



**GRACE CITY**  
— CHURCH —



# JOSEPH

**CG TERM 1 2026**  
**LEADER BOOKLET**



<b>Feb 9-12</b>	CG Intros and a peak at Genesis 40
<b>Feb 16-19</b>	Genesis 41
<b>Feb 23-26</b>	Genesis 42-43
<b>Mar 2-5</b>	Genesis 44
<b>Mar 9-12</b>	Genesis 45
<b>Mar 16-19</b>	Genesis 46-47
<b>Mar 23-26</b>	Genesis 49-50
<b>Mar 30 - Apr 2</b>	Easter Social
<b>Apr 6-17</b>	<b>CG BREAK</b>
<b>April 22</b>	<b>2026 LEADERS ALL IN</b>

## **What the Joseph Story Is Really About**

Moses gives Joseph more time in Genesis than he does any other character—a striking fact given the significance of Genesis’s other main characters: Adam, Noah, and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This prominence is even more striking considering the apparent insignificance of Joseph in the rest of Scripture.

What then do we make of the Joseph story? Why is it so prominent in Genesis? Many Christians fail to notice how Joseph’s story contributes to the Genesis narrative and to redemptive history in general. Within Reformed circles, preachers often use Joseph merely to illustrate how divine sovereignty and human responsibility intersect, focusing almost exclusively on Genesis 50:20: “What you meant for evil God meant for good.” Certainly, we are meant to read Joseph’s life in light of this verse. God’s sovereignty is a major theme in Genesis 37–50, and Joseph himself intends for us to interpret his life in light of God’s providence (cf. Gen. 45:1–9).

But reducing the story to an illustration for the doctrine of compatibilism misses the rich contribution Joseph’s life makes to the storyline of Scripture. God’s sovereignty figures largely in the Joseph story because God wants us to see how he puts himself in impossible situations and yet finds a way to keep his covenant promises. Joseph highlights how God’s providence secures God’s promises. In this light, we can see how Joseph uniquely contributes to Scripture’s opening book.

## **Threats Resolved**

Genesis records a series of reoccurring threats that endanger the survival and purity of the covenant line. In chapters 37–50, all the threats converge, creating an impossibly dire situation for Jacob and his children:

- Family division and violence, reminiscent of Cain and Abel, threaten the seed’s survival. (Gen. 37; cf. Gen. 4)
- Unrighteousness and intermarriage with foreign nations threaten the seed’s purity. (Gen. 38; cf. Gen. 12:10–20)
- Global famine endangers the entire covenant line. (Gen. 42:1–2; cf. Gen. 3:17–19; 12:10; 26:1)

Yet God uses Joseph to resolve each of these recurring problems in Abraham's family:

- Instead of exacting revenge, Joseph reconciles with his brothers and restores family unity by extending forgiveness. (Gen. 45:1–15)
- Joseph settles his family in Goshen, shielding them from foreign cultural influence. Safeguarded by the Egyptians' prejudices (Gen. 46:33–34), Israel develops as a nation without dangers posed by intermarriage with foreign peoples.
- Joseph preserves his family (and the world) amid severe famine through wisdom and administrative genius. (Gen. 41:25–35; 47:13–26)

Through Joseph, God is reversing the curse—unraveling violence through forgiveness, unrighteousness through righteousness, and hunger through wisdom.

### **Promises Fulfilled**

Further, Genesis 37–50 records how God fulfills (in part) his promises to Abraham (cf. Gen. 12:1–3).

Through Joseph, Yahweh blesses the nations. Potiphar appoints Joseph as a steward over his house; then God blesses Potiphar for Joseph's sake (Gen. 39:4–5). Later we again find Joseph established over the house of Pharaoh (Gen. 41:40). The result is the same: Joseph blesses the nations by providing grain during a severe famine, first for Egypt (Gen. 41:56) then for all the earth (Gen. 41:57). God also uses Joseph to fulfill his promise to multiply Abraham's seed. Once Joseph settles his family in Goshen, the family of Abraham is "fruitful and multiplie[s] exceedingly" (Gen. 47:27). The words "fruitful and multiply" occur throughout Genesis, but this instance is unique. Previously, God has either commanded people to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28; 9:1, 7; 35:11) or promised they will be so (Gen. 16:10; 17:2, 6; 22:17; 26:4, 24). But now, for the first time, fruitfulness and multiplication is a reality—an indicative. Under Joseph's leadership, Abraham's seed flourishes.

Even the kingship promise comes to fruition with Joseph. Forecasting Joseph's place in the Egyptian court, Joseph's dreams anticipate his royal position. Even his "coat of many colors" is royal garb (cf. 2 Sam. 13:18). At the beginning of Genesis 37, readers have awaited—prophetically, typologically, and by covenant promise—the arrival of a royal seed through the line of Abraham (Gen. 17:6, 16; 35:11). Now, in the opening verses of the book's final section, Joseph's introduction heightens that anticipation.

Readers who remember these promises cannot help but ask, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect another?”

Joseph’s later rise to the royal court, then, is not merely evidence of God vindicating Joseph’s faithfulness. It is tangible evidence of God’s unswerving commitment to restore human rule through a son of Abraham. God promised Abraham a dynasty, a royal seed.

Joseph is the first of that seed, a new Adam mediating God’s blessings to the nations—a beloved son and a servant king.

What does all this have to do with divine providence? While Moses keeps Joseph center stage in Genesis 37–50, the main actor is God himself. The story isn’t just about how Joseph fulfills the Abrahamic promises, but about how Yahweh keeps his covenant and fulfills his promises through a rejected but royal seed. The covenant is secure in the hands of the God who can sovereignly orchestrate the actions of evil men for his good purposes (Gen 50:20). Through Joseph, God is reversing the curse and fulfilling his promises to Abraham.

The Joseph story is not just the last item in Genesis, but the resolution of the Genesis story. Genesis takes readers on a journey from fratricide to forgiveness, from famine to feast, and from promise to fulfillment.

### **Is Joseph a ‘Type’ of Christ?**

These observations raise the question of whether Joseph is a “type”—a divinely intended prefiguring—of the Messiah. Most interpreters throughout church history have affirmed Joseph is a type of Christ—noting several obvious correspondences between the two figures. Joseph is a favored son, rejected by his brothers, and yet through faithfulness and suffering ascends to the highest throne in the land.

Yet these similarities are not the only points of contact between Joseph and Jesus. More pointedly, Joseph’s life anticipates the Messiah’s because God uses him to fulfill covenant promises and undo the effects of the curse.

Interestingly, Genesis itself suggests that Joseph is a type in Jacob’s blessing of Judah: “Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons shall bow down before you” (Gen. 49:8).

Jacob depicts the coming king from Judah with imagery that closely resembles Joseph's narrative. Judah's brothers will praise and even "bow down" before him—the same word used three times when the brothers bowed to Joseph in the dreams (Gen. 37:7, 9, 10) and another three times when they bowed before him in the Egyptian court (Gen. 42:4; 43:26, 28). Indeed, the image of 11 brothers "bowing" to their royal sibling in Genesis 49:8 reads like a summary of the preceding Joseph story. This similarity is deliberate. When we ask what the coming Messiah will look like, we have an answer provided in Jacob's words—he will look like Joseph.

