

WEEK 2 — JACOB AND HIS SONS

Date: roughly 1991 to about 1877 BC

The Story: God, as he promised, continues to work out his blessings in Abraham's family, through whom he has said he will bless the world (Genesis 12:2-3). In spite of their own sins and through the various dangers they face, God never abandons Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's sons. These stories, foundational to the history of the nation of Israel, reveal God's excellent character and faithfulness as he works to bring about his purposes even through a deeply flawed—yet persistently faithful—family.

* Kids' readings may not align with the daily full readings. Parents, see the content ratings on the back page.

JANUARY 9 GENESIS 26-28

Today's reading follows Isaac briefly as he enjoys God's favor even as a foreigner in Canaan; then it moves to focus on Jacob. Jacob cheats his older brother Esau out of their father's blessing, flees for his life, and encounters God in a dream in which God affirms that his blessing to Abraham and Isaac now extends also to Jacob.

Date: sometime between about 1991 and 1966 BC to about 1929 BC • When Esau marries at age 40, his brother Jacob is also 40 and Isaac is 100. Ishmael is still alive, at age 114. When Jacob tricks Isaac and flees from Esau, he and Esau are probably around 77 years old, and Isaac is 137.

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Genesis 27-28

Kids' Reading*: Genesis 27:1-40

JANUARY 10 GENESIS 29-30

Today's reading brings Jacob to his relatives in Harran, where he marries, has many children, and begins to accumulate wealth. Sounds like a happy, peaceful story, right? Not so fast... But God is still helping him.

Date: about 1929-1909 BC • Jacob marries at around age 84, then works for Laban another 7 years until around age 91. Six more years pass, until Jacob is around 97 years old. All of his 11 sons (so far) are born in a span of about six years.

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Genesis 29:1 to 30:24

Kids' Reading*: Genesis 32:1 to 33:17

JANUARY 11 GENESIS 31-33

Today's reading brings Jacob and his family back to the promised land of Canaan, where Jacob must face his offended—and now powerful—brother, Esau. God continues to help Jacob, and gives him a new name: Israel, which means something like, "He struggles with God."

Date: about 1909 BC • Jacob and Esau are about 97 years old at this time.

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Genesis 32-33

Kids' Reading*: Genesis 37

JANUARY 12 GENESIS 34-36

Today's reading begins with a terrible crime committed by two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, in response to a crime committed against their sister, Dinah. This family through whom God chooses to work is far from an ideal family; yet God appears to Jacob again and encourages him. God still has great plans for this family. Jacob experiences both joy (in the birth of another son) and tragedy (in the loss of his wife Rachel). Genesis 36 fills out the story of Esau with a genealogy of his descendants, who will become the nation of Edom (south of Canaan and future Israel).

Date: sometime between about 1909 and 1898 BC • Jacob's oldest sons—Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, were probably in their early twenties at this time, Reuben (the oldest) being not older than about 24. Skipping

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ahead to 1886 BC, Isaac dies at age 180; Jacob and Esau are 120 at this time; Joseph (already in Egypt) is about 29.

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Genesis 34-35

Kids' Reading*: Genesis 39

JANUARY 13 1 CHRONICLES 1 • GENESIS 37

Today's reading introduces us to a new book, 1 Chronicles. Chronicles, in two parts, covers the history of Israel from the time of David (beginning around 1010 BC) to the return from exile (539 BC). But first it offers a series of genealogies of key figures in Israel's history, starting with the family line of Adam through Abraham and Esau (chapter 1), which comes from the time period we're reading about now. We'll return to 1 Chronicles later. Genesis 37 tells the pivotal story of Jacob's son Joseph being sold into slavery. Again, Abraham's descendants demonstrate less than ideal character.

Date: about 1898 BC • 1 Chronicles was written in the late 500s or early 400s BC and records Israel's history from about 1010 to 539 BC, but its genealogies stretch back to the very first human being, Adam.

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: 1 Chronicles 1:1-34 • Genesis 37

Kids' Reading*: Genesis 40

JANUARY 14 GENESIS 38-40

Today's reading focuses on two of Jacob's sons: Judah and Joseph. Judah, by a couple of bad decisions, gets himself into trouble. Meanwhile, Joseph, in slavery, demonstrates excellent character and devotion to God—but gets into trouble for it. And though God works in his life, he remains both a slave and a prisoner.

Date: about 1898-1887 BC (Judah's encounter with Tamar could be anytime before 1876 BC) • Joseph is a slave and prisoner for 11 years in Genesis 39-40.

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Genesis 39-40

Kids' Reading*: Genesis 41

JANUARY 15 GENESIS 41-42

Today's reading continues Joseph's story as God works to move him from enslaved prisoner to second-highest ruler of Egypt. Then Joseph and his brothers are reunited—but ironically, for this time their positions are reversed, with Joseph holding all the power. What will he do with these brothers who betrayed him?

Date: about 1885-1877 BC • Joseph is 30 years old when he enters Pharaoh's service; it has been 13 years since his brothers sold him into slavery. The famine strikes 7 years later, when Joseph is 37 years old. His oldest brother, Reuben, would have been about 43. When they meet about a year into the famine, it's been about 21 years since Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery.

In a hurry? 10-minute reading: Genesis 41:1-40 • Genesis 42

Kids' Reading*: Genesis 42

Parents' Guide

PG preview for young children

27:5-45 (T)

29:21-23 (S), 30 (S)

30:3-4 (S), 15-16 (S), 38-41 (S)

31:10-12 (S), 35 (S)

34:7 (S), 14-17 (C), 22-25 (C), 31 (S)

37:18-36 (T, V)

38:2 (S), 7 (V), 8 (S), 10 (V), 15-18 (S), 21-22 (S), 24 (S), 26 (S)

39:7-17 (S)

40:19-22

(V)

C = Circumcision

N = Nudity

S = Sexuality

T = Dark/Sensitive Themes

V = Violence

PG-13 preview for under age 13

34:25-29 (V)

35:22 (S)

38:9 (S), 24 (V)

R shocking, graphic, or disturbing

34:2-5 (S, V), 13 (S)