

Genesis: More Questions

So, the questions at the end of each chapter weren't enough for you, huh? Good. We're glad that you're interested in thinking deeper about Genesis. Here are a few more questions for each chapter. You can use them for individual study or in a group discussion.

Chapter 1: A Book of Beginnings

1. As your study of the first book of the Bible begins, think about the word *Genesis*. *Why is it important to know about the beginning of the universe? What about the beginning of humanity? Or, about the beginning of God's relationship with humanity?*
2. Jesus and the writers of the New Testament referred to the people and events in Genesis as reality, not just fables. Why is it important that we view the Genesis account as fact, not fiction?
3. How can knowing biblical history help? What do you suppose God wants you to learn from your study of Genesis?

Chapter 2: How It All Began

1. What are the personal implications for your life that arise from the fact that God created the universe?
2. What arguments can you make in favor of the "young earth" view? What arguments can you make in favor of the "old earth" position?
3. What does it mean that humans were created "in the image of God" as mentioned in Genesis 1:26-27?

Chapter 3: You're the Only One for Me

1. The Apostle Paul taught that marriage should be based on the practiced principle of love, not based merely on feelings. How does Ephesians 5:21-33 explain this?
2. Read Genesis 24:58-60 for a key and essential ingredient for a successful marriage.
3. Why would God put a tree in the middle of the Garden and then tell Adam and Eve not to eat from it?

Chapter 4: Sin and the Downfall

1. What have you learned about human nature (and yourself) from studying about Adam and Eve?
2. Explain why Adam and Eve were equally guilty?
3. Did Adam and Eve get what they desired? Did they get what they deserved?

Chapter 5: More Sin and the Downpour

1. Reread Genesis 4:3-7. How should Cain have responded? How do you respond when you sense that God is displeased with your actions?
2. What motivated Noah to follow God's instructions? Was it fear, obedience or ignorance, or something else? Explain your answer.
3. Do you suppose there was a time when Noah doubted God (i.e., while he was building the ark, while he was collecting the animals, during the 40 days of rain, or while he was waiting for the water to recede)? Describe circumstance when we might be inclined to doubt God?

Chapter 6: God Intervenes When Humans Scheme

1. Genesis 11:3 says that the tower was constructed from man-made brick. These bricks were not as strong as God-made stone. Can you find any symbolism in this fact?
2. What are the monuments that people in our culture build to themselves? Some things are not wrong in themselves but become inappropriate when we use them to measure our self-worth. Are you building any towers in your life?
3. How can you avoid inappropriate self-ambition? How can you give God credit for the accomplishments in your life?

Chapter 7: When God Called, Abraham Answered

1. Review the circumstances of Abram's life when he was told by God to leave his country and go to an unspecified place. Has there ever been a similar situation in your life when God was asking you to change your circumstances but wasn't revealing much about what else He had in store for you? What does the story of Abram suggest to you about making long-range and definite plans for your life?
2. Building an altar (Genesis 12:7) helped Abraham worship God. What are the things that you do to reinforce your worship of God and your connection with Him?
3. Did it surprise you that this great man of faith, Abram, was so quick to lie to avoid problems with the Egyptians? Why do you suppose he lost faith in God? Is it easier to trust God for promises than for protection?

Chapter 8: A Lot of Trouble

1. Think about how much Abram had cared for his nephew. Do you think Lot owed loyalty to his uncle? Now think about the decision Lot made when Abram gave him the choice of the land. What does the choice Lot made tell you about his character? Do you think that examining one's choices are a valid way of analyzing a person's character? If so, then identify some of your choices and describe what they reflect about your character?
2. Do you think Abram let Lot make the first choice because Abram was merely polite? What other reason could there have been? What does this tell you about circumstances of your life?
3. Can you trust God with the situations in your life like Abram trusted God? Do you even want to trust God in that way? Why or why not?

Chapter 9: All About the Covenant

1. Review the conduct of Abram's life and the ways in which his actions revealed his faith in God. Now read Genesis 15:6. It wasn't his actions that him right with God, it was something else. What was it? What does this tell you about God's preference for your life. Yes, actions are important, but correct actions should be the natural by-products of what?
2. Have you ever asked God a question similar to what Abraham asked in Genesis 15:8? What advantage do you have for guidance that wasn't available to Abraham? (Hint: Read Psalm 119:105.)
3. Reread Genesis 16:1-5. It was Sarai who arranged for Hagar to have a child by Abram. But Sarai blames Abram for the result. What does this tell you about human nature and issues such as: assuming responsibility; admitting error; blaming someone else; and asking forgiveness.

Chapter 10: A Divine Encounter, An Angelic Attack, and An Old Sin

1. If you had been Abraham, what advice would you have given to your nephew, Lot, before he moved into the city of Sodom?
2. We shouldn't be too hard on Lot because there must have been something good about him. Read 2 Peter 2:7-8. How do you think Peter came to have such an opinion about Lot?
3. Abraham had a hard time resisting the urge to tell a lie when he was in an awkward situation. What does his conduct tell you about the progress of letting a sinful act become a sinful pattern of behavior?

Chapter 11: Isaac -- The Family Begins and Nearly Ends

1. Think of the many years that Sarah worried about not having a child. She was stressed because she never believed God's promise during those years. What are the emotional, psychological and physical benefits that we could enjoy if we simply learned to trust God for our future rather than fret about it? Use Sarah as an example.
2. Abraham's faith was tested when God asked him to sacrifice Isaac. God wasn't intending to watch Abraham fail the test; He simply wanted to deepen Abraham's trust and obedience. Describe situations that God may be putting you through as a means of strengthening your faith. Isaac was the most precious thing in Abraham's life. Yet, God asked Abraham to be willing to give Isaac up. God didn't take Isaac, but He wanted Abraham to willing to do so. Is there anything in your life that you are hanging onto so tightly that you would refuse to give it up if God asked?

Chapter 12: Jacob – A Life of Struggles

1. Esau made a terrible choice when he traded his birthright for a bowl of stew. He let his urges of the moment overshadow clear thinking. Are there times when you make decisions on your immediate feelings without thinking things through? How should have Esau approached his situation? What should you do in yours?
2. Jacob came face to face with God in their famous wrestling match. Notice that encounters with God aren't always easy. Sometimes they are struggles. Describe a time when you felt God's presence in a calming, reassuring manner. Next, describe a time when you seemed to be struggling with God.
3. Isaac had his favorite child (Esau) and Rebekah had her favorite (Jacob). Each parent's preference was no secret. Do you think this game of "parental favorites" had anything to do with the friction between Esau and Jacob? What does their story teach us about family relationships?

Chapter 13: Joseph – It Was No Mere Coincidence

1. What are some of the factors that lead to the friction between Joseph and his brothers? Respond from the perspectives of: Jacob; the brothers; and Joseph.
2. Describe how you think the brothers changed their understanding of God's sovereignty when they discovered that Joseph was second in command of Egypt.
3. When Joseph was a captive of the slave traders, do you think that he had any idea how good his future would turn out? What about when he was in prison? Do you think he had any inkling that he would become so important and lead such a privileged life? Does Joseph's experience give you any guidance for how you should feel if your present circumstances are bleak?