This verse is not the first time Joseph and Judah have been closely linked. In fact, throughout the story Moses has juxtaposed these two individuals. They dominate the three most critical moments of the Joseph story: its beginning (Gen 38 and 39), its climax (Genesis 44 and 45), and Jacob's prophecy (Gen 49)—the capstone of both the Joseph story and the entire book of Genesis. Joseph and Judah's stories are interwoven. Jacob's prophecy shows that both foreshadow the coming king of Israel.

By drawing a typological line from Joseph to the future king from Judah, Moses explicitly folds the Joseph narrative into Israel's larger story, which will culminate with the Messiah. This association retrospectively informs our reading of the story. To ensure that his readers see Joseph as a royal figure with eschatological significance, Moses now makes that point plainly. The account of Joseph is not an end in itself. It is a pattern for God's work in the future.

### **Echo of the Future**

Genesis 37–50 is not just about God's providence; it's also about his promises.

God uses Joseph to turn back the effects of the curse and accomplish, in part, his promises to Abraham. He stacks the odds against himself and then demonstrates his power by using an imprisoned slave exiled by his own family.

Perhaps Moses spends so much time on Joseph to show us God can pull off the impossible even through a seemingly insignificant Jew rejected by his own brothers. Perhaps Moses spends so much time on Joseph so his people would anticipate a coming Joseph who would finally and completely reverse the curse and fulfill the promises.

Joseph's story is the story of the whole Bible. It's the story of glory through suffering, exaltation through humiliation. It's the story of the cross and the crown.



## PREPARING FOR CG

Preparation isn't a task to get done, it is an encounter with the living God as he speaks to us through his word.

The most important thing you as a leader can do when you prepare is to make sure you have the time and space to allow God to speak to you through your preparation, shaping you. As you are impacted and then reflect on that impact, you will be well prepared to lead others to hear God speak with them.

### **With that in mind, here are some helpful steps you can take.**

1. Pray for yourself and your group and then read the passage once through.
2. Read the passage again and underline/circle/highlight key ideas, questions, observations as you go.
3. Now that you have familiarised yourself with the passage, use the COMA method for yourself to study the passage.
4. As you use COMA, note down any discoveries you make, and how you make them, as these will help you lead the group through the passage.
5. Remember that COMA is simply a box of tools designed to help your members wrestle with and understand the text for themselves. Your job isn't to be the expert, but to equip your members to become the experts over time.
6. Next go back over the previous week's study and check in on your One Thing. Ask yourself, "Where am I getting stuck putting God's word into action in my life and what do I need to do to get unstuck?" Setting an example in growing as a disciple is a key part of your role.
7. Pray for your Community Group.

As time progresses, and your group uses the tools, they will become more and more proficient in their use. Don't be surprised if their use of them is a bit clunky as they begin. Assure them that they will find them easier to use as they become more familiar with them.

### **There are a number of things to consider:**

- a. Which sections of COMA will be the whole group chatting through and which will be in pairs/triplets?
- b. Are there any major questions you need answers to before being able to lead the study? (Can you chat to your co-leader or coach or consult a commentary?)
- c. Having done your observation and meaning preparation, ask yourself which are the ideas, themes, or concepts in your current passage that has the author raised earlier in the book. These will be the ones to help your group recall as they do Context.

## The CG Template

Each week we use a template in our CG. It's designed to move disciples to maturity in Christ over time through word, prayer and care, all within a gospel shaped community.

It has 6 key elements.

1. Fellowship
2. The Check In
3. Context
4. Observation
5. Meaning
6. Application using My One Thing.

The elements of the template aren't meant to be handcuffs, tying the leaders up, or as blunt instruments. Rather we long for them to be used with finesse and a gentle touch.

Experienced leaders will help the group move through the elements almost seamlessly, dwelling where they need to, and moving on when it's best. The lines between elements often blur and the movement between them should become organic.

We've chosen the elements because they are all designed to help the members of your group make discoveries for themselves, learn from others and grow in their confidence that they can read and understand the Bible for themselves.

They are also designed to grow members' confidence to speak about what they learn with others, both the saved and yet to be saved.

Each of the elements is designed to help members learn by doing rather than by simply hearing.

**CONTEXT:** Genesis is an unfolding story of God's plan to rescue humanity from their sin and its consequences. It's driven by the promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Each new episode moves God's rescue plan forward and is shaped and informed by the story so far.

**With bibles closed**, remind each other of the story of God making and fulfilling his promises so far in Genesis.

**You might find it helpful to:**

**a. Have fun with this.** You'll find as you go that your group will remember their own discoveries and may develop its own shorthand. They will remember what happened when 'lights came on' in the previous weeks. This is a good thing.

**b. Try to have at least one key idea from each passage** that we have studied so far.

**c. Limit context to around 5 minutes** — this will be more important as we get further into the letter.

**There are 2 key goals with Context:**

1. **To read the passage faithfully.** A text without a context can so easily become a 'con'. Allowing the author's previous content to shape what they are now telling us is a key to discovering what they want us to understand.

2. **To learn the outline of the whole book or letter.** We want to ensure our members have confidence that they know the whole book and can read it for themselves.

**OBSERVATION:** involves carefully examining the passage you're reading. Genesis 37-50 is a narrative in which we see God beginning to fulfil his promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We also start to discover how he keeps them as we watch Jacob's family 'living with the promises'. The details in the narrative are key to discovering how God keeps his promises and to seeing Jacob and his family's response to them.

We'll be using a timeline to help us explore the steps God takes in fulfilling his promises.

**Each exercise is designed to be done in pairs or triplets, no more.**

They are designed to get each person speaking about God's word with their partner/s and making discoveries for themselves. The more the pair/triplet speak as they do the exercise, the more they will learn, and the higher their confidence will grow.

**The exercises are designed to be simple.**

Don't let their simplicity fool you into thinking that they lack power.

Some of your members may want to 'rush' through the exercise and 'just get them done'. If they finish quickly, push them back into the text and challenge them, asking if they have actually discovered everything that could be found. If they have simple answers, encourage them to see if there is more that can be found to flesh them out.

**Give the group 10+ minutes for each of the exercises.**

It's important to note that no matter how much time you give the group to do their observations, they'll often run out of time. Finding the balance between giving them enough time to dig in to make their own discoveries and finishing the task is an art rather than science. This is especially true when it comes to exercises that require drawing. The goal isn't the perfection of the finished product, it's to explore God's word and hear him speak to us as we do.

## Observation continued

When you come back together as a large group, don't simply gather all the answers or get each pair to present. This tends to be tedious and has little educational value. Rather gather the observations each pair have made in a way that builds a picture that enables the whole group to see the key observations from the passage.

