



SKIP HEITZIG

**THE
BIBLE
FROM
30,000
FEET**



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS
EUGENE, OREGON

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This book is dedicated to all of God's people
who believe the Bible is important enough
to read,
to learn,
to know,
to apply,
and to obey.

“Your words were found, and I ate them,
and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart”
(Jeremiah 15:16).

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GIVE ME A YEAR, AND I'LL GIVE YOU THE BIBLE

It takes just under seventy hours to read the Bible straight through at a moderate rate. But most people would never approach it nonstop like that. To do so would be tedious. However, if that reading time were spread out over the course of an entire year, it would average out to about an hour and twenty minutes per week.

This weekly approach breaks down the Bible into more bite-sized chunks, allowing you to set aside time for meditating upon and applying the Bible's meaningful truths. In your hand is a tool that will help you to do exactly that. In fact, I want to make a deal with you: Give me a year—fifty-two weeks—and I'll give you a working understanding of the message of the Bible. I will help you to see it as a whole, understand and apply the main principles of all sixty-six books, and show you how it all fits together, revealing a panorama of God's mind and plan as revealed in Scripture.

When you fly at 30,000 feet (the relative cruising altitude for most commercial aircraft), a glance out the window reveals a broad, curved horizon and the shifting blur of the ground below. You have a sense of the massiveness of heaven and earth, but not the details of everyday life—no buildings or cars or people, and certainly none of the triumphs or struggles of human hearts as they engage with one another at ground level. So when you consider the title of this book, *The Bible from 30,000 Feet*, you might wonder how you could get anything meaningful from looking at the Bible from such a great height. *Just think of all the things you'd miss*, you might say. And while that would be a struggle with any other book you might read, the Bible is different.

The Bible is unlike any other book you will ever read, unlike any book that has ever been written. It's both personal—a love letter from God to us—and historical—an account of God's interactions with His people over thousands of years. It

gives us the big picture—God creating the world and everything in it, the forming of nations, God’s plan of redemptive history—and the intimate details—Jesus pouring His heart out to His Father in Gethsemane, David describing his brokenness after his affair with Bathsheba, Hannah praising God for her miracle child Samuel. It is certainly worth the effort to consider every single paragraph and verse, and the nuance of every word. But there is also value in stepping back from the details and considering the larger scope. We can sometimes “miss the forest for the trees” and lose our bearings of the larger story amid the numerous details. Therefore both approaches are needed—up close and farther away.

Reading the Bible ought to be a lifetime commitment. God is deeply concerned with the ins and outs of your life, and nothing does His work in your heart like His Word. But I am concerned, even alarmed, because the tendency in our age is to drift away from listening to God’s voice in His Word. The biblical understanding of past generations has become the biblical illiteracy of modern ones. Researchers tell us that only 19 percent of churchgoers read their Bibles daily.* I’ve written this book in part to counter that trend. God’s Word is a living thing—and it can do His work in your life, even from 30,000 feet. “His powerful Word is sharp as a surgeon’s scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey. Nothing and no one is impervious to God’s Word. We can’t get away from it—no matter what” (Hebrews 4:13 MSG). No matter who or where you are, the Bible can still speak to you and show you vital truths about God—His love for you, and His plans for your life.

I want to give you a taste of God’s Word, a movable feast you can eat over a year’s time, in chapter-sized portions. In *The Bible from 30,000 Feet* I’ve covered the whole Bible in fifty-two chapters. So if you’ll give me a year, I’ll give you the Bible. Stick with this plan for the next fifty-two weeks, and I promise you that you won’t regret it; in fact, your appetite for the Scriptures will increase. You’ll gain a clearer sense of the big picture, the grand plan of God for the world...and for *you*.

In order to give you an overview of each book, I’ve provided a flight plan at the beginning of each chapter, using FLIGHT as an acronym:

Facts: The basics about who wrote the book and when it was written

Landmarks: A brief overview of the major themes of each Bible book

Itinerary: The key points—the distinguishing topics and memorable moments in each book

* Rankin, Russ. “Study: Bible Engagement in Churchgoers’ Hearts, Not Always Practiced,” LifeWay Research, accessed March 15, 2017, <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/research-survey-bible-engagement-churchgoers>.

