise.

The second is romanticizing the call. People will talk about big dramatic leaps. Most of your room does not need a leap. They need the next step they have been avoiding for a year.

Watch for the person who believes they missed their window. Abram was seventy five.

Before You Start

Know your own next step. The one you are waiting on more information to take. Say it first.

LIFE GROUP Week Six The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 37, page 65.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

What is the biggest thing you have ever done without knowing how it would turn out?

It gets the room in touch with what faith actually felt like in their body, not in theory.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 12:1 through 4, then Genesis 15:5 through 6. Have two different people read them.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. God called a seventy five year old idol worshiper with no children. What excuse have you been using about why He would not use you?

2. So Abram went. What is the step you have been waiting for more information before you take?

3. The promise was global on day one. All the families of the earth. How big is your picture of what God is doing, honestly?

4. He believed God and it was counted as righteousness. Where are you still trying to perform for something you already have?

5. God passed between the pieces while Abram slept. What does that show you about His faithfulness to His promise?

6. Romans 4 says Abraham faced the facts and did not weaken. What fact are you facing right now, and what promise are you setting next to it?

Apply 15 minutes

Everyone names the next step and takes it before Sunday. Specific, dated, out loud.

Day 38 sends them outside at night to look up and say the promise they are still waiting on. Tell them to actually go outside.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray for the dead situation each person named in question six. Pray the promise, not the problem.

Close the whole group together with Day 38's prayer. God, I believe You. Count it to me.

Send Them Into the Week

Day 42 lands on Galatians 3:16. The seed is singular and the seed is Jesus. Text the group Thursday. Did you take the step?

DAY 37 Monday, November 9

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM

Today's Reading

Genesis 12:4–9 (ESV)

Key Verse

"So Abram went, as the LORD had told him" — Genesis 12:4

Daily Word

Five words carry the whole thing. So Abram went. He did not get a map, a timeline, or a reason. He got a direction and a voice, and he moved.

The Promise Kept

Faith is not certainty about the plan. It is confidence in the One giving it, and Hebrews 11 says he went out not knowing where he was going.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I will go. Show me the next step and I will take it.

Today's Response

Take the step you have been waiting on more information to take. Send it, call it, start it today.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit for the next step only. He rarely gives the whole map.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 38 Tuesday, November 10

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM

Today's Reading

Genesis 15:1–6 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness." — Genesis 15:6

Daily Word

God took a childless man outside and told him to count stars. Abram believed Him, and God wrote righteous next to his name. Not because he performed. Because he trusted.

The Promise Kept

Paul builds the doctrine of justification by faith on this one verse. The way in has never changed, from Abram to you.

Daily Prayer

God, I believe You. Count it to me.

Today's Response

Go outside tonight and look up. Say out loud the promise you are still waiting on.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to strengthen faith in the exact area where you have quietly stopped asking.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 39 Wednesday, November 11

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM

Today's Reading

Genesis 15:7–18 (ESV)

Key Verse

"behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces." — Genesis 15:17

Daily Word

God passed between the pieces while Abram slept. His promise rested on His faithfulness.

The Promise Kept

Christians see that faithfulness at the cross, where Jesus gave His life for sinners.

Daily Prayer

Father, Your promise rests on Your faithfulness. Thank You.

Today's Response

Stop trying to earn something today that was already given. Name it and then rest from it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to give you assurance that does not rise and fall with your performance.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 40 Thursday, November 12

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM

Today's Reading

Romans 4:18–25 (ESV)

Key Verse

"In hope he believed against hope" — Romans 4:18

Daily Word

Paul says Abraham did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, as good as dead. He looked at the facts and did not deny them. He just refused to let them be the final word.

The Promise Kept

The same power that gave life to a dead womb raised Jesus from the dead, and Paul says it was written for our sake too.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I see the facts. I am still believing You.

Today's Response

Say one promise of God out loud over the situation that looks dead. Out loud, not in your head.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to bring resurrection language into your mouth today.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 41 Friday, November 13

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM

Today's Reading

Galatians 3:7–14 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham." — Galatians 3:7

Daily Word

The family line God started in Genesis 12 has your name in it. Not by blood, by faith. The blessing promised to all the families of the earth came to your family.

The Promise Kept

Paul says the gospel was preached beforehand to Abraham in the words all nations will be blessed in you. The gospel is older than you thought.

Daily Prayer

Father, thank You that the promise reached my house.

Today's Response

Tell someone in your family today, in plain words, how God got hold of you. If they have heard it, tell them again.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make your testimony short, honest, and ready.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 42 Saturday, November 14

WEEK SIX • THE CALL OF ABRAM

Today's Reading

Galatians 3:15–18 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And to your offspring, who is Christ." — Galatians 3:16

Daily Word

Paul makes an argument out of one letter. The promise was not to seeds, plural, but to seed, singular. Everything God swore to Abraham was aimed at one Person.

The Promise Kept

Genesis 3:15 promised a seed. Genesis 12 narrows it to a family. Galatians names Him.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You are the seed and the promise and the point.

Today's Response

Share a meal today beyond your own walls. Tell the story of Abram in four sentences to whoever is at the table.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make you a person who traces God's faithfulness out loud.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 43 Sunday, November 15

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE

Today's Reading

Genesis 22:1–2 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love" — Genesis 22:2

Daily Word

God piled up the words on purpose. Your son. Your only son. Whom you love. He was not being cruel. He was making sure Abraham knew exactly what was being asked, and He was describing what He would one day do Himself.

The Promise Kept

John 3:16 uses the same construction. His only Son, whom He loves. Moriah was a rehearsal for Calvary.

Daily Prayer

Father, what am I holding that You have asked for?

Today's Response

Name the Isaac in your life. The thing you would argue with God about. Say it out loud today.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to search you and not to be polite about it.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Seven Monday, November 16

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 44 THROUGH 49

Daily readers: continue at Day 44, page 76.

The Week Ahead

This is the heaviest week in the series and the most important one after Genesis 3:15. Do not overwork it. Genesis 22 does its own preaching if you get out of the way.

Next Sunday is the Thanksgiving message and the Genesis arc pauses again. Your group still meets November 23. Say so tonight.

The Text

Genesis 22:1 through 14.

Read the whole thing out loud tonight. It is fourteen verses and it needs to be heard as one piece.

The Point

A substitute died and a son walked down the mountain alive. That is the gospel in one scene, and the ram has a name.

What the Passage Actually Says

Verse 2 piles up the words. Your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love. God is not being cruel. He is naming the cost precisely, and He is describing what He will one day do Himself. John 3:16 uses the same construction.

Verse 3 says Abraham rose early. This is a man who argued with God over Sodom, and here he does not argue. Hebrews 11:19 tells us why: he had concluded God could raise the dead.

Verse 6 puts the wood on the back of the son, and the two of them walk up together. Do not explain that. Just read it and pause.

Verse 8 is Abraham's answer to the only question that matters. God will provide for Himself the lamb. It took two thousand years for John the Baptist to finish that sentence on a riverbank.

Verse 13 is the ram caught in the thicket, already there before Abraham knew he needed it. Substitute dies. Son goes free.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is the morality of the command. Someone will say this is disturbing. They are right and you should say so. Do not rush past it. The tension is the point, and it resolves at verse 13 and finally at Calvary where nobody stopped the knife.