## Meaning

Meaning is all about discovering the main point or idea that the original human author of Genesis wanted his audience, the people of Israel, to understand. Discovering the meaning of the text involves remembering the context and allowing your observations to lead you to the author's intended goal.

The easiest thing to do is simply ask, **“What do you think the author wanted his readers to understand as he wrote this passage?”**

## The Meaning for us as followers of Jesus

Peter, in 1Peter 1 helps us to understand that even though we live thousands of years after Genesis was originally written, we are God's intended readers. He writes, “<sup>10</sup> Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, <sup>11</sup> trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. <sup>12</sup> It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

This means that we need to ask 2 key questions in order to recognise what God wants us, his primary readers, to understand. They are:

- i. What stays the same?
- and
- ii. What's different for us because of the cross?

There is a final meaning question that you might consider as you're thinking about the 2 key questions, or you might want to ask later, and it is this, “God raised Joseph up as his saviour. In what ways does Joseph help us to see Jesus and his saving work more clearly?”

Murray Capill says “In these patterns we see the gospel at work in the Old Testament among God's old covenant people. It is, therefore, not hard to travel from the realities of the story of the realities of the Gospel and, since Joseph is the God-provided deliverer, it is not hard to travel from him to the ultimate deliverer, Jesus Christ.”

Asking your group to have a go at this task in their pairs/triplets before having a group discovery can be really helpful in the long run. Again, the more individuals can discover for themselves the higher the impact will be on them.

## You'll need to keep an eye on the time in this section.

There may be difficulties with a passage that simply can't be resolved in your Community Group. That's OK. Getting bogged down in the minutiae and missing the big idea of the passage is a danger to avoid.

Again, this is an art that you'll grow into as time progresses.

# COMA Cheatsheet

## Application

Application simply asks how we are to respond to the passage today.

It asks the question, “If that is true, so what?” or, “What difference does it make to the way that I think, or feel or act (head, heart, hands)?”

### Head

What thoughts or beliefs have been confirmed or challenged by this passage?

### Hands

What behaviours has this passage revealed that I need to stop/start/keep doing?

### Heart

What has this passage revealed relating to an attitude or idol that I need to deal with?

Many groups find it helpful to begin the application time as a large group. They benefit from gathering a large basket full of possible applications before sending members off into their pairs to zero in on particular applications that may resonate for individuals.

If you use the basket approach, consider having one of the members jot down all the application ideas that get thrown in. At the end of the application brainstorming time, they then read the list to the group. The leader then encourages each person to pull one out that they'd like to ask God to work in their lives that week. That application becomes their One Thing.

So spend a few minutes as a whole group reflecting on the real world application of the passage before breaking into your M1T pairs.

# My One Thing - M1T



## My One Thing has 6 simple steps.

### Part 1 *Alone*

1. Individually identify your One Thing.
2. Decide how you'll put your One Thing into practice.
3. Decide upon 2 people you'll see in the next week with whom you can share your One Thing.
4. Write your One Thing and your two names down either in a note in your phone or in your CG booklet.

### Part 2 *In Pairs*

5. Break up into triplets/pairs and share your M1T Ask each other how you'll put your M1T into practice that week. Push each other a little to be specific about the details.
6. Pray for each other.



## THE CHECK IN

### M1T Check In & personal prayer *(in 2s/3s)*

We want to joyfully and sacrificially be applying what we learn from God's word to our lives. We want to take seriously the command to speak with others about God's word and its impact in our lives.

So every week at the beginning of the study we stop and look back at our lives and consider our walk with Jesus. Some weeks will be harder than others. Some will be a joy. Sometimes we will get stuck and sometimes God will graciously open our hearts and minds to obediently walk in His way. So in the Check In we ask each other these 3 questions and we then pray for each other in the light of them.

#### **The Check In has 3 simple questions**

##### **a. What are you thankful to God for?**

This is an opportunity to look at what God has been doing for you, what are you grateful for, and seeing his hand in your life.

##### **b. What would you like God to do?**

Our Father is often more willing to act than we are to ask. So let's be bold and ask him to do big things in our lives and the lives of others.

##### **c. Where did you get stuck with your M1T last week?**

If your partner got stuck, spend some time thinking about how you can help each other get unstuck.

#### **Pray with each other.**

## Getting to know each other

Week 1: Feb 9-12

### Welcome & Dinner 30mins

#### To welcome people well to your first week of CG

1. make sure that the meal is prepared on time
2. consider lighting, music, tidiness of the house, etc
3. contact every member the week before group

### Starting the year off well 30mins

#### 1. Expectations **10mins**

- a. What are your expectations of this group?
- b. Have you been in other groups before?
- c. What are you hoping to get out of it?
- d. What expectations do you have of others in the group?

#### 2. Decisions **5mins**

- a. Will you have a meal or a snack together?
- b. Delegate someone to run the food roster.
- c. Delegate someone to run the birthday roster.
- d. Delegate someone to be the time keeper. (**Preferably not the host or leaders**)

#### 3. Quick run through of the tools **15mins**

- a. The booklet
- b. M1T **p4-5 in member booklet**
- c. COMA **p6 in member booklet**
- d. The Check In

### **TIMELINE: Reflect, share, pray 50mins**

This exercise is designed to help your members be a little vulnerable with each other in a safe context. It's also to help them connect with each other and welcome each into their CG. It'll begin a process of knowing and being known that continues all year.

**TIP: Whoever goes first will set the tone. Choose wisely.**

#### **A. REFLECT**

Give everyone MAX 5 minutes to identify:

- 3 life events that have shaped who they are.
- One thing that they are passionate about
- Something that is on their heart at the moment.

#### **B. SHARE & PRAY**

- SET A 5 MIN MAX TIMER that is visible to the leader and the person sharing.
- ***The goal isn't to hear everything.*** Rather, it's for members to gain insights into everyone else, and then pique their curiosity to find out more in the coming weeks. It's better to leave people wanting to hear more!
- Give each person the opportunity to share what they have written/drawn.
- It can work well if the leader "interviews" the person sharing. This can keep things moving helpfully.
- Have someone in the group pray as each person finishes sharing their time.

**3 LIFE EVENTS THAT SHAPED ME**

**ONE THING I'M  
PASSIONATE ABOUT**

**SOMETHING THAT IS ON  
MY HEART**

## 1. The Check In

In pairs, ask each other the 3 Check In questions, help get each other unstuck and pray.

## 2. CONTEXT:

- What's happened so far in the story to Jacob's sons and what have we discovered about God's promises?

## 3. OBSERVATION:

Read the passage. As you read it, get the members to annotate their booklets, highlighting anything that they notice that stands out.

- In pairs get the members to quickly draw a timeline of the key/unusual events in the chapter.
- Have members reflect on the events in the account and notice if and how this story moves God's promises forward.
  - Land
  - People
  - Blessing
- In what ways does this passage add to our picture of the ways that God keeps his promises?
- What does the passage show us about how God's people live in the light of his promises

## 4. MEANING:

- **Part 1:** What does Moses long for his original hearers to understand?
- **Part 2:** We live on the other side of the cross. What is the meaning for us today, remembering that some things will be the same and some things will be different?