Gospel: Jesus is in every book of the Bible, and this tells where to find Him

History: A bit of context to set the scene for each book

Travel Tips: Points of application to keep in mind as you travel through the Bible

The **In Flight** portion of each chapter is a compact version of my teaching on each of the Bible's books. You'll find that, even from this surveyor's perspective, the Bible is full of amazing people, stories, and events—and most of all, an amazing God. My hope and prayer is that your appetite will be whetted—that after reading this book, you'll go back to *the Book* and dig in, hungry for more. An airplane can take you on incredible adventures, whether for work or play, but the Bible can change your life—even from 30,000 feet.

Finally, one of the advantages of our flyover vantage point is the ability it gives us to see what has been called the Bible's *scarlet thread of redemption*—God's redemptive plan through the ages. From the very beginning God planned to redeem mankind from sin and restore us to intimate relationship with Himself. At this altitude, we see clearly that the Bible is really all about one person, Jesus Christ. The Old Testament points toward Him through prophecy and types, and the New Testament describes the immediate and ultimate effects of His first and second comings.

So as we prepare to take this yearlong flight together, make sure you buckle your seatbelt, place your heart in an upright position, and don't hesitate to ask your flight attendant, the Holy Spirit, for any assistance you'll need along the way.

Skip Heitzig

OLD TESTAMENT





GENESIS

FLIGHT PLAN

Facts

Author

Moses authored Genesis, the first of the five opening books of the Bible, which Jesus called the “Law of Moses” (Luke 24:44). Moses lived 120 years (Deuteronomy 34:7). His life can be split into three parts: his life in Egypt (around 1500 BC), in Midian (the mid-1400s BC), and in the wilderness (the early 1400s BC).

Date Written

We don’t know where or when Moses wrote Genesis, but he could have started to collect the facts about God and His people after he was taken into Pharaoh’s house. He probably finished writing the book sometime prior to his exile in the wilderness of Midian.

Landmarks

Genesis is the foundation of God’s work as Creator and Redeemer of His creation. It all begins here—creation, sin, God’s remedy for sin, family, government, and the origins of the nation of Israel. To get a grip on all these beginnings, we’ll follow a set of landmarks: four great events—the formation, the fall, the flood, the fallout from man’s rebellion—and a foursome of great men.

Itinerary

- Four Great Events (Genesis 1–11)
 - The Formation (Genesis 1–2)
 - The Fall of Man (Genesis 3–5)
 - The Flood (Genesis 6–9)
 - The Fallout from Rebellion (Genesis 10–11)

- Four Great Men (Genesis 12–50)
 - Abraham (Genesis 12–25)
 - Isaac (Genesis 21–28, 35)
 - Jacob (Genesis 25–37, 42–43, 45–49)
 - Joseph (Genesis 37–50)

Gospel

The Old Testament predicts the coming of a *Superman*, One who will repair the damage caused by Eden's evil interloper, a dark prince who spoiled God's creation. Numerous prophecies, predictions, and allusions point to both the first and second coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. These form the trail mapping God's plan to save mankind—a scarlet thread of redemption woven throughout the Scriptures.

The first thread was woven after the fall, when Jesus was introduced as the Seed of the woman who will overcome Satan (Genesis 3:15). We also see a symbol of salvation in Noah's ark (like Jesus, the sole means of salvation), Jacob's ladder (pre-saging Jesus as the only connection we have to God in heaven), and in the parallels between Joseph and Jesus: both were betrayed by loved ones and sold, and both played mediators between life and death. God's redemptive plan goes back to the beginning of time.

History

The story of Genesis unfolds in the Fertile Crescent of the Middle East, starting with Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). Some controversy exists as to how long ago “the beginning” was, but simple math indicates that Genesis covers at least 2500 years of human history, focusing on the emergence of the Hebrew people. Noted biblical archaeologist Dr. Steven Collins places the human record of Genesis between 3300 BC (the Stone Age) and 1800 BC (the Middle Bronze Age).

Travel Tips

The challenge of Genesis is to personalize these well-known stories, understand that they are real accounts of real events and real people, and learn practical lessons from them. That begins with three points of recognition:

- Recognize God is the Creator (Genesis 1). God created all things for a purpose. As the Bible unfolds, this purpose is ultimately found in

Jesus Christ. First, all people must recognize their need for a relationship with their Creator through Christ. How do we do that? Read on.