The second is parenting. People with kids will make it about their children and stop there. Push it one step further. What is the Isaac that is not a child?

Somebody in your room has lost a child or is estranged from one. Know before you walk in who that is and lead gently. If you do not know your room well enough to answer that, that is your real assignment this week.

Before You Start

Name your own Isaac before the meeting. And decide to let silence sit after verse 13. Most leaders talk over the only moment that would have landed.

LIFE GROUP Week Seven The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 44, page 76.

Open 10 minutes

Invite brief responses from anyone who wants to share.

What is the one thing you would argue with God about if He asked you for it?

Let it be uncomfortable. That question is the whole passage.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 22:1 through 14, all of it, one reader, slowly. When they finish, say nothing for thirty seconds.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. God stacks the words: your son, your only son, whom you love. Why do you think He said it that way?

2. Abraham rose early and did not argue, and he had argued with God before. What changed?

3. Isaac carried the wood up the hill. What do you do with that picture?

4. God will provide for Himself the lamb. Abraham said it before he could see it. Where do you need to say that this week?

5. The ram was already in the thicket before Abraham knew he needed it. Where has God provided before you knew to ask?

6. On this mountain a father was stopped. On another hill no one stopped it. What does that settle for you about how God feels about you?

Apply 15 minutes

Invite anyone who wishes to name their Isaac aloud; others may write it privately. No commentary from the room after someone shares.

Day 48 asks them to bring one specific sin by name and leave it. Tell them tonight that Friday is that day.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray over what people choose to share; allow private prayer too. Ask for open hands, not for a different assignment.

Close the whole group together with Day 49's prayer. Father, You did not spare Him. I will stop questioning whether You are for me.

Send Them Into the Week

Day 49 lands on Romans 8:32. Next Sunday is the Thanksgiving message. We still meet Monday, November 23. Text the group Thursday with one line from verse 8. God will provide.

DAY 44 Monday, November 16

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE

Today's Reading

Genesis 22:3–6 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son." — Genesis 22:6

Daily Word

Abraham rose early. There is no record of him arguing, and he had argued with God before over Sodom. Then he laid the wood on the back of his son and they walked up together.

The Promise Kept

Another Son carried the wood up a hill outside Jerusalem. The picture is not an accident.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I will rise early and obey before I understand.

Today's Response

Do the hard obedience first thing tomorrow morning. Do not let the day talk you out of it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to wake you with the assignment, not the anxiety.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 45 Tuesday, November 17

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE

Today's Reading

Genesis 22:7–8 (ESV)

Key Verse

"God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." — Genesis 22:8

Daily Word

Isaac asked the question every honest person asks. Where is the lamb? Abraham did not have the details. He had a conviction about the character of God, and it held on the worst walk of his life.

The Promise Kept

God did provide Himself a lamb, and it took two thousand years for the sentence to land in full. John the Baptist finally said it. Behold the Lamb of God.

Daily Prayer

God, You will provide. I am going to say that before I see it.

Today's Response

Answer one worry today with that sentence instead of a plan. God will provide.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to hold you steady in the part of the climb where you have no answers.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 46 Wednesday, November 18

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE

Today's Reading

Genesis 22:9–14 (ESV)

Key Verse

"The LORD will provide" — Genesis 22:14

Daily Word

The knife was up. A voice stopped him, and behind him was a ram caught in a thicket. The substitute was already there before Abraham knew he needed it. A son walked down that mountain alive because something else died.

The Promise Kept

This is the gospel in one scene. A substitute dies and the son goes free. That is you, and the ram has a name.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You took the place that was mine. I will not get over it.

Today's Response

Sit with this one for ten minutes and do not do anything with it. Some truths are not assignments.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make the substitution personal and not theoretical.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 47 Thursday, November 19

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE

Today's Reading

Hebrews 11:17–19 (ESV)

Key Verse

"He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead" — Hebrews 11:19

Daily Word

That is what Abraham was doing on the way up. He had done the math. God promised the line would run through Isaac, so either the promise fails or God raises the dead. He bet on resurrection before there was a word for it.

The Promise Kept

He figured out God's plan by trusting God's word. Faith does arithmetic on promises.

Daily Prayer

Father, I will do the math on what You said and not on what I see.

Today's Response

Write down one promise of God and the situation that contradicts it. Then write which one you are betting on.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to teach you to reason from the promise backward.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 48 Friday, November 20

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE

Today's Reading

John 1:29–34 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" — John 1:29

Daily Word

Isaac's question got answered on a riverbank by a man in camel hair. Where is the lamb? There He is, walking toward the water. Two thousand years to deliver one sentence.

The Promise Kept

God answers slowly and He answers completely. He is never late on the part that matters.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, Lamb of God, take away what I cannot carry.

Today's Response

Bring one specific sin to Him by name today and then leave it there. Do not pick it back up at bedtime.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make the release real and not just verbal.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 49 Saturday, November 21

WEEK SEVEN • THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SUBSTITUTE

Today's Reading

Romans 8:31–39 (ESV)

Key Verse

"He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all" — Romans 8:32

Daily Word

Abraham did not withhold his son, and God stopped him. God did not withhold His Son, and nobody stopped Him. Paul's logic is simple. If He gave you the most expensive thing He had, why would He hold back the rest?

The Promise Kept

The mountain settles the question of God's heart toward you forever.

Daily Prayer

Father, You did not spare Him. I will stop questioning whether You are for me.

Today's Response

Eat with people today and read Romans 8:31 and 32 out loud before the food.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to settle the accusation you keep rehearsing.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 50 Sunday, November 22

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING

Today's Reading

Genesis 50:15–21 (ESV)

Key Verse

"you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" — Genesis 50:20

Daily Word

Joseph does not pretend it was fine. He says you meant evil. Then he says God meant good. Both are true and he refuses to drop either one. That is the most honest thanksgiving verse in the Bible.

The Promise Kept

The cross is the same sentence. Men meant it for evil. God meant it for the salvation of the world.

Daily Prayer

God, You meant good. I am going to say it before I can see it.

Today's Response

Write down one hard thing from this year. Beside it write one good thing God has done through it. If you cannot find one yet, write not yet and leave it open.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to give you sight for this year before you sit down at the table Thursday.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Eight Monday, November 23

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 51 THROUGH 56

Daily readers: continue at Day 51, page 87.

The Week Ahead

Thanksgiving is Thursday. Half your group is traveling and the other half is hosting. Meet anyway and keep it to the time you promised. A group that meets on a holiday week tells the room that this is not optional.

The Genesis arc resumes November 29 with Jacob. This week stands on its own, and its anchor verse comes from the end of Genesis, so the series is still in the room.

The Text

Genesis 50:20, with Luke 17:11 through 19 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

You meant evil, God meant good. Nine healed men who never came back. Thanks in all circumstances, not for them.

The Point

Gratitude that refuses to lie is the only kind worth having. Joseph named the evil and named the good in the same sentence.

What the Passage Actually Says

Genesis 50:20 holds two things at once. You meant evil against me. God meant it for good. Joseph does not say it was fine and he does not excuse them. He refuses to drop either half.