## 5. APPLICATION:

- What are the possible implications of the meaning for us?
- Use *My One Thing* in pairs to kick start your application

## Genesis 41

When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: he was standing by the Nile, <sup>2</sup> when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. <sup>3</sup> After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the river-bank. <sup>4</sup> And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

<sup>5</sup> He fell asleep again and had a second dream: seven ears of corn, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. <sup>6</sup> After them, seven other ears of corn sprouted – thin and scorched by the east wind. <sup>7</sup> The thin ears of corn swallowed up the seven healthy, full ears. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream.

<sup>8</sup> In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

<sup>9</sup> Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, ‘Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. <sup>10</sup> Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. <sup>11</sup> Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. <sup>12</sup> Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream. <sup>13</sup> And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was impaled.’

<sup>14</sup> So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

<sup>15</sup> Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.’

<sup>16</sup> ‘I cannot do it,’ Joseph replied to Pharaoh, ‘but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.’

<sup>17</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile, <sup>18</sup> when out of the river there came up seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds. <sup>19</sup> After them, seven other cows came up – scrawny and very ugly and lean. I had never seen such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt. 18

## Genesis 41

<sup>20</sup> The lean, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first. <sup>21</sup> But even after they ate them, no one could tell that they had done so; they looked just as ugly as before. Then I woke up.

<sup>22</sup> ‘In my dream I saw seven ears of corn, full and good, growing on a single stalk.

<sup>23</sup> After them, seven other ears sprouted – withered and thin and scorched by the east wind. <sup>24</sup> The thin ears of corn swallowed up the seven good ears. I told this to the magicians, but none of them could explain it to me.’

<sup>25</sup> Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, ‘The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. <sup>26</sup> The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears of corn are seven years; it is one and the same dream.

<sup>27</sup> The seven lean, ugly cows that came up afterwards are seven years, and so are the seven worthless ears of corn scorched by the east wind: they are seven years of famine.

<sup>28</sup> ‘It is just as I said to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do. <sup>29</sup> Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the land of Egypt, <sup>30</sup> but seven years of famine will follow them. Then all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will ravage the land. <sup>31</sup> The abundance in the land will not be remembered, because the famine that follows it will be so severe. <sup>32</sup> The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon.

<sup>33</sup> ‘And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. <sup>34</sup> Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. <sup>35</sup> They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food. <sup>36</sup> This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine.’

## Genesis 41

<sup>37</sup> The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials. <sup>38</sup> So Pharaoh asked them, 'Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?'

<sup>39</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you.'

<sup>40</sup> You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you.'

<sup>41</sup> So Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.' <sup>42</sup> Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain round his neck.

<sup>43</sup> He made him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, 'Make way!' Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

<sup>44</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt.' <sup>45</sup> Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.

<sup>46</sup> Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and travelled throughout Egypt. <sup>47</sup> During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully. <sup>48</sup>

Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities. In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it. <sup>49</sup> Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

## Genesis 41

<sup>50</sup> Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. <sup>51</sup> Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, 'It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household.' <sup>52</sup> The second son he named Ephraim and said, 'It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.'

<sup>53</sup> The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, <sup>54</sup> and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food. <sup>55</sup> When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, 'Go to Joseph and do what he tells you.'

<sup>56</sup> When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt. <sup>57</sup> And all the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere.

**NOTES**

**Warning: This week there are 2 chapters to consider so you're not going to mine every last detail. Hit the high points.**

### 1. The Check In

In pairs, ask each other the 3 Check In questions, help get each other unstuck and pray.

### 2. CONTEXT:

- What's happened so far in the story to Jacob's sons and what have we discovered about God's promises?

### 3. OBSERVATION:

Read the passage. As you read it, get the members to annotate their booklets, highlighting anything that they notice that stands out.

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  - Land
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### 4. MEANING:

- **Part 1:** What does Moses long for his original hearers to understand?
- **Part 2:** We live on the other side of the cross. What is the meaning for us today, remembering that some things will be the same and some things will be different?

### 5. APPLICATION:

- What are the possible implications of the meaning for us?
- Use *My One Thing* in pairs to kick start your application

## Genesis 42-43

When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, 'Why do you just keep looking at each other?' <sup>2</sup> He continued, 'I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may live and not die.'

<sup>3</sup> Then ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt. <sup>4</sup> But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with the others, because he was afraid that harm might come to him. <sup>5</sup> So Israel's sons were among those who went to buy grain, for there was famine in the land of Canaan also.

<sup>6</sup> Now Joseph was the governor of the land, the person who sold grain to all its people. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup> As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognised them, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them. 'Where do you come from?' he asked.

'From the land of Canaan,' they replied, 'to buy food.'

<sup>8</sup> Although Joseph recognised his brothers, they did not recognise him. <sup>9</sup> Then he remembered his dreams about them and said to them, 'You are spies! You have come to see where our land is unprotected.'

<sup>10</sup> 'No, my lord,' they answered. 'Your servants have come to buy food. <sup>11</sup> We are all the sons of one man. Your servants are honest men, not spies.'

<sup>12</sup> 'No!' he said to them. 'You have come to see where our land is unprotected.'

## Genesis 42-43

<sup>13</sup> But they replied, ‘Your servants were twelve brothers, the sons of one man, who lives in the land of Canaan. The youngest is now with our father, and one is no more.’

<sup>14</sup> Joseph said to them, ‘It is just as I told you: you are spies! <sup>15</sup> And this is how you will be tested: as surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. <sup>16</sup> Send one of your number to get your brother; the rest of you will be kept in prison, so that your words may be tested to see if you are telling the truth. If you are not, then as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies!’ <sup>17</sup> And he put them all in custody for three days.

<sup>18</sup> On the third day, Joseph said to them, ‘Do this and you will live, for I fear God: <sup>19</sup> if you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison, while the rest of you go and take grain back for your starving households. <sup>20</sup> But you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified and that you may not die.’ This they proceeded to do.

<sup>21</sup> They said to one another, ‘Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that’s why this distress has come on us.’

<sup>22</sup> Reuben replied, ‘Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn’t listen! Now we must give an accounting for his blood.’ <sup>23</sup> They did not realise that Joseph could understand them, since he was using an interpreter.

## Genesis 42-43

<sup>24</sup> He turned away from them and began to weep, but then came back and spoke to them again. He had Simeon taken from them and bound before their eyes.

<sup>25</sup> Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to put each man's silver back in his sack, and to give them provisions for their journey. After this was done for them, <sup>26</sup> they loaded their grain on their donkeys and left.

<sup>27</sup> At the place where they stopped for the night one of them opened his sack to get feed for his donkey, and he saw his silver in the mouth of his sack. <sup>28</sup> 'My silver has been returned,' he said to his brothers. 'Here it is in my sack.'