- Recognize you are a sinner (Genesis 2). Humans are fallen beings in need of redemption. One of the key moments in Genesis is when God established a relationship with Abraham through his seed—down the line, that was Christ. Ultimately, Christ will crush the serpent (Satan). Part of this “crushing” of sin in the world is to make new creations of people who turn from their sin and to Jesus Christ.
- Recognize that God has a purpose for you (Genesis 12–37). As you read Genesis, you’ll find all types of characters and narratives. All of them come into contact—for better or worse—with God. God is the great conductor, leading the symphony of life according to His purposes. When you turn to God, know that He has a plan for your life: “to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29). As a Christian, your purpose is to grow more Christlike day by day until Christ either comes for His church or calls you home. Your growth starts here in Genesis.

In Flight

The Formation (Genesis 1–2)

The record of the formation of the universe is simple, straightforward, and unambiguous: God created it all (Genesis 1:1-5). That’s it. If you can accept that first verse of the Bible, you should have no problem believing the rest of it.

If you can accept that first verse of the Bible, you should have no problem believing the rest of it.

Here’s a rundown of Earth’s first week:

- Day one: God turned on the light, dividing day from night.
- Day two: God set up the hydrological cycle, separating the water in the sky from the water covering the earth. This “firmament” was different from the sky we have now; it has been described as a “vapor canopy” that surrounded the earth and lasted until the flood.

- Day three: God pooled the waters into oceans (possibly even a single ocean), creating land masses (possibly even a single continent). Then, because it now had a place to grow, God produced plant life, vegetation of all sorts, each with its own ability to reproduce itself through seeds.
- Day four: God installed some celestial bodies—the sun, moon, and stars—and instituted days, seasons, and years.
- Day five: God put birds into play, along with sea life—both examples of amazing diversity and complexity.
- Day six: God generated the animal kingdom in all of its remarkable variety and then topped off His creation with its pinnacle: human beings, created in His own image (Genesis 1:27). He arranged food for everyone, set Adam and Eve in charge of taking care of His creation, and called it all “good” (Genesis 1:31).
- Day seven: His work completed, God rested (Genesis 2:1-2).

Creation itself is amazing—a perfect balance of conditions that make life on earth possible—but even more powerful is the thought that God cares so much about the people who live in it. Right away, God gave Adam an equal counterpart and helper, Eve (Genesis 2:18-25), and made them caretakers of His creation.

The Fall (Genesis 3–5)

Up to this point, God had given mankind only one negative command: not to eat from a particular tree in the garden, the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Genesis 2:17). Everything else—all the good things in Eden—was theirs to do with as they pleased. However, God also gave us free will. From the start, we had the ability to choose our actions.

Prohibition becomes an invitation, and Satan knew it. He questioned God, God’s Word, and God’s motives (Genesis 3:1-7). Eve’s first mistake was engagement with this clever, single-minded entity. Adam’s mistake was just standing there while she did it.

That day marked the beginning of what the Bible calls *the world*—a term used especially in the New Testament to describe the system of thinking and behaving that opposes God (1 John 2:16; 5:19). God established His creation, the physical world, and called it good, and now Satan intruded with his *modus operandi*, the spiritual world of deception and destruction. Satan came to commandeer God’s world, and Adam handed him the title deed.

This is the darkest day in the history of the human race, where all our problems began.

This is the darkest day in the history of the human race, where all our problems began (Romans 5:12). Death spread and reigned from Adam to Moses. When Adam took that fruit and sinned against God, he acted as the representative of every human being ever—so that the effects of what he did spread to everyone throughout all history. Every human being to be born would now have a sin-imbued nature.

It was a game-changer for Satan too. When God laid out the consequences for Adam and Eve's disobedience—bearing children in pain and working the ground to feed their family, among other things—He nailed down Satan's future as well: At some point in the future, God would provide a way to defeat him (Genesis 3:15). This marked the beginning of God's long-term plan of redemption. Eventually, a descendant of Eve—specifically, a woman from God's chosen people Israel—would give birth to the Savior, a Son who would undo everything Satan accomplished in Eden and crush him in the process. It set Satan on a narrower path, one intended not just to bring down mankind but to end the godly line through whom this Messiah would come. God's rescue operation for the world was now set in motion.

Satan set about polluting everything God had made, looking to destroy the human race and end the threat to his power on earth. The end result was a human race so twisted and wicked that God decided to reboot life on a global scale (Genesis 6:17).

