



Genesis: Jacob to Joseph

Complete Workbook · Parts 1–8 · Genesis 24–50

TEACHER / PARENT EDITION — WITH ANSWER KEY

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Part 1

Finding a Wife for Isaac · Genesis 24–26

Overview

What Happens in Part 1

Genesis 24 opens with Abraham, now old, sending his senior servant on an oath-bound errand: find a wife for Isaac from Abraham's own relatives, not from the local Canaanites. The servant travels to the city of Nahor and prays for a sign at the town well. Rebekah arrives, offers water to him and to all his camels, and the servant realizes she is the answer to his prayer — and Abraham's own relative. Her family agrees to let her go, Rebekah herself consents, and she travels back with the servant to marry Isaac. Genesis 25 records Abraham's death at a good old age; Isaac and Ishmael bury him beside Sarah. Rebekah, long childless, finally conceives twins who struggle inside her; the LORD tells her two nations are in her womb, and the older will serve the younger. Esau is born first, then Jacob, grasping his brother's heel. Esau grows into a skilled hunter; Jacob stays closer to the tents. One day, hungry from the field, Esau sells his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew, showing how little he valued it. Genesis 26 follows Isaac to Gerar during a famine, where he repeats his father's old mistake, telling people Rebekah is his sister; King Abimelech discovers the truth and protects them anyway. Isaac grows very wealthy, and the Philistines, envious, stop up the wells his father Abraham had dug. Isaac re-digs them, disputes over two of them, then digs a third without dispute. At Beersheba, the LORD repeats his covenant promise to Isaac, and Abimelech comes to make a formal peace treaty with him.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for promises, family standing, and blessing: oath, steadfast, birthright, despised, envied, covenant, reaped
Bible Study	How to follow a story built around a well and a prayer for a sign, and what a character's small choices reveal
Scripture Discovery	Real ancient marriage customs and how a family's wells were serious, defended property

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
24	A Wife for Isaac — Abraham sends his servant to find a wife for Isaac among his own relatives.

	The servant prays for a sign at a well; Rebekah answers it exactly, and her family agrees to let her go. She travels back with the servant and marries Isaac.
25	Twins and a Birthright — Abraham dies and is buried beside Sarah. Rebekah bears twin sons, Esau and Jacob, who struggle even before birth; the LORD says the older will serve the younger. Esau later sells his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew.
26	Isaac at Gerar — During a famine, Isaac settles in Gerar, where he repeats Abraham's old mistake about Rebekah being his sister. He grows wealthy, re-digs his father's stopped-up wells, and eventually makes a peace treaty with Abimelech at Beersheba.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · Sealing a Marriage with Gifts *[Word Study · Ancient Custom]*

Word Study · Ancient Custom Genesis 24 describes the servant giving Rebekah jewelry, and later giving her family costly gifts before she leaves with him. This matches a real ancient marriage custom. In much of the ancient Near East, a groom's family gave the bride's family a formal gift, sometimes called a bride price, as part of a marriage agreement between two households, and the bride's own family often gave gifts back. Marriage contracts from the city of Nuzi describe careful arrangements of exactly this kind. Genesis 24 fits this pattern closely: gifts are given, the woman's family discusses and agrees, and only then does Rebekah herself consent to go.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
oath	<i>n. · Gen 24:9</i>	A serious, sworn promise	<i>"Abraham's servant swears an oath concerning how he will find Isaac a wife."</i>
steadfast	<i>adj. · Gen 24:12</i>	Faithful and unchanging, especially in love or loyalty	<i>"The servant asks God to show steadfast love to his master Abraham."</i>
birthright	<i>n. · Gen 25:31</i>	The special rights and inheritance belonging to the firstborn son	<i>"Jacob asks Esau to sell him his birthright."</i>
despised	<i>v. · Gen 25:34</i>	Looked down on or thought little of something	<i>"Esau ate and drank and despised his birthright."</i>
envied	<i>v. · Gen 26:14</i>	Felt jealous of what someone else has	<i>"The Philistines envied Isaac because of his great wealth."</i>
covenant	<i>n. · Gen 26:28</i>	A solemn promise or agreement, especially one made with God	<i>"Abimelech comes to Isaac to make a covenant of peace."</i>
reaped	<i>v. · Gen 26:12</i>	Gathered a harvest	<i>"Isaac sowed in that land and reaped a hundred times as much."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. A serious, sworn promise is called an _____. (Gen 24:9)

A) offering

✓ B) oath

C) envy

D) excuse

Why: Abraham's servant places his hand under Abraham's thigh and swears an oath.

2. In Genesis 24, the servant asks God to show