Their hearts sank and they turned to each other trembling and said, 'What is this that God has done to us?'

<sup>29</sup> When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them. They said, <sup>30</sup> 'The man who is lord over the land spoke harshly to us and treated us as though we were spying on the land. <sup>31</sup> But we said to him, "We are honest men; we are not spies. <sup>32</sup> We were twelve brothers, sons of one father. One is no more, and the youngest is now with our father in Canaan."

<sup>33</sup> 'Then the man who is lord over the land said to us, "This is how I will know whether you are honest men: leave one of your brothers here with me, and take food for your starving households and go. <sup>34</sup> But bring your youngest brother to me so I will know that you are not spies but honest men. Then I will give your brother back to you, and you can trade in the land.'"

## Genesis 42-43

<sup>35</sup>As they were emptying their sacks, there in each man's sack was his pouch of silver! When they and their father saw the money pouches, they were frightened. <sup>36</sup>Their father Jacob said to them, 'You have deprived me of my children. Joseph is no more and Simeon is no more, and now you want to take Benjamin. Everything is against me!'

<sup>37</sup>Then Reuben said to his father, 'You may put both of my sons to death if I do not bring him back to you. Entrust him to my care, and I will bring him back.'

<sup>38</sup>But Jacob said, 'My son will not go down there with you; his brother is dead and he is the only one left. If harm comes to him on the journey you are taking, you will bring my grey head down to the grave in sorrow.'

**43** Now the famine was still severe in the land. <sup>2</sup>So when they had eaten all the grain they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, 'Go back and buy us a little more food.'

<sup>3</sup>But Judah said to him, 'The man warned us solemnly, "You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you." <sup>4</sup>If you will send our brother along with us, we will go down and buy food for you. <sup>5</sup>But if you will not send him, we will not go down, because the man said to us, "You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you."'

<sup>6</sup>Israel asked, 'Why did you bring this trouble on me by telling the man you had another brother?'

<sup>7</sup>They replied, 'The man questioned us closely about ourselves and our family. "Is your father still living?" he asked us. "Do you have another brother?" We simply answered his questions. How were we to know he would say, "Bring your brother down here"?''

## Genesis 42-43

<sup>8</sup> Then Judah said to Israel his father, ‘Send the boy along with me and we will go at once, so that we and you and our children may live and not die. <sup>9</sup> I myself will guarantee his safety; you can hold me personally responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him here before you, I will bear the blame before you all my life. <sup>10</sup> As it is, if we had not delayed, we could have gone and returned twice.’

<sup>11</sup> Then their father Israel said to them, ‘If it must be, then do this: put some of the best products of the land in your bags and take them down to the man as a gift – a little balm and a little honey, some spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts and almonds. <sup>12</sup> Take double the amount of silver with you, for you must return the silver that was put back into the mouths of your sacks. Perhaps it was a mistake. <sup>13</sup> Take your brother also and go back to the man at once. <sup>14</sup> And may God Almighty grant you mercy before the man so that he will let your other brother and Benjamin come back with you. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved.’

<sup>15</sup> So the men took the gifts and double the amount of silver, and Benjamin also. They hurried down to Egypt and presented themselves to Joseph. <sup>16</sup> When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, ‘Take these men to my house, slaughter an animal and prepare a meal; they are to eat with me at noon.’

<sup>17</sup> The man did as Joseph told him and took the men to Joseph’s house.

<sup>18</sup> Now the men were frightened when they were taken to his house.

They thought, ‘We were brought here because of the silver that was put back into our sacks the first time. He wants to attack us and overpower us and seize us as slaves and take our donkeys.’

## Genesis 42-43

<sup>19</sup> So they went up to Joseph's steward and spoke to him at the entrance to the house. <sup>20</sup> 'We beg your pardon, our lord,' they said, 'we came down here the first time to buy food. <sup>21</sup> But at the place where we stopped for the night we opened our sacks and each of us found his silver – the exact weight – in the mouth of his sack. So we have brought it back with us. <sup>22</sup> We have also brought additional silver with us to buy food. We don't know who put our silver in our sacks.'

<sup>23</sup> 'It's all right,' he said. 'Don't be afraid. Your God, the God of your father, has given you treasure in your sacks; I received your silver.' Then he brought Simeon out to them.

<sup>24</sup> The steward took the men into Joseph's house, gave them water to wash their feet and provided fodder for their donkeys. <sup>25</sup> They prepared their gifts for Joseph's arrival at noon, because they had heard that they were to eat there.

<sup>26</sup> When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts they had brought into the house, and they bowed down before him to the ground. <sup>27</sup> He asked them how they were, and then he said, 'How is your aged father you told me about? Is he still living?'

<sup>28</sup> They replied, 'Your servant our father is still alive and well.' And they bowed down, prostrating themselves before him.

<sup>29</sup> As he looked about and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, he asked, 'Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?' And he said, 'God be gracious to you, my son.' <sup>30</sup> Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, Joseph hurried out and looked for a place to weep. He went into his private room and wept there.

## **Genesis 42-43**

<sup>31</sup>After he had washed his face, he came out and, controlling himself, said, 'Serve the food.'

<sup>32</sup>They served him by himself, the brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because Egyptians could not eat with Hebrews, for that is detestable to Egyptians. <sup>33</sup>The men had been seated before him in the order of their ages, from the firstborn to the youngest; and they looked at each other in astonishment. <sup>34</sup>When portions were served to them from Joseph's table, Benjamin's portion was five times as much as anyone else's. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

## 1. The Check In

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## 2. CONTEXT:

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Read the passage. As you read it, get the members to annotate their booklets, highlighting anything that they notice that stands out.

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**NOTES**

## Genesis 44

Now Joseph gave these instructions to the steward of his house: ‘Fill the men’s sacks with as much food as they can carry, and put each man’s silver in the mouth of his sack. <sup>2</sup> Then put my cup, the silver one, in the mouth of the youngest one’s sack, along with the silver for his grain.’ And he did as Joseph said.

<sup>3</sup> As morning dawned, the men were sent on their way with their donkeys. <sup>4</sup> They had not gone far from the city when Joseph said to his steward, ‘Go after those men at once, and when you catch up with them, say to them, “Why have you repaid good with evil? <sup>5</sup> Isn’t this the cup my master drinks from and also uses for divination? This is a wicked thing you have done.”’

<sup>6</sup> When he caught up with them, he repeated these words to them. <sup>7</sup> But they said to him, ‘Why does my lord say such things? Far be it from your servants to do anything like that! <sup>8</sup> We even brought back to you from the land of Canaan the silver we found inside the mouths of our sacks. So why would we steal silver or gold from your master’s house? <sup>9</sup> If any of your servants is found to have it, he will die; and the rest of us will become my lord’s slaves.’

<sup>10</sup> ‘Very well, then,’ he said, ‘let it be as you say. Whoever is found to have it will become my slave; the rest of you will be free from blame.’