The Flood (Genesis 6–9)

When God decided to wipe mankind off the face of the earth, He chose a single individual to live so that the human race could begin again. Noah alone was considered righteous by God (Genesis 6:5-8), so God made him the instrument of mankind's physical salvation.

If you look back to Satan's desire to disrupt God's ultimate plan to save mankind and crush him, he and his minions probably responded with a resounding cheer to God's decision to send a flood: *Yes! He's going to wipe all of them out. Game over.* But, as usual, the enemy of our souls underestimated the Lord of the universe. God established His covenant with Noah (Genesis 6:18), and told him to build a boat. "Here are the specs," He told Noah (Genesis 6:14-16), and Noah obeyed. No doubt, Noah took a lot of grief from his neighbors as he faithfully built this enormous

vessel. His very work on it was a witness to the unbelieving world (Hebrews 11:7). And then it started to rain.

And boy, did it rain (Genesis 7:11)! The foundations of the earth broke up, releasing gushing torrents that had been stored in subterranean cavities. The vapor canopy dissolved, pouring down water from the heavens. More water than most had ever even imagined was suddenly released—for forty straight days. Hills were covered, then mountains, and if you weren't on the boat, you died, wiped away like grime off a windshield (Genesis 7:17-24). Meanwhile, God kept life and hope alive on one boat.

God's Word tells us He unleashed a worldwide flood but preserved life and kept His promise to maintain the eventual line of the Savior through Noah and his family. Even in judgment, then and now, God is just and merciful. The shame of it is what mankind did with its second chance.

**Even in judgment, then and now,
God is just and merciful.**

The Fallout (Genesis 9–11)

After the flood, people and animals followed God's command to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 8:17; 9:1). Mankind established a new social order, ordaining human government with the authority to exercise capital punishment as a just response to murder (Genesis 9:5-6). There was also a new physical order. The protective vapor canopy, a sort of thermal blanket that had surrounded earth since its creation, had been destroyed as a result of the floodwaters bursting forth, resulting in a more dangerous environment (storms, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, and drought, plus higher exposure to solar radiation) that contributed to a general shortening of human lifespans.

That didn't stop people from multiplying. Genesis 10 is called the Table of Nations because it records how Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, had their own children, who eventually became various people groups and nations around the world. However, the second half of God's command was to "fill the earth"—*to spread out*, in other words. Instead, they did the opposite, coming together to build a superstate that stood in rebellion against God (Genesis 11:1-4).

God, of course, saw what they were doing, but more than that, He saw why. The people were united in opposition to God's direct instruction, so He decided to

head them off at the pass, confusing their language and forcing them to abandon the tower at Babel (Genesis 11:5-9).

God's response to man's rebellion was the beginning not just of historical Babylon but spiritual Babylon. Everything that Satan did and does to disrupt God's plan to bring salvation through His people, the Jews, and to deceive and destroy mankind in general can be categorized as spiritual Babylon. It's what we mean when we speak of *the world* or *the world system*, in contrast with God's kingdom and kingdom values. The choice between the two shapes each of our lives, as it did the next phase of God's plan for mankind, led by four great men.

The Foursome (Genesis 12–50)

As is so often the case throughout history, God uses people to accomplish His purposes. The rest of Genesis is the account of four such people—four great men whom we call the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

Abraham

The first time they met, God told Abram, “I want you to leave everything you're familiar with; get out of your comfort zone. Though it's going to be hard to leave all of that behind, what I'm going to replace that with—how I'm going to bless you—is incalculable, mind-blowing. So leave everything that has shaped your life up till now, make a clean break, and come follow Me.” And in a remarkable show of faith, Abram obeyed (Genesis 12:1-4).

One of the key events in the Bible is the covenant God made with Abram (Genesis 15). It was a one-sided promise, whereby God would do all that was necessary to fulfill the conditions. Abram's part was to trust God—to remain patient, hopeful, and full of belief. Abram had concerns and he shared them, but God didn't get mad at Abram. Instead, He took him for a walk and repeated His promises (Genesis 15:5). It was a comforting, reassuring moment—and a reminder of two important things: God can handle your hard questions, and He always keeps His promises.

Abram responded with faith (Genesis 15:6), and from that moment on, God said, “You're righteous. I'm taking your faith and crediting it to you, calling you righteous because of your faith.” It was a pivotal moment, establishing a precedent for how God arranges everything so that unrighteous people can be made righteous in His sight.