Luke 17 is the sharper text. Ten were healed and one came back, and the one was a Samaritan. It is possible to receive everything from God and never return to Him for it.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 says in all circumstances, not for all circumstances. That single preposition keeps the verse honest and keeps it from being cruel.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is fake gratitude. Someone will perform a list. Ask a follow up question every time an answer sounds like a greeting card.

The second is the hard year. Somebody in your room buried someone this year or lost a marriage or a job. Do not make them be thankful. Take them to Joseph, who named the evil out loud first.

Watch for who has nowhere to go Thursday. Somebody in that room does. Find out before you leave and fix it tonight.

Before You Start

Know whether anyone in your group is alone on Thursday. That is the most important preparation for this meeting. Have a seat available at your own table before you ask the room to set one.

LIFE GROUP Week Eight The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 51, page 87.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

What is one thing from this year you are grateful for that you would not have chosen?

The second half of the question is what makes it worth asking. Do not let people answer only the first half.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 50:15 through 21, then Luke 17:11 through 19.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. Joseph names the evil and names God's purpose in one sentence. Which half do you have a harder time saying?

2. Nine men got the miracle and missed the Man. What have you received from God and never gone back to thank Him for?

3. Paul says give thanks in all circumstances, not for them. What is the circumstance you are supposed to be thankful inside of right now?

4. Psalm 103 has David preaching to his own soul. What do you need to say to yourself this week?

5. Who is going to be alone on Thursday, and what are we doing about it before we leave tonight?

6. What is the one thing about this year that you still cannot call good, and can you say it out loud here?

Apply 15 minutes

Everyone writes down ten things. Ten, not three. Make them finish the list before they leave.

Day 55 asks for a real note on paper to one person. Name the person tonight and mail it Friday.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Thank God out loud for one specific thing in each other's lives that the person themselves overlooked.

Close the whole group together with Day 50's prayer. God, You meant good. I am going to say it before I can see it.

Send Them Into the Week

Thursday, before anyone eats, they go around the table and let the youngest answer first. Text the group Thursday morning with one line. Let the youngest go first. Genesis resumes Sunday with Jacob.

DAY 51 Monday, November 23

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING

Today's Reading

Psalm 100 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!" — Psalm 100:4

Daily Word

Thanksgiving is the gate. Not the reward for getting in, the way in. If you are struggling to sense God this week, start with what He has already done and walk in through that door.

The Promise Kept

We come through a better gate than the psalmist knew. Jesus said I am the door.

Daily Prayer

Father, I enter with thanks. Here is what You have already done.

Today's Response

List ten things out loud on the drive today. Ten, not three. Make yourself get to ten.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to bring to mind what you have already forgotten this year.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 52 Tuesday, November 24

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING

Today's Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (ESV)

Key Verse

"give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." — 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Daily Word

It says in all circumstances. It does not say for all circumstances. There is a difference, and the difference is where a lot of people quit reading.

The Promise Kept

This is named as the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. If you have been asking what God's will is, here is one clear answer.

Daily Prayer

Lord, in this. Not for it. In it, I thank You.

Today's Response

Thank God today specifically inside the circumstance you would rather He removed.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to separate gratitude from pretending.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 53 Wednesday, November 25

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING

Today's Reading

Luke 17:11–19 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" — Luke 17:18

Daily Word

Ten were healed. One came back. Nine got the miracle and missed the Man. It is possible to receive everything from God and never return to Him for it.

The Promise Kept

The one who came back got more than clean skin. Jesus told him his faith had made him well. Gratitude took him deeper than healing.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, I am coming back. Thank You for what I already took and never mentioned.

Today's Response

Tell one person today, out loud, a specific thing God did for you that you never thanked Him for at the time.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make you one out of ten.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 54 Thursday, November 26

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING

Today's Reading

Psalm 103:1–5 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" — Psalm 103:2

Daily Word

Happy Thanksgiving. David is talking to himself in this psalm, and he is doing it because the soul forgets. Gratitude is not a mood. It is a command you give yourself.

The Promise Kept

He forgives all your iniquity and heals all your diseases. The list starts with forgiveness, and that benefit cost Him everything.

Daily Prayer

Bless the LORD, O my soul. All that is within me, bless His holy name.

Today's Response

Before anyone eats today, go around the table and have each person name one thing. Let the youngest go first. If you are alone, call someone and do it on the phone.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to be the unseen guest at your table today.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 55 Friday, November 27

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING

Today's Reading

Colossians 3:15–17 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And be thankful." — Colossians 3:15

Daily Word

Three words, and they are a command. Paul puts thankfulness right in the middle of how a household is supposed to work. An ungrateful house is a hard house to live in.

The Promise Kept

Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Even the leftovers.

Daily Prayer

Father, let thanks be the tone of my home and not just the menu on one day.

Today's Response

Write a real note, on paper, to one person today. Not a text. Mail it or hand it to them.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to root out the complaining you have stopped noticing.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 56 Saturday, November 28

WEEK EIGHT • THE TABLE OF THANKSGIVING

Today's Reading

2 Corinthians 9:10–15 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!" — 2 Corinthians 9:15

Daily Word

Paul runs out of words. He is writing about generosity and he hits the gift that started it all and cannot describe it. Four weeks from Christmas is a good time to be speechless.

The Promise Kept

The inexpressible gift is a Person. Everything else on your list this week is downstream of Him.

Daily Prayer

God, thank You for the gift I will never have words for.

Today's Response

Share a meal today with people beyond your own walls. Set one extra chair this season and decide today who fills it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to point out the person who will be alone this December.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 57 Sunday, November 29

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP

Today's Reading

Genesis 25:27–34 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Thus Esau despised his birthright." — Genesis 25:34

Daily Word

Esau traded a permanent inheritance for a hot meal because he was hungry right now. Nobody wakes up planning to sell their birthright. You sell it in a moment when the appetite is loud and the future feels far away.

The Promise Kept

Hebrews warns us not to be like Esau. The One who fasted forty days and refused to turn stones into bread is the One who can hold you at your hungriest.

Daily Prayer

Lord, do not let me trade what lasts for what is warm.

Today's Response

Identify the appetite that has cost you the most. Name the hour of the day it shows up. Put something in that hour today.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to widen the gap between the impulse and the decision.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Nine Monday, November 30

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 58 THROUGH 63

Daily readers: continue at Day 58, page 98.

The Week Ahead

December starts and the calendar is about to get loud. From here to Christmas your people will be busier every week. Front load the commitment tonight.

Jacob is the most relatable man in Genesis because he is the least admirable. Use that.

The Text

Genesis 28:10 through 17 and Genesis 32:22 through 31.

The ladder and the limp. God meets a runaway, and later wounds him to bless him.

The Point

God chose the schemer. Grace is not a reward for character, and Jesus said the ladder is Him.

What the Passage Actually Says

Jacob is running for his life after deceiving his father and cheating his brother. He sleeps on a rock. God appears and repeats the Abrahamic promise to him, with no correction and no conditions attached. That is the offense of grace.

Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it. God was already there. Jacob just found out.

In chapter 32 he sends everyone else across the river and stays alone, and he wrestles until daybreak. God asks his name, which forces him to say deceiver out loud, and then renames him.

