



Genesis Bible study guide

A clear 8-session guide for personal study, small groups, and churches

Read Genesis as a whole before working through the sessions. Let its own structure set the agenda.

Every question sends you back to the biblical text. The guide helps you observe the passage, follow the author's argument, interpret it in context, and respond faithfully.

CHOOSE YOUR DEPTH

- Short: Read the book overview and discuss the first and final question in a session.
- Study: Work through all 8 sessions and answer each question from the passage.
- Deep: Open the free chapter commentary and dictionary links while you study.

protos-app.com/commentary/genesis

Genesis at a glance

BIG IDEA

Genesis is the book of beginnings-of the universe and of humanity, of sin and its catastrophic effects, and of God's plan to restore blessing to the world through his chosen people. [1]

HISTORICAL SETTING

Author: Moses, according to tradition. Date: Records primeval events and events from the patriarchal period (ca. 2100-1700 BC). Setting: A variety of places in the Middle East, focusing heavily on the patriarchs during their time in Canaan and Egypt. [1]

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

Read this book as covenant instruction within Israel's story. Ask what the passage requires, why it requires it, and how its place in the wider canon shapes faithful reading today.

MAJOR THEMES

- To trace the establishment of God's plan to overcome sin through his chosen people, Israel
- The book's literary movement and central claims
- Faithful response within the people of God
- Hope, judgment, grace, and obedience in their proper context

INTERPRETIVE CARE

- Read commands in their covenant and narrative setting before applying them directly.
- Distinguish what the text describes, commands, and anticipates in the wider biblical story.

Genesis 1-7

184 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Noah · Cain · Adam · Seth · Eden · Enoch

Questions

- Try to state the argument in one sentence before anyone reacts to it.
- What does the writer repeat? Repetition is usually the point, not a habit.
- What surprised you, or what did you have to read twice?
- Why does the writer bring Cain into this argument, and what claim does the example support?
- The word garden is doing real work here. What did you assume it meant, and does the passage agree?
- What problem was this letter written to solve, and does knowing that change how the instruction lands?
- Where does this cut against something you already believe or already do?

[Stuck on a word or name? Open the free Bible dictionary.](#)

NOTES AND PRAYER

Genesis 8-15

198 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Noah · Lot · Shem · Sodom · Canaan · Eber

Questions

- What is the writer trying to get these readers to do or stop doing?
- Who is being addressed here, and what do they already know that we do not?
- What is assumed rather than argued? Those assumptions are often the real claim.
- What does the writer assume the readers know about Eber, and how is that knowledge being used?
- Define abram from this passage alone, without reaching for what you already know.
- Is this a command, a description, or an argument? They are not read the same way.
- What would actually be different this week if you took this seriously?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Genesis 16-22

190 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Abraham · Sarah · Abimelech · Isaac · Lot · Hagar

Questions

- What has the writer already established that this section is building on?
- Which single verse carries the weight of this section?
- What is left unsaid that you expected to be said?
- Which detail about Abimelech matters to the argument here, and which familiar details do not?
- Where else have you heard wife used, and is it being used that way here?
- What did the first readers face that we do not, and what does that change?
- Who do you know who needs to hear this, and what stops you saying it?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Genesis 23-27

202 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Isaac · Abraham · Esau · Rebekah · Abimelech · Kedar

Questions

- Where does the writer expect pushback, and how do you know?
- Where does the tone shift, and what causes it?
- What question does this section answer that you had not thought to ask?
- Trace the sentence or paragraph that mentions Kedar. What conclusion does the writer want the readers to reach?
- The word jacob is doing real work here. What did you assume it meant, and does the passage agree?
- Where does the writer move from what God has done to what we should do?
- What is the hardest thing in this passage to accept, and why that one?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Genesis 28-32

187 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Laban · Rachel · Leah · Esau · Isaac · Abraham

Questions

- If you disagreed with this, where would you push first?
- What does the writer repeat? Repetition is usually the point, not a habit.
- What surprised you, or what did you have to read twice?
- Why does the writer bring Laban into this argument, and what claim does the example support?
- Define Jacob from this passage alone, without reaching for what you already know.
- What problem was this letter written to solve, and does knowing that change how the instruction lands?
- If this is true, what have you been getting wrong?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Genesis 33-38

189 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Esau · Shechem · Judah · Joseph · Hamor · Rachel

Questions

- What would be missing from the letter if this section were cut?
- Who is being addressed here, and what do they already know that we do not?
- What is assumed rather than argued? Those assumptions are often the real claim.
- What does the writer assume the readers know about Hamor, and how is that knowledge being used?
- Where else have you heard Jacob used, and is it being used that way here?
- Is this a command, a description, or an argument? They are not read the same way.
- What would you want to be reminded of from this section in six months?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Genesis 39-43

175 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Joseph · Pharaoh · Egypt · Benjamin · Canaan · Ephraim

Questions

- Try to state the argument in one sentence before anyone reacts to it.
- Which single verse carries the weight of this section?
- What is left unsaid that you expected to be said?
- Which detail about Ephraim matters to the argument here, and which familiar details do not?
- The word seven is doing real work here. What did you assume it meant, and does the passage agree?
- What did the first readers face that we do not, and what does that change?
- Where does this cut against something you already believe or already do?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Genesis 44-50

208 verses. Read it aloud together before anyone talks about it.

Who and what appears

Joseph · Egypt · Pharaoh · Israel · Canaan · Gershon

Questions

- What is the writer trying to get these readers to do or stop doing?
- Where does the tone shift, and what causes it?
- What question does this section answer that you had not thought to ask?
- Trace the sentence or paragraph that mentions Gershon. What conclusion does the writer want the readers to reach?
- Define Jacob from this passage alone, without reaching for what you already know.
- Where does the writer move from what God has done to what we should do?
- What would actually be different this week if you took this seriously?

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NOTES AND PRAYER

Sources, method, and reuse

Protos created this guide to help readers understand Genesis in its literary and historical context. Questions are designed to be answered from the passage, not from guesswork or personal opinion alone.

REFERENCES

[1] Tyndale Open Study Notes

Tyndale House Publishers. Book background, purpose, setting, and structural orientation. CC BY-SA 4.0.

<https://tyndaleopenresources.com/>

[2] Protos study guide editorial

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Printable Bible reading plans [_protos-app.com/reading-plans](https://protos-app.com/reading-plans)

Protos is also available on iPhone and Android, with verse-by-verse study help beside the passage you are reading.

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