<sup>11</sup> Each of them quickly lowered his sack to the ground and opened it. <sup>12</sup> Then the steward proceeded to search, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack. <sup>13</sup> At this, they tore their clothes. Then they all loaded their donkeys and returned to the city.

## Genesis 44

<sup>14</sup> Joseph was still in the house when Judah and his brothers came in, and they threw themselves to the ground before him. <sup>15</sup> Joseph said to them, ‘What is this you have done? Don’t you know that a man like me can find things out by divination?’

<sup>16</sup> ‘What can we say to my lord?’ Judah replied. ‘What can we say? How can we prove our innocence? God has uncovered your servants’ guilt. We are now my lord’s slaves – we ourselves and the one who was found to have the cup.’

<sup>17</sup> But Joseph said, ‘Far be it from me to do such a thing! Only the man who was found to have the cup will become my slave. The rest of you, go back to your father in peace.’

<sup>18</sup> Then Judah went up to him and said: ‘Pardon your servant, my lord, let me speak a word to my lord. Do not be angry with your servant, though you are equal to Pharaoh himself. <sup>19</sup> My lord asked his servants, “Do you have a father or a brother?” <sup>20</sup> And we answered, “We have an aged father, and there is a young son born to him in his old age. His brother is dead, and he is the only one of his mother’s sons left, and his father loves him.”

<sup>21</sup> ‘Then you said to your servants, “Bring him down to me so I can see him for myself.” <sup>22</sup> And we said to my lord, “The boy cannot leave his father; if he leaves him, his father will die.” <sup>23</sup> But you told your servants, “Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.” <sup>24</sup> When we went back to your servant my father, we told him what my lord had said.

## Genesis 44

<sup>25</sup> ‘Then our father said, “Go back and buy a little more food.” <sup>26</sup> But we said, “We cannot go down. Only if our youngest brother is with us will we go. We cannot see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.”

<sup>27</sup> ‘Your servant my father said to us, “You know that my wife bore me two sons. <sup>28</sup> One of them went away from me, and I said, ‘He has surely been torn to pieces.’ And I have not seen him since. <sup>29</sup> If you take this one from me too and harm comes to him, you will bring my grey head down to the grave in misery.”

<sup>30</sup> ‘So now, if the boy is not with us when I go back to your servant my father, and if my father, whose life is closely bound up with the boy’s life, <sup>31</sup> sees that the boy isn’t there, he will die. Your servants will bring the grey head of our father down to the grave in sorrow. <sup>32</sup> Your servant guaranteed the boy’s safety to my father. I said, “If I do not bring him back to you, I will bear the blame before you, my father, all my life!”

<sup>33</sup> ‘Now then, please let your servant remain here as my lord’s slave in place of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers. <sup>34</sup> How can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? No! Do not let me see the misery that would come on my father.’

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# NOTES

## Genesis 45

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, ‘Make everyone leave my presence!’ So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. <sup>2</sup>And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh’s household heard about it.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph! Is my father still living?’ But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

<sup>4</sup>Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Come close to me.’ When they had done so, he said, ‘I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! <sup>5</sup>And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. <sup>6</sup>For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no ploughing and reaping. <sup>7</sup>But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

<sup>8</sup>‘So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. <sup>9</sup>Now hurry back to my father and say to him, “This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don’t delay. <sup>10</sup>You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me – you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. <sup>11</sup>I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.”

## Genesis 45

<sup>12</sup> ‘You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you. <sup>13</sup> Tell my father about all the honour accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly.’

<sup>14</sup> Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. <sup>15</sup> And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterwards his brothers talked with him.

<sup>16</sup> When the news reached Pharaoh’s palace that Joseph’s brothers had come, Pharaoh and all his officials were pleased. <sup>17</sup> Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘Tell your brothers, “Do this: load your animals and return to the land of Canaan, <sup>18</sup> and bring your father and your families back to me. I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you can enjoy the fat of the land.”

<sup>19</sup> ‘You are also instructed to tell them, “Do this: take some carts from Egypt for your children and your wives, and get your father and come. <sup>20</sup> Never mind about your belongings, because the best of all Egypt will be yours.”’

<sup>21</sup> So the sons of Israel did this. Joseph gave them carts, as Pharaoh had commanded, and he also gave them provisions for their journey. <sup>22</sup> To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five sets of clothes. <sup>23</sup> And this is what he sent to his father: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other provisions for his journey. <sup>24</sup> Then he sent his brothers away, and as they were leaving he said to them, ‘Don’t quarrel on the way!’

<sup>25</sup> So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. <sup>26</sup> They told him, ‘Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is ruler of all Egypt.’

Jacob was stunned; he did not believe them. <sup>27</sup> But when they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts Joseph had sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. <sup>28</sup> And Israel said, ‘I’m convinced! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.’

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**NOTES**

## Genesis 46-47

So Israel set out with all that was his, and when he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

<sup>2</sup>And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, ‘Jacob! Jacob!’ ‘Here I am,’ he replied.

<sup>3</sup>‘I am God, the God of your father,’ he said. ‘Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. <sup>4</sup>I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph’s own hand will close your eyes.’

<sup>5</sup>Then Jacob left Beersheba, and Israel’s sons took their father Jacob and their children and their wives in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to transport him. <sup>6</sup>So Jacob and all his offspring went to Egypt, taking with them their livestock and the possessions they had acquired in Canaan. <sup>7</sup>Jacob brought with him to Egypt his sons and grandsons and his daughters and granddaughters – all his offspring.

<sup>8</sup>These are the names of the sons of Israel (Jacob and his descendants) who went to Egypt:

Reuben the firstborn of Jacob.

<sup>9</sup>The sons of Reuben:

Hanok, Pallu, Hezron and Karmi.

<sup>10</sup>The sons of Simeon:

Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman.

<sup>11</sup>The sons of Levi:

Gershon, Kohath and Merari.

## **Genesis 46-47**

<sup>12</sup> The sons of Judah:

Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerah (but Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan).

The sons of Perez:

Hezron and Hamul.

<sup>13</sup> The sons of Issachar:

Tola, Puah, Jashub and Shimron.

<sup>14</sup> The sons of Zebulun:

Sered, Elon and Jahleel.

<sup>15</sup> These were the sons Leah bore to Jacob in Paddan Aram, besides his daughter Dinah. These sons and daughters of his were thirty-three in all.

<sup>16</sup> The sons of Gad:

Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi and Areli.

<sup>17</sup> The sons of Asher:

Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi and Beriah.

Their sister was Serah.

The sons of Beriah:

Heber and Malkiel.

<sup>18</sup> These were the children born to Jacob by Zilpah, whom Laban had given to his daughter Leah – sixteen in all.

<sup>19</sup> The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel:

Joseph and Benjamin. <sup>20</sup> In Egypt, Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphara, priest of On.

## **Genesis 46-47**

<sup>21</sup> The sons of Benjamin:

Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim and Ard.

<sup>22</sup> These were the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob – fourteen in all.

<sup>23</sup> The son of Dan:

Hushim.