God wins by touching his hip. The blessing and the wound arrive together and he walks differently for the rest of his life.

John 1:51 is the payoff. Jesus tells Nathanael he will see angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. He is saying I am the ladder.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is Jacob's character. The room will want to debate whether he deserved it. That is the point. He did not. Let the discomfort sit.

The second is spiritualizing the limp. Some people will make the wound poetic. Invite honesty without asking anyone to name a private wound aloud. A chronic struggle may still be painful and unresolved.

This meeting can go deep fast. Protect the time and do not let one person's story eat the hour.

Before You Start

Consider what you might share about your own limp, but leave room for people to keep theirs private.

LIFE GROUP Week Nine The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 58, page 98.

Open 10 minutes

Invite brief responses from anyone who wants to share.

When was a time God met you in a place you were not proud to be in?

That question is Genesis 28 in plain English and it gets you past the small talk.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 28:10 through 17, then Genesis 32:24 through 28.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. God appears to a man on the run and adds no conditions. What does that do to how you approach Him when you have blown it?

2. Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it. Where has He been present and you have not noticed?

3. Jacob sent everyone away and stayed alone. What do you need to settle with God that cannot be settled in a crowd?

4. God asked his name, which made him say deceiver out loud. What is the truest word about you that you do not use in public?

5. He walked with a limp for the rest of his life. What might you learn from Jacob's limp about living with a lasting weakness? Share personally only if you want to.

6. Paul asked three times and God said my grace is sufficient. Where have you been asking for removal when God is offering sufficiency?

Apply 15 minutes

Everyone blocks twenty minutes alone this week with no phone and prays about one thing until they are done with it.

Day 62 asks them to invite one person to come and see this Sunday. Say the name tonight and send the text before Friday.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray for what people choose to share. Ask what prayer they want; do not assume every weakness should remain or should be prayed away.

Close the whole group together with Day 61's prayer. Father, change my name. I will take the limp.

Send Them Into the Week

Days 58 through 63 carry them into Joseph next week. Text the group Thursday. Did you get the twenty minutes alone?

DAY 58 Monday, November 30

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP

Today's Reading

Genesis 28:10–15 (ESV)

Key Verse

“a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven” — Genesis 28:12

Daily Word

Jacob is running. He has lied to his father, cheated his brother, and he is sleeping on a rock in the middle of nowhere. That is exactly where God shows up and repeats the promise. Grace is not a reward for character.

The Promise Kept

Jesus told Nathanael you will see the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. He was telling him I am the ladder.

Daily Prayer

God, You met the schemer on the run. Meet me where I actually am.

Today's Response

Stop cleaning yourself up before you pray. Pray right now, as is, for two minutes.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to kill the delay that says you will come back to God once you are better.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 59 Tuesday, December 1

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP

Today's Reading

Genesis 28:16–22 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." — Genesis 28:16

Daily Word

God was already there. Jacob just found out. Most of us are not waiting for God to show up. We are waiting to notice.

The Promise Kept

His name is Immanuel, God with us. Not God near us, not God watching us. With.

Daily Prayer

Lord, You are in this place. Open my eyes to what is already here.

Today's Response

Pick the most ordinary place in your life, the car, the desk, the kitchen. Say out loud, surely the Lord is in this place. Then stay there a minute.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make you aware, not just informed.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 60 Wednesday, December 2

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP

Today's Reading

Genesis 32:22–26 (ESV)

Key Verse

"I will not let you go unless you bless me." — Genesis 32:26

Daily Word

He sent everyone else across the river and stayed alone. Some things only get settled when nobody else is in the room. He wrestled all night and refused to quit, and God let him.

The Promise Kept

Jesus spent whole nights alone in prayer. The Son of God thought that was necessary. You are not above it.

Daily Prayer

God, I am not letting go. Bless this.

Today's Response

Get alone tonight for twenty minutes with no phone and pray about one thing until you are done with it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to give you persistence where you have been polite.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 61 Thursday, December 3

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP

Today's Reading

Genesis 32:27–32 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel" — Genesis 32:28

Daily Word

God asked him his name, which means He made him say it out loud. Jacob means deceiver. He had to admit what he was before he could be told what he would be. Then God touched his hip and he walked different for the rest of his life.

The Promise Kept

God wins by wounding. The limp was the proof, the same way the scars in His hands are the proof.

Daily Prayer

Father, change my name. I will take the limp.

Today's Response

Say out loud to God the truest word about yourself, the one you do not use in public. Then ask Him what He calls you.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make peace with the weakness you have been hiding.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 62 Friday, December 4

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP

Today's Reading

John 1:43–51 (ESV)

Key Verse

"you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." — John 1:51

Daily Word

Nathanael was sitting under a fig tree being honest about his low opinion of Nazareth. Jesus took Jacob's dream and put Himself in the middle of it. The ladder is not a thing. It is a Person.

The Promise Kept

There is one point of contact between heaven and earth, and He knows your name before you get there.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You are the ladder. I stop trying to climb.

Today's Response

Invite one person to come and see this Sunday. Two words are enough.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit for one name today and then send the text before you overthink it.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 63 Saturday, December 5

WEEK NINE • JACOB, THE LADDER AND THE LIMP

Today's Reading

2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (ESV)

Key Verse

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." — 2 Corinthians 12:9

Daily Word

Paul asked three times for it to be removed. God said no and told him why. The limp was not a failure of prayer. It was the shape of the answer.

The Promise Kept

The Man who saves you was wounded to do it. Do not be surprised when He works the same way in you.

Daily Prayer

Lord, if You will not remove it, then be sufficient in it.

Today's Response

If it is wise, tell a trusted person about a weakness you usually hide, or write it privately first. Honesty can build community.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to turn the thing you resent into the thing you minister from.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 64 Sunday, December 6

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 37:1–11 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Are you indeed to reign over us?" — Genesis 37:8

Daily Word

Joseph had a dream, a robe, and a father who played favorites. The family dysfunction here is not incidental. God ran the promise of Genesis 3:15 straight through a household that was a mess.

The Promise Kept

He was the beloved son of the father, and his brothers hated him for it. Keep that sentence in your mind all week.

Daily Prayer

Father, work through my family and not around it.

Today's Response

Name the family pattern you do not want to repeat. Write one sentence about how it stops with you.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to show you where you are favoring, comparing, or keeping score at home.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Ten Monday, December 7

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 65 THROUGH 70

Daily readers: continue at Day 65, page 109.

The Week Ahead

Joseph is split across two weeks on purpose. This week is rejection and it does not resolve. Next week is exaltation. Do not give away next week's payoff tonight.

Let the room feel the pattern before you name it. If somebody sees Jesus in it on their own, let them say it and then move on without building the whole sermon. Next Sunday does that.

The Text

Genesis 37:12 through 28 and Genesis 39:19 through 23.

The beloved son sent by the father, sold for silver, and the Lord with him in prison.

The Point

The father sent the beloved son to his brothers, and they stripped him, sold him, and sat down to eat.

What the Passage Actually Says

Verse 13 has the father sending the beloved son to check on his brothers. Joseph says here I am and goes, knowing how they feel about him.

Here comes this dreamer. They saw the one God sent to save their family and saw a problem to remove.