In the meantime, however, Abram's wife, Sarai, was getting impatient. She thought, as so many of us do when we're tired of waiting on God's promises, *I'm going to help God out. After all, God helps those who help themselves.* Not only is that

idea nowhere to be found in the Bible (Benjamin Franklin popularized this ancient sentiment in his *Poor Richard's Almanack*), the main thrust of Scripture is the exact opposite—that God helps the helpless.

That's exactly what God did here. He cleaned up the mess Sarai caused when she gave her servant Hagar to sleep with Abram in order to produce a child (Genesis 16). God would bless Ishmael, the son Hagar had with Abram, but He would keep His promise and give Abram and Sarai a son, Isaac, through whom He would keep the line of Jesus going. As a symbol of His faithfulness, God also changed their names to Abraham and Sarah.

On His way to destroy the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah with a pair of angels, God dropped in on Abraham to let him know that his son would be born within a year (Genesis 17:15-21). Sodom and Gomorrah were doomed (Genesis 19:13), but God is always looking to save any who want to be saved. For Abraham's sake, He saved Abraham's wayward nephew Lot from the destruction (Genesis 19:29).

A bit later, God gave Abraham the hardest test ever, telling him to offer his precious son Isaac as a sacrifice (Genesis 22:1-2). Whatever thoughts Abraham may have had about why, his only response was obedience. Another remarkable point is that God felt it necessary to identify Isaac as the son “whom you love” (Genesis 22:2). This is the first use of the word *love* in the Bible, and it was written about a father loving his “only son” and preparing to offer him in sacrifice. It clearly foreshadows God's own plans for His only Son, who would be sacrificed on the same mount years later.

Abraham embraced God's will through a process. He obeyed God's command, but he also thought about what he knew of God's nature and character, and that gave him confidence that God would work everything out for the best. His faith was tested severely and he passed God's test, leaving a legacy of godliness for Isaac.

Isaac

As Abraham's life drew to a close, he sent a servant out on a final mission—to find a wife for Isaac. His own wife Sarah had recently died (Genesis 23:2), and he was discharging at long last a common duty, ensuring his son's happiness and the continuation of his line. God orchestrated the match, bringing Abraham's servant Eliezer to Rebekah, confirming the match, and then blessing his journey home with the young bride-to-be (Genesis 24:12-63).

It's a beautiful love story, and Isaac's part in it is touching. While Eliezer was away he waited patiently and sought God, trusting his father's judgment to make a match. It was a beautiful beginning for the relationship. I wish I could tell you that they all lived happily ever after, but they didn't.

Here's a quick flyover: Rebekah was infertile, like her mother-in-law Sarah had been, so Isaac prayed for her and she became pregnant. However, it was a difficult pregnancy, and she asked God why. The Lord replied, "Two nations are in your womb" (Genesis 25:23). Rebekah's twins would indeed become fathers of nations: Esau was born first, red-haired and hairy, and then came Jacob, grabbing at his brother's heel to pull him back inside the womb.

Their names fit—Hairy and Heel-catcher—and their personalities made their differences even clearer. Isaac encouraged Esau's sportiness and Rebekah doted on Jacob's indoor acumen (Genesis 25:28). Of course, as whenever parents pick favorites, it went poorly.

Jacob

God had predicted that Rebekah's secondborn would rule over her firstborn (Genesis 25:23), but it seemed highly unlikely that Jacob would take Esau's position and inheritance. Esau was their father's favorite, strong and outgoing, an obvious provider. However, he was also ruled by his urges. Jacob made up for his lack of outdoor skills by being clever and even conniving. He bided his time, waiting to make a play for his brother's birthright—the inheritance and property rights of the firstborn—based on Esau's weakness.

Jacob's cunning swindled Esau twice. The first time, he got his brother to abandon his birthright for a bowl of stew (Genesis 25:29-34). The second time, with his mom's help, Jacob dressed up like Esau in pelts, sprayed on some *eau d'Outdoorsman*, and tricked his dad into giving him his brother's blessing while Esau was out hunting at their father's request. Isaac was blind in his old age, and Jacob got away with this. But Jacob had to flee when Esau became enraged over his brother's deception and wanted to kill him (Genesis 27:41-45).