<sup>24</sup> The sons of Naphtali:

Jahziel, Guni, Jezer and Shillem.

<sup>25</sup> These were the sons born to Jacob by Bilhah, whom Laban had given to his daughter Rachel – seven in all.

<sup>26</sup> All those who went to Egypt with Jacob – those who were his direct descendants, not counting his sons' wives – numbered sixty-six persons. <sup>27</sup> With the two sons who had been born to Joseph in Egypt, the members of Jacob's family, which went to Egypt, were seventy in all.

<sup>28</sup> Now Jacob sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to get directions to Goshen. When they arrived in the region of Goshen, <sup>29</sup> Joseph had his chariot made ready and went to Goshen to meet his father Israel. As soon as Joseph appeared before him, he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time.

<sup>30</sup> Israel said to Joseph, 'Now I am ready to die, since I have seen for myself that you are still alive.'

## Genesis 46-47

<sup>31</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, 'I will go up and speak to Pharaoh and will say to him, "My brothers and my father's household, who were living in the land of Canaan, have come to me. <sup>32</sup> The men are shepherds; they tend livestock, and they have brought along their flocks and herds and everything they own." <sup>33</sup> When Pharaoh calls you in and asks, "What is your occupation?" <sup>34</sup> you should answer, "Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did." Then you will be allowed to settle in the region of Goshen, for all shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians.'

**47** Joseph went and told Pharaoh, 'My father and brothers, with their flocks and herds and everything they own, have come from the land of Canaan and are now in Goshen.' <sup>2</sup> He chose five of his brothers and presented them before Pharaoh.

<sup>3</sup> Pharaoh asked the brothers, 'What is your occupation?'

'Your servants are shepherds,' they replied to Pharaoh, 'just as our fathers were.' <sup>4</sup> They also said to him, 'We have come to live here for a while, because the famine is severe in Canaan and your servants' flocks have no pasture. So now, please let your servants settle in Goshen.'

<sup>5</sup> Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Your father and your brothers have come to you, <sup>6</sup> and the land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land. Let them live in Goshen. And if you know of any among them with special ability, put them in charge of my own livestock.'

<sup>7</sup> Then Joseph brought his father Jacob in and presented him before Pharaoh. After Jacob blessed Pharaoh, <sup>8</sup> Pharaoh asked him, 'How old are you?'

## Genesis 46-47

<sup>9</sup>And Jacob said to Pharaoh, ‘The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty. My years have been few and difficult, and they do not equal the years of the pilgrimage of my fathers.’ <sup>10</sup>Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence.

<sup>11</sup>So Joseph settled his father and his brothers in Egypt and gave them property in the best part of the land, the district of Rameses, as Pharaoh directed. <sup>12</sup>Joseph also provided his father and his brothers and all his father’s household with food, according to the number of their children.

<sup>13</sup>There was no food, however, in the whole region because the famine was severe; both Egypt and Canaan wasted away because of the famine. <sup>14</sup>Joseph collected all the money that was to be found in Egypt and Canaan in payment for the grain they were buying, and he brought it to Pharaoh’s palace. <sup>15</sup>When the money of the people of Egypt and Canaan was gone, all Egypt came to Joseph and said, ‘Give us food. Why should we die before your eyes? Our money is all gone.’

<sup>16</sup>‘Then bring your livestock,’ said Joseph. ‘I will sell you food in exchange for your livestock, since your money is gone.’ <sup>17</sup>So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and he gave them food in exchange for their horses, their sheep and goats, their cattle and donkeys. And he brought them through that year with food in exchange for all their livestock.

<sup>18</sup>When that year was over, they came to him the following year and said, ‘We cannot hide from our lord the fact that since our money is gone and our livestock belongs to you, there is nothing left for our lord except our bodies and our land.’

## Genesis 46-47

<sup>19</sup> Why should we perish before your eyes – we and our land as well?

Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we with our land will be in bondage to Pharaoh. Give us seed so that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate.’

<sup>20</sup> So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians, one and all, sold their fields, because the famine was too severe for them. The land became Pharaoh’s, <sup>21</sup> and Joseph reduced the people to servitude, from one end of Egypt to the other. <sup>22</sup> However, he did not buy the land of the priests, because they received a fixed allowance from Pharaoh and had food enough from the allowance Pharaoh gave them. That is why they did not sell their land.

<sup>23</sup> Joseph said to the people, ‘Now that I have bought you and your land today for Pharaoh, here is seed for you so you can plant the ground. <sup>24</sup> But when the crop comes in, give a fifth of it to Pharaoh. The other four-fifths you may keep as seed for the fields and as food for yourselves and your households and your children.’

<sup>25</sup> ‘You have saved our lives,’ they said. ‘May we find favour in the eyes of our lord; we will be in bondage to Pharaoh.’

<sup>26</sup> So Joseph established it as a law concerning land in Egypt – still in force today – that a fifth of the produce belongs to Pharaoh. It was only the land of the priests that did not become Pharaoh’s.

<sup>27</sup> Now the Israelites settled in Egypt in the region of Goshen. They acquired property there and were fruitful and increased greatly in number.

## **Genesis 46-47**

<sup>28</sup> Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years, and the years of his life were a hundred and forty-seven. <sup>29</sup> When the time drew near for Israel to die, he called for his son Joseph and said to him, 'If I have found favour in your eyes, put your hand under my thigh and promise that you will show me kindness and faithfulness. Do not bury me in Egypt, <sup>30</sup> but when I rest with my fathers, carry me out of Egypt and bury me where they are buried.'

'I will do as you say,' he said.

<sup>31</sup> 'Swear to me,' he said. Then Joseph swore to him, and Israel worshipped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

As the term comes to a close there are a number of options available to you and your groups. You should choose the option that you feel will be most helpful for your group.

Some things to consider as you weigh things up:

- In the week following the CG study the sermon will be on chapters 49 and 50.
- The last week of term ends with Good Friday, Easter Sunday and school holidays beginning.
- Some groups love Gospel Groups and find them really helpful.
- Some groups may need some “social time” together to bring the term to a conclusion.
- Some groups will value getting into chapter 49 and 50 in more depth, over 2 weeks.
- Chapter 49 is a cracker. In it Jacob ‘blesses’ his sons and in doing so sets up much of the rest of the Old Testament. Some groups will love looking back into Genesis 12-48 to discover why Jacob blesses as he does, and then look forward to see how his blessing is fulfilled in the OT and then in Jesus.

Here are two good options you can choose from:

1. In week 7 do a study on chapter 49:28 - 50:26 to bring the book to a close. Then in week 8 you can choose either a social or gospel groups.
2. In week 7 do a study on chapter 49:1-27 and in week 8, after the sermon, do a study on chapter 49:28 - 50:26 and wind up the book.

If you choose option 2 here is a suggestion for tackling chapter 49.

Follow COMA as usual.

When you're doing the Context section get the group to remember what happened when Jacob "stole" Isaac's blessing from Esau and note that Isaac's blessing was fulfilled for Jacob.