Verse 25 is the detail to slow down on. They threw him in a pit and then sat down to eat. The cruelty is not the violence. It is the lunch.

Judah is the one who proposes selling him, and they get twenty shekels of silver. Keep that in your pocket. You will want it in week twelve when Judah gets the scepter.

Genesis 39 twice says the Lord was with Joseph, once in Potiphar's house and once in the prison. Not the Lord rescued him. The Lord was with him. That is the promise for the middle of the story.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is Joseph's arrogance. Someone will point out he told the dreams to his brothers and make the whole thing his fault. Fine, note it, and then ask whether that justifies a pit.

The second is making this a lesson about resilience. It is not a self improvement story. The refrain is the Lord was with him, not Joseph was tough.

Somebody in that room was betrayed by family and has never said it out loud in a group. Tonight might be the night. Leave room.

Before You Start

Resist the urge to preach Jesus into every verse tonight. Hold it. Next week you get to say it all.

LIFE GROUP Week Ten The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 65, page 109.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

When have you done the right thing and paid for it?

It sets up Genesis 39 before you get there and it will tell you who is currently in a pit.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 37:18 through 28. Read verse 25 twice, the part where they sat down to eat.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. The father sent the beloved son to brothers who hated him, and he went. What does that cost a person?

2. They sat down to eat while he was in the pit. How does someone get that numb, and where are you getting numb?

3. Joseph was sold by family. Who has hurt you that was supposed to protect you?

4. In Potiphar's house he did the right thing and went to prison for it. Where has integrity cost you and nobody noticed?

5. The text says twice that the Lord was with him. Not rescued him. With him. Is that enough for you right now, honestly?

6. Who is in a pit near you right now, and what specific thing will you do for them this week? Not sympathy. A thing.

Apply 15 minutes

Everyone names one person in a pit and does one concrete thing for them before Sunday. Money, time, presence.

Day 68 asks them to decide their answer before the moment comes. Have each person write down one decision made in advance.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray for the betrayal each person named. Ask for healing and not for revenge, and let people be honest about which one they want.

Close the whole group together with Day 69's prayer. Lord, I would rather be out. Since I am not, be here.

Send Them Into the Week

Day 70 lands on John 1:11. He came to his own and his own did not receive Him. Next Sunday the story turns. Text the group Friday. Did you do the thing for the person in the pit?

DAY 65 Monday, December 7

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 37:12–20 (ESV)

Key Verse

“Here comes this dreamer.” — Genesis 37:19

Daily Word

The father sent the beloved son to check on his brothers, and they saw him coming and plotted against him. He went anyway. He knew where he was going and who he was going to.

The Promise Kept

Jesus told a parable about a landowner who finally said I will send my beloved son. The tenants said this is the heir, and they killed him. He knew that story was about Him when He told it.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You came to Your own knowing what they would do. Thank You.

Today's Response

Go toward the person who has been cold to you. One text, one call, one step across the room.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to give you courage to go where you are not welcome.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 66 Tuesday, December 8

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 37:23–28 (ESV)

Key Verse

“and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver” — Genesis 37:28

Daily Word

They stripped his robe, threw him in a pit, sat down to eat, and then sold their own brother for silver. Read the part about the meal again. They ate lunch while he was in the hole.

The Promise Kept

Judah is the one who proposed the sale. Silver, a brother, and a betrayal. You have heard this before with a different name and thirty pieces.

Daily Prayer

Lord, keep me from the cruelty that can eat lunch while someone is in a pit.

Today's Response

Who is in a pit near you right now? Do one concrete thing for them today. Money, time, presence. Not sympathy.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to break any numbness you have developed toward suffering you have gotten used to.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 67 Wednesday, December 9

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 39:1–6 (ESV)

Key Verse

"The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man" — Genesis 39:2

Daily Word

He was a slave. Scripture calls him successful in the same sentence. Success in Genesis is not circumstance. It is the presence of God in whatever room you are stuck in.

The Promise Kept

The Lord was with Joseph in Potiphar's house, in the prison, and on the throne. That is the same Presence promised to you until the end of the age.

Daily Prayer

God, be with me here, in this job, in this season, in this house.

Today's Response

Do your ordinary work today as if God were the one receiving it. Pick one task and do it at that level.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make the small room holy instead of waiting for a bigger one.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 68 Thursday, December 10

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 39:7–20 (ESV)

Key Verse

"How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" — Genesis 39:9

Daily Word

She asked day after day. He kept saying no, and when it got physical he ran and left his coat behind. It cost him the coat and then it cost him his freedom. Integrity is not always rewarded in the next chapter.

The Promise Kept

Jesus was tempted in every way as we are, without sin. He does not coach you from a distance. He knows the pressure.

Daily Prayer

Father, give me a no that costs me something and stays no.

Today's Response

Decide today, before the moment, what your answer is. Write it down. Deciding in the moment is how people fall.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to give you a fast exit and the humility to use it.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 69 Friday, December 11

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 39:21–23 (ESV)

Key Verse

"But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love" — Genesis 39:21

Daily Word

He did the right thing and went to prison for it. And the very next sentence says the Lord was with him. Not the Lord rescued him. The Lord was with him. That is the promise for the middle of the story.

The Promise Kept

He was numbered with the transgressors too. Jesus has been in the cell.

Daily Prayer

Lord, I would rather be out. Since I am not, be here.

Today's Response

Write down the place you feel stuck. Write beside it, the Lord was with him. Leave the paper where you will see it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit for patience in a season you did not choose and cannot end.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 70 Saturday, December 12

WEEK TEN • JOSEPH, REJECTED

Today's Reading

John 1:10–13 (ESV)

Key Verse

"He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him." — John 1:11

Daily Word

Joseph's brothers looked at the one God sent to save them and saw a problem to get rid of. Many of Jesus' own people rejected Him, while others received Him. Rejection is not proof that God is absent. Sometimes it is proof that He is at work.

The Promise Kept

But to all who did receive Him, He gave the right to become children of God. The rejected brother is how you got into the family.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, I receive You. Thank You for coming anyway.

Today's Response

Eat with people beyond your own walls today. Tell them about a rejection God turned. Keep it honest.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to heal the rejection you are still carrying.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 71 Sunday, December 13

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 41:38–45 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" — Genesis 41:38

Daily Word

Thirteen years in slavery and prison, and then one morning he goes from the dungeon to the right hand of the throne. God is not slow. He is thorough. The delay was the preparation.

The Promise Kept

From the lowest place to the highest, in a single day, by the word of a king. That is resurrection shaped.

Daily Prayer

Father, prepare me in the waiting so I survive the promotion.

Today's Response

Name what these last few years have been building in you. Write three words. Then thank Him for the ones you would not have chosen.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make you ready before you are noticed.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Eleven Monday, December 14

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 72 THROUGH 77

Daily readers: continue at Day 72, page 120.

The Week Ahead

This is the payoff week for Joseph and the setup for Christmas. Next Sunday is December 20, the finale, and the whole series lands on Bethlehem. Tell your people to be in the room that day and to bring somebody.

Now you can say out loud what you held back last week.

The Text

Genesis 45:1 through 8 and Genesis 50:15 through 21.