Despite all the massive family dysfunction going on, God was sovereign. He let Jacob know He was with him, giving him a dream of a stairway full of angels connecting heaven and earth, and repeating the promise He had made to Jacob's ancestors (Genesis 28:13-15). It was the first of two key moments in Jacob's faith. God's timing was perfect, because Jacob was in for a rough season with his uncle Laban, a man as tricky and self-serving as he himself had been.

Jacob fell hard for Laban's younger daughter, Rachel, and Laban agreed to their marriage in return for Jacob's service to him (Genesis 29:9-20). Jacob jumped at the chance to earn his bride's hand and said, "I'll serve you seven years if I can marry Rachel." Laban agreed and played it cool, but he also played Jacob for a lovesick fool.

Sure enough, after Jacob met the terms of their deal, Laban switched daughters on the wedding night. Ironically, he pulled a reverse-Jacob, switching his firstborn

daughter Leah for his secondborn, Rachel, Jacob's intended (Genesis 29:18-25). Payback! Jacob went to Laban and said, "You tricked me!" But Laban slickly siphoned another seven years off of him, and Jacob ended up working fourteen years for two wives.

That kind of family drama was a constant companion. Rachel and Leah ended up competing to see who could bear Jacob the most sons, even bringing in their handmaidens, Hagar-style, to up their totals. Leah won the babython, eight sons to four, and with a total of twelve sons, Jacob was *really* blessed.

Eventually, Jacob left Laban and headed home to Canaan. He got word that Esau was coming to meet him. That led to Jacob's second pivotal moment of faith. He sent his family on ahead and hung back to wait for Esau, thinking there was a decent chance his brother would kill him. That night, the incredible happened: Jacob wrestled "a Man" who turned out to be God—and whom Jacob did not let go of until he received God's blessing (Genesis 32:24-26). It was at that point that God changed Jacob's name, calling him Israel in honor of his struggle (Genesis 32:28). God also blessed Jacob's meeting with Esau, which went without incident.

Jacob learned the hard way that it's more important to ask "Am I on God's side?" rather than the more typical question, "Is God on my side?" It was a question one of his sons also learned to ask as he went through various trials on the way to the triumphs God had in store for him.

Joseph

The story of Jacob's second-to-last son is one of the most epic in the entire Bible. Though I'll just hit the highlights, his impressive biography and incredible personal journey unfolds for us in Genesis 37–50.

Joseph was a dreamer shaped by the school of hard knocks, a believer molded in a crucible of pride, betrayal, and a series of sudden rises and falls into a model of perseverance and faith. Most people are familiar with the Sunday-morning highlight reel of Joseph's life: Drama was a fact of life for Jacob's eleventh son (and Rachel's first). He was Daddy's favorite (another family theme), was given a fancy technicolor coat that pretty much screamed "Hate me!," shared some dreams that depicted him lording it over all his jealous brothers—and his parents, got thrown into a hole by his fed-up brothers, and was sold into slavery in Egypt. That's just Act I.

In Act II, Joseph caught the eye of his owner, Potiphar (an official in Pharaoh's court), moved upstairs to run the household, and got hit on by the first desperate housewife, Mrs. Potiphar. When he refused her advances on ethical grounds, she ratted him out and got him thrown in jail, where, even though he interpreted

some dreams for some of Pharaoh's key guys, he languished, forgotten by everyone except God.

In the final act, Joseph was recalled from prison to interpret some troubling dreams for Pharaoh himself. God gave him the meanings of the dreams and eventual favor with Pharaoh, who put him in charge of plans to prepare Egypt to survive the famine the dreams foretold. Everyone in Egypt got fed, and people came from all over the region to buy food, including Joseph's brothers from Canaan.

When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, they thought they were dead men, fearing their younger brother's revenge. But Joseph summed up the whole affair by crediting God for turning their evil into a blessing for many, including them (Genesis 50:20)! Pharaoh insisted that Joseph bring his whole family down to a temporary land of plenty in Goshen, father and son were lovingly reunited, and the family was reconciled.

Enjoy this moment, because when we pick up the story in the book of Exodus, things will have changed. The children of Israel will have multiplied greatly, in keeping with God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But they will have fallen out of favor with Egypt's rulers and been made slaves. In Egypt, they were allowed to grow and become a great nation. They thrived and God blessed them, but Egypt was never meant to be their home. God had promised His people the land to which He had called Abraham, and He would rescue them from Egypt, calling them to go home.