When you get to the observation section it's worth getting the group to both look back through Genesis 37-48 to see the background to the events that Jacob refers to as he blesses his sons, as well as using your cross references to look forward and see how Jacob's blessings function as prophecy, fulfilled in national Israel as well as in Jesus himself.

The key background accounts to look back on are the blessings on Reuben, Simeon and Levi, Joseph and Judah. The author doesn't give us much about the background to the other sons. Use your cross references to find the passages you'll need.

When it comes to looking forward, focus on the blessing of Judah, and its fulfilment in Jesus. It's fun to chase the ideas in 49:10 especially through the OT to Jesus, seeing God's sovereign hand raising up our saviour.

In many ways chapter 49 gives us the global and universal view of God's sovereign hand that we see intimately in the lives of Joseph and his family in chapter 50.

## 1. The Check In

In pairs, ask each other the 3 Check In questions, help get each other unstuck and pray.

## 2. CONTEXT:

- What's happened so far in the story to Jacob's sons and what have we discovered about God's promises?

## 3. OBSERVATION:

Read the passage. As you read it, get the members to annotate their booklets, highlighting anything that they notice that stands out.

- In pairs get the members to quickly draw a timeline of the key/unusual events in the chapter.
- Have members reflect on the events in the account and notice if and how this story moves God's promises forward.
  - Land
  - People
  - Blessing
- In what ways does this passage add to our picture of the ways that God keeps his promises?
- What does the passage show us about how God's people live in the light of his promises

## 4. MEANING:

- **Part 1:** What does Moses long for his original hearers to understand?
- **Part 2:** We live on the other side of the cross. What is the meaning for us today, remembering that some things will be the same and some things will be different?

## 5. APPLICATION:

- What are the possible implications of the meaning for us?
- Use *My One Thing* in pairs to kick start your application

# NOTES

**49** Then Jacob called for his sons and said: ‘Gather round so that I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Assemble and listen, sons of Jacob; listen to your father Israel.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, the first sign of my strength, excelling in honour, excelling in power.

<sup>4</sup> Turbulent as the waters, you will no longer excel, for you went up onto your father’s bed, onto my couch and defiled it.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Simeon and Levi are brothers – their swords are weapons of violence.

<sup>6</sup> Let me not enter their council, let me not join their assembly, for they have killed men in their anger and hamstringed oxen as they pleased.

<sup>7</sup> Cursed be their anger, so fierce, and their fury, so cruel!

I will scatter them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel.

<sup>8</sup> ‘Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons will bow down to you.

<sup>9</sup> You are a lion’s cub, Judah; you return from the prey, my son.

Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness – who dares to rouse him?

The sceptre will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.

<sup>11</sup> He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch;

he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes.

<sup>12</sup> His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk.

<sup>13</sup> ‘Zebulun will live by the seashore and become a haven for ships; his border will extend towards Sidon.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Issachar is a scrawny donkey lying down among the sheepfolds.

<sup>15</sup> When he sees how good is his resting place and how pleasant is his land, he will bend his shoulder to the burden and submit to forced labour.

<sup>16</sup> ‘Dan will provide justice for his people as one of the tribes of Israel.

<sup>17</sup> Dan will be a snake by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse’s heels so that its rider tumbles backwards.

<sup>18</sup> ‘I look for your deliverance, Lord.

<sup>19</sup> ‘Gad will be attacked by a band of raiders, but he will attack them at their heels. <sup>20</sup>

‘Asher’s food will be rich; he will provide delicacies fit for a king. <sup>21</sup> ‘Naphtali is a doe set free that bears beautiful fawns.

<sup>22</sup> ‘Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall.

<sup>23</sup> With bitterness archers attacked him; they shot at him with hostility.

<sup>24</sup> But his bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed supple,

because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob,

because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,

<sup>25</sup> because of your father’s God, who helps you,

because of the Almighty, who blesses you

with blessings of the skies above, blessings of the deep springs below,

blessings of the breast and womb.

## Genesis 49-50 (Weeks 7 and 8)

<sup>26</sup>Your father's blessings are greater than the blessings of the ancient mountains, than the bounty of the age-old hills. Let all these rest on the head of Joseph, on the brow of the prince among his brothers.

<sup>27</sup>'Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; in the morning he devours the prey, in the evening he divides the plunder.'

<sup>28</sup>All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, giving each the blessing appropriate to him.

<sup>29</sup>Then he gave them these instructions: 'I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, <sup>30</sup>the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite. <sup>31</sup>There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried, there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried, and there I buried Leah. <sup>32</sup>The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites.'

<sup>33</sup>When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

**50** Joseph threw himself on his father and wept over him and kissed him. <sup>2</sup>Then Joseph directed the physicians in his service to embalm his father Israel. So the physicians embalmed him, <sup>3</sup>taking a full forty days, for that was the time required for embalming. And the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

<sup>4</sup>When the days of mourning had passed, Joseph said to Pharaoh's court, 'If I have found favour in your eyes, speak to Pharaoh for me. Tell him, <sup>5</sup>"My father made me swear an oath and said, 'I am about to die; bury me in the tomb I dug for myself in the land of Canaan.' Now let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.'"

<sup>6</sup>Pharaoh said, 'Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear to do.'

<sup>7</sup>So Joseph went up to bury his father. All Pharaoh's officials accompanied him – the dignitaries of his court and all the dignitaries of Egypt – <sup>8</sup>besides all the members of Joseph's household and his brothers and those belonging to his father's household. Only their children and their flocks and herds were left in Goshen. <sup>9</sup>Chariots and horsemen also went up with him. It was a very large company.

<sup>10</sup>When they reached the threshing-floor of Atad, near the Jordan, they lamented loudly and bitterly; and there Joseph observed a seven-day period of mourning for his father.

<sup>11</sup>When the Canaanites who lived there saw the mourning at the threshing-floor of Atad, they said, 'The Egyptians are holding a solemn ceremony of mourning.' That is why that place near the Jordan is called Abel Mizraim.

<sup>12</sup>So Jacob's sons did as he had commanded them: <sup>13</sup>they carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite. <sup>14</sup>After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, together with his brothers and all the others who had gone with him to bury his father.

## Genesis 49-50 (Weeks 7 and 8)

<sup>15</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, 'What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?' <sup>16</sup> So they sent word to Joseph, saying, 'Your father left these instructions before he died: <sup>17</sup> "This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly." Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father.' When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

<sup>18</sup> His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. 'We are your slaves,' they said.

<sup>19</sup> But Joseph said to them, 'Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. <sup>21</sup> So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.' And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph stayed in Egypt, along with all his father's family. He lived a hundred and ten years <sup>23</sup> and saw the third generation of Ephraim's children. Also the children of Makir son of Manasseh were placed at birth on Joseph's knees.

<sup>24</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.' <sup>25</sup> And Joseph made the Israelites swear an oath and said, 'God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place.'

<sup>26</sup> So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. And after they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

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