I am Joseph your brother whom you sold. You meant evil, God meant good.

The Point

The rejected brother is exalted and becomes the only source of bread for the people who sold him.

What the Passage Actually Says

Chapter 41 moves him from prison to the right hand of the throne in a single day. Thirteen years of preparation and one morning of promotion.

Pharaoh's answer to a starving nation is two words. Go to Joseph. There is bread in Egypt and one man is holding it.

In chapter 45 Joseph does not soften the truth. I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. And in the same breath, come near to me. He weeps so loudly the Egyptians hear it.

Genesis 50:20 is the thesis of the book. You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good. Acts 2:23 says the identical thing about the cross.

Philippians 2:9 through 11 is where this lands. The humiliated one is highly exalted and given the name above every name.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is cheap forgiveness. Someone will use this passage to pressure a person in the room to reconcile with someone dangerous. Stop that. Joseph forgave from a position of power and safety. Forgiveness is required. Access is not.

The second is that God meant it for good gets used to flatten real grief. Do not let anyone say that sentence over another person's loss tonight. Joseph got to say it about his own life, twenty two years later.

Watch for the person who has been waiting years for a door to open. This is their week.

Before You Start

Have Philippians 2:9 through 11 marked. And have your own name ready for question five.

LIFE GROUP Week Eleven The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 72, page 120.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

What is the longest you have ever waited for something that finally came?

It puts thirteen years of prison in a category people can feel.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 45:1 through 8. Then Genesis 50:20 by itself, twice.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. Thirteen years, then one morning. How does that change the way you think about the season you are in?

2. Pharaoh said go to Joseph. What are you trying to solve without going to Jesus first?

3. I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold. Come near. How does a person say both of those in one breath?

4. You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good. Can you say the first half out loud about your own story yet?

5. Is there a relationship where a safe next step is possible? You may keep the person's name private; no contact is required.

6. The rejected brother became the source of life for the ones who sold Him. Where do you see Jesus in this story?

Apply 15 minutes

Invite each person to consider a safe step toward healing this week. That may mean prayer, a private decision, wise counsel, or contact if it is safe. Do not press anyone to reconcile with an unsafe person.

Next Sunday is the finale. Every person invites one person to come with them on December 20. Names out loud tonight.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray for relationships people choose to name, and for those they are inviting Sunday. Leave room for private prayer.

Close the whole group together with Day 77's prayer. Jesus, every knee. Including mine, today, on purpose.

Send Them Into the Week

Day 77 lands on Philippians 2. The promise is about to arrive in Bethlehem. Text the group Thursday. Did you invite them?

DAY 72 Monday, December 14

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 41:53–57 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do." — Genesis 41:55

Daily Word

The famine came and Pharaoh had one answer for the whole country. Go to Joseph. There was bread in Egypt and there was only one man holding it.

The Promise Kept

Mary said the same thing at a wedding in Cana. Whatever He tells you, do it. Every famine has one address.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, I am coming to You. You are holding the bread.

Today's Response

Take the thing you have been trying to solve with information and bring it to Him first this morning.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to break the habit of going to Him last.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 73 Tuesday, December 15

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 45:1–8 (ESV)

Key Verse

"I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt." — Genesis 45:4

Daily Word

He does not soften it. Whom you sold. And in the same breath he tells them to come near, and he weeps so loudly the Egyptians hear it. Revelation and reconciliation in one sentence.

The Promise Kept

The risen Jesus met the men who abandoned Him and led with peace be with you. The wounds were real and so was the welcome.

Daily Prayer

Lord, give me wisdom and courage for the next safe step toward healing.

Today's Response

Consider one safe step toward healing this week. It may be prayer, counsel, or contact if that is wise. You do not have to reach out to someone who is unsafe.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to do what you cannot manufacture, which is a willing heart.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 74 Wednesday, December 16

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 45:9–15 (ESV)

Key Verse

“And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them.” — Genesis 45:15

Daily Word

Twenty two years of silence ended with a grown man crying on the shoulders of the men who sold him. Forgiveness is not a feeling he worked up. It is a decision he made and then his body caught up to it.

The Promise Kept

God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting our trespasses against us. That is the pattern we are asked to copy.

Daily Prayer

Father, help my heart move toward forgiveness, and show me what a safe next step looks like.

Today's Response

Write the name privately if you are ready. Pray, 'Help me forgive,' without forcing a feeling or making contact. If the relationship is unsafe, keep the boundary.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to keep you from rehearsing the offense again today.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 75 Thursday, December 17

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED

Today's Reading

Genesis 50:15–21 (ESV)

Key Verse

"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" — Genesis 50:20

Daily Word

After their father died the brothers were sure the other shoe was about to drop. Joseph's answer is the thesis of the entire book. Human evil is real and God's purpose runs straight through it without being stopped by it.

The Promise Kept

Acts 2:23 says the same thing about the cross. Delivered up according to the definite plan of God, and you crucified Him. Both are true.

Daily Prayer

God, You meant it for good. I will hold both halves of that verse.

Today's Response

Tell one person the story of something God turned in your life. Not the polished version. The real one.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to give you the long view on the thing that is currently unresolved.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 76 Friday, December 18

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED

Today's Reading

Acts 7:9–14 (ESV)

Key Verse

"but God was with him and rescued him out of all his afflictions" — Acts 7:9–10

Daily Word

Stephen retold Joseph's story while standing on trial for his life, and he was making a point his accusers did not want. You always reject the deliverer the first time. Then he was stoned for saying it.

The Promise Kept

Stephen saw heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. The exalted brother was on His feet for him.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, You are standing at the right hand. That is enough for today.

Today's Response

Do one thing today that costs you socially because it is true.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit for the kind of courage that does not need the room to agree.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 77 Saturday, December 19

WEEK ELEVEN • JOSEPH, EXALTED

Today's Reading

Philippians 2:9–11 (ESV)

Key Verse

"Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name" — Philippians 2:9

Daily Word

Joseph went from the pit to the palace and the brothers who sold him bowed. Paul says the same arc about Jesus, except the bowing is universal and the name is above every name. Including the names that scare you.

The Promise Kept

The humiliated brother is exalted and becomes the source of life for the very people who sold Him. That is not irony. That is the gospel.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, every knee. Including mine, today, on purpose.

Today's Response

Share a meal today beyond your own walls. Before Christmas week starts, make sure somebody outside your family has been at your table.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to prepare your heart for next Sunday. The promise is about to land in Bethlehem.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 78 Sunday, December 20

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH

Today's Reading

Genesis 49:8–12 (ESV)

Key Verse

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah" — Genesis 49:10

Daily Word

A dying old man blesses his sons and out of his mouth comes the narrowing of the promise. Not all twelve. One tribe. Judah, the brother who suggested selling Joseph. Grace keeps choosing the unlikely one.

The Promise Kept

Walk it forward. A seed promised in a garden, carried through a flood, sworn to Abraham, provided on a mountain, preserved through Joseph, and now narrowed to one tribe. Next stop is one town.

Daily Prayer

Father, You have never missed a step in four thousand years. Thank You.

Today's Response

Read Genesis 3:15 and Genesis 49:10 back to back tonight. Tell your household what is connecting them.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to make this Christmas week about the promise and not the pressure.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Twelve Monday, December 21

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 79 THROUGH 84

Daily readers: continue at Day 79, page 131.

The Week Ahead

Christmas Eve is Thursday and Christmas Day is Friday. Keep this meeting short and warm and end on time. Sixty minutes is plenty this week.

The series finale was yesterday. Tonight your job is to make sure the thread they heard on Sunday gets into their house this week, because Thursday and Friday are the two nights of the year when families will actually open a Bible.

The Text

Genesis 49:8 through 10, with Micah 5:2 and Revelation 5:5.

The scepter narrowed to one tribe, the ruler named to one town, and the Lion who turns out to be a Lamb.

The Point

The seed promised in Genesis 3:15 was carried four thousand years and delivered to one tribe, one town, and one manger.

What the Passage Actually Says

Jacob is dying and blessing his sons, and the scepter lands on Judah. Judah is the brother who proposed selling Joseph for silver. Grace keeps choosing the unlikely one.

The scepter shall not depart from Judah until tribute comes to him, and the obedience of the peoples is his. Matthew 1 traces the legal line straight through Judah to Jesus.

Micah 5:2 puts the address in writing seven hundred years early, and calls Bethlehem too little to be counted.

Revelation 5:5 is the finish. John hears Lion of the tribe of Judah and turns to look, and sees a Lamb standing as though slain. Genesis 22 and Genesis 49 meet in one throne room.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is Christmas logistics. The room will want to talk about travel and schedules. Give it five minutes at the open and then take the Bible out.

The second is familiarity. They have heard the Christmas story since they were four. The thread from Genesis is what makes it new. Keep it on the promise.

Ask who is alone this week. Somebody is. Do not leave without fixing it.

Before You Start

Have the whole chain ready to walk in five minutes: Genesis 3:15, 12:3, 22:8, 49:10, Micah 5:2, Matthew 1, Luke 2, Revelation 5:5. Practice saying it out loud once before the meeting.

LIFE GROUP Week Twelve The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH | SUGGESTED MEETING OUTLINE | 60 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 79, page 131.

Open 5 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

What is one thing you saw in Genesis this fall that you had never seen before?

Twelve weeks of work is sitting in that room. Let them hear each other say it.

Read 5 minutes

Genesis 49:8 through 10, then Revelation 5:5 through 6. Read them back to back with no comment in between.

Discuss 25 minutes

1. The scepter goes to Judah, the brother who sold Joseph. What does that tell you about who God uses?

2. Micah named the town seven hundred years early and called it too little to be counted. Where is the small place in your life that God might be using?

3. Matthew 1 keeps the scandals in the family tree on purpose. What does that do for how you see your own family line?

4. John hears Lion and turns to see a Lamb. How do you hold both of those together?

5. Walk the promise from Genesis 3:15 to Bethlehem in your own words. Somebody try it.

6. Who is alone this Christmas, and what are we doing about it before we leave tonight?

Apply 10 minutes

Every household reads Luke 2:1 through 14 out loud on Christmas Eve. Let a child read it if there is one.

On Christmas Day, before the gifts, read John 1:1 and John 1:14. Two verses. Tell them tonight so it is not an afterthought.

Pray 15 minutes

Twos and threes. Thank God specifically for the thing each person named in the opening question.

Close the whole group together with Day 83's prayer. Jesus, the Word made flesh. Thank You for coming the whole way.

Send Them Into the Week

Days 85 through 89 close out the year and end on Joshua 24:15. We meet one more time, Monday, December 28. Text the group Christmas morning with one line. The Word became flesh.

DAY 79 Monday, December 21

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH

Today's Reading

Micah 5:2–5 (ESV)

Key Verse

"But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel" — Micah 5:2

Daily Word

Seven hundred years before the manger, a prophet named the town. Too little to be counted, and God put the address in writing anyway. He specializes in places nobody would pick.

The Promise Kept

Whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Micah is saying the baby is older than Bethlehem.

Daily Prayer

Lord, You use the small places. Use mine.

Today's Response

Do something generous today in the least impressive part of your life.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to keep you off the stage this week and in the room where you are needed.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 80 Tuesday, December 22

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH

Today's Reading

Matthew 1:1–17 (ESV)

Key Verse

"The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." — Matthew 1:1

Daily Word

Matthew opens the New Testament with a list, and the list is the payoff of this entire series. Abraham is in it. Judah is in it. Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth are in it. God wrote a family tree with the scandals left in.

The Promise Kept

Every name in that list is God keeping Genesis 3:15. The genealogy is not filler. It is the receipt.

Daily Prayer

Father, You kept the promise through people like me.

Today's Response

Read Matthew 1:1 through 17 out loud tonight, all of it, names and all. Then read Genesis 3:15 after it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to give you patience with your own family line.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 81 Wednesday, December 23

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH

Today's Reading

Luke 2:1–7 (ESV)

Key Verse

“and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.” — Luke 2:7

Daily Word

A decree from Caesar moved a pregnant teenager seventy miles so a prophecy could be fulfilled in the right town. Caesar thought he was counting people. He was running an errand for God.

The Promise Kept

Proverbs 21:1 said the king's heart is a stream of water in His hand. Luke 2 is that verse with a census attached.

Daily Prayer

God, You use even the paperwork. Nothing is outside Your reach.

Today's Response

Make room today for one person your schedule has no room for.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to slow you down enough to notice who is standing outside the inn.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 82 Thursday, December 24

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH

Today's Reading

Luke 2:8–14 (ESV)

Key Verse

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." — Luke 2:11

Daily Word

Christmas Eve. The announcement went to men working a night shift in a field. Not to the temple, not to Rome. To shepherds. God entrusted them with news they went and shared.

The Promise Kept

Unto you. The angel made it personal before he made it cosmic.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, unto me. Thank You for coming to the field and not the palace.

Today's Response

Read Luke 2:1 through 14 out loud with whoever is in your house tonight. Let a child read it if there is one.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to put wonder back into a story you have heard your whole life.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 83 Friday, December 25

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH

Today's Reading

John 1:14–18 (ESV)

Key Verse

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" — John 1:14

Daily Word

Merry Christmas. The voice that said let there be light in Genesis 1 took on skin and needed His mother to feed Him. The Creator became a creature without ceasing to be the Creator.

The Promise Kept

We have seen His glory, full of grace and truth. Eighty three days ago this workbook started with In the beginning, God. Today it arrives at God with us.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, the Word made flesh. Thank You for coming the whole way.

Today's Response

Before the gifts today, read John 1:1 and John 1:14 out loud. Two verses. Then enjoy your people.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to keep Christ at the center of a day that will try to crowd Him out.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 84 Saturday, December 26

WEEK TWELVE • THE LION OF JUDAH

Today's Reading

Revelation 5:1–10 (ESV)

Key Verse

"the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered" — Revelation 5:5

Daily Word

John hears Lion and turns to look, and what he sees is a Lamb standing as though it had been slain. The Lion of Judah and the Lamb of God are the same Person. Genesis 22 and Genesis 49 meet in one throne room.

The Promise Kept

He is worthy because He was slain and by His blood He ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. Babel is answered. Abraham's promise is paid in full.

Daily Prayer

Worthy is the Lamb. Worthy is the Lion. You are both.

Today's Response

Eat with people today and tell them what you saw in Genesis this fall that you had never seen before.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to seal this series in you so it does not evaporate in January.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 85 Sunday, December 27

YEAR END • BRINGING IT HOME

Today's Reading

Galatians 4:4–7 (ESV)

Key Verse

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son” — Galatians 4:4

Daily Word

The fullness of time. Not early, not late. Four thousand years between the promise in the garden and the birth in the barn, and God called it right on time. Your calendar is not the standard.

The Promise Kept

He came to redeem and to adopt. The seed of Genesis 3:15 came so that you could call God Father.

Daily Prayer

Father, Your timing held for four thousand years. I will trust it with my next twelve months.

Today's Response

Write down the thing you thought would happen this year and did not. Put the words fullness of time under it.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to heal the disappointment you have not named.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

LIFE GROUP Week Thirteen Monday, December 28

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK THIRTEEN • BRINGING IT HOME | LEADER PREP | COVERS DAYS 87 THROUGH 89

Daily readers: continue at Day 86, page 142.

The Week Ahead

Last meeting of the year and last meeting of this workbook. Three days remain, and Day 89 is New Year's Eve.

Do not make this a nostalgia night. Make it a decision night. Genesis told them who God is and what He promised. Thursday they answer.

The Text

Psalm 90:12, Lamentations 3:22 through 23, and Joshua 24:14 through 15.

Number your days, mercies are new, choose this day.

The Point

Thirteen weeks of Genesis end with one question that is not about Genesis. Who will your house serve?

What the Passage Actually Says

Moses wrote Psalm 90 after watching a generation waste forty years. Numbering your days is not morbid. It is how you stop spending your life on what does not matter.

In the ruins of Jerusalem, Lamentations says God's mercies are new every morning. That matters for anyone in your room who had a hard year.

Joshua gathered the tribes at the end and made them choose out loud. As for me and my house is not a decoration. It was a public declaration made in front of witnesses.

Where the Room Will Go

The first ditch is resolutions. Somebody will turn it into goal setting. Redirect it to who will your house serve, which is a different question than what will you accomplish.

The second is the hard year. For someone in that room this was the worst year of their life. Let them say so. Do not fix it and do not rush them to Lamentations 3:23. Sit with it and then read it.

Ask what was actually different in their life because of these thirteen weeks. Accept honest answers, including nothing.

Before You Start

Know what you are going to ask this group to do in January. If there is a next series or a next study, bring the dates on paper. Momentum dies in the gap.

LIFE GROUP Week Thirteen The Meeting

OPTIONAL RESOURCE

WEEK THIRTEEN • BRINGING IT HOME | MEETING OUTLINE | 90 MINUTES

Daily readers: continue at Day 86, page 142.

Open 10 minutes

Go around the room. Everyone answers in one or two sentences.

What is one thing that is actually different in your life because of these thirteen weeks?

Accept nothing as an answer if it is honest. That answer is more useful to you than a polished one.

Read 5 minutes

Joshua 24:14 through 15, then Lamentations 3:22 through 23.

Discuss 40 minutes

1. Teach us to number our days. What did you spend this year on that you would not spend it on again?

2. What did God do this year that you never stopped to thank Him for?

3. His mercies are new every morning, written by a man looking at a burned city. What would it mean to believe that on January 1?

4. Paul said forgetting what lies behind. What from this year are you still carrying that you need to put down?

5. Genesis 3:15 to Bethlehem. Say in one sentence what you now believe about God that you did not believe in October.

6. As for me and my house. What does that specifically mean in your house next year?

Apply 15 minutes

Everyone writes one sentence about what their house will do differently in the new year. One sentence, written, not a list.

Thursday night, every household reads Joshua 24:15 out loud and everyone in the house signs Day 89, whether that is one name or ten. Tell them to date it.

Pray 20 minutes

Twos and threes. Pray over each person's one sentence for the new year.

Close the whole group together with Day 89's prayer. Lord, hear this house declare it. As for me and my house, we will serve You.

Send Them Into the Week

Days 87 through 89 finish the year. Text the group New Year's Eve with one line. Sign it tonight. Then tell them the date of the first meeting in January before they walk out the door.

DAY 86 Monday, December 28

YEAR END • BRINGING IT HOME

Today's Reading

Psalm 90:1–12 (ESV)

Key Verse

"So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom." — Psalm 90:12

Daily Word

Moses wrote this psalm, and he watched an entire generation waste forty years. Numbering your days is not morbid. It is how you stop spending your life on things that do not matter.

The Promise Kept

Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. The God of Genesis 1 is the God of your next year.

Daily Prayer

God, teach me to number my days. Show me what to stop doing.

Today's Response

List the three things that mattered most this year. Then list the three that took the most time. Look at both lists side by side.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to tell you what to put down before you decide what to pick up.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 87 Tuesday, December 29

YEAR END • BRINGING IT HOME

Today's Reading

Lamentations 3:19–26 (ESV)

Key Verse

"his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." — Lamentations 3:22–23

Daily Word

In the ruins of Jerusalem, Lamentations says God's mercies are new every morning. They were new even on the worst morning.

The Promise Kept

New every morning includes January 1. You do not get last year's supply. You get a fresh one.

Daily Prayer

Lord, great is Your faithfulness. I have not run You out.

Today's Response

Name the mercy you received this year that you did not deserve and never told anyone about.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to start tomorrow morning with you.

Church Prayer

Tomorrow morning the church gathers to pray: Wednesday, 6:30 AM. Set your alarm tonight and come pray with your church family.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 88 Wednesday, December 30

YEAR END • BRINGING IT HOME

Today's Reading

Philippians 3:12–14 (ESV)

Key Verse

"forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead" — Philippians 3:13

Daily Word

Paul had things behind him worth forgetting, including blood on his hands. Forgetting here is not amnesia. It is refusing to let the past set the terms of the future.

The Promise Kept

The prize is the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. The goal was never a better year. It is Him.

Daily Prayer

Jesus, I let go of the year behind me. I press on toward You.

Today's Response

Write down one thing from this year you are still carrying. Then write one sentence about what you are pressing toward in the next one.

Walking with the Spirit

Ask the Spirit to close what needs closing before midnight tomorrow.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.

DAY 89 Thursday, December 31

YEAR END • BRINGING IT HOME

Today's Reading

Joshua 24:14–15 (ESV)

Key Verse

"But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." — Joshua 24:15

Daily Word

Eighty nine days ago this started with In the beginning, God. It ends tonight with a decision about a house. Genesis told you who God is and what He promised. Tonight you answer with who you will serve.

The Promise Kept

From the seed in Genesis 3:15 to the Lion in Revelation 5, God has kept His promise. Tonight, choose whom you will serve.

Daily Prayer

Lord, hear this house declare it. As for me and my house, we will serve You.

Today's Response

Read Joshua 24:15 out loud at your table tonight. Invite anyone in the house who wants to make this declaration to sign in the notes below. Date it.

Walking with the Spirit

The series is over. The Spirit is not. Ask Him to carry what Genesis started into the new year.

Notes

How does God want to speak to me today through this? Chew on this through the day, stop and wrestle. Finish the day by examining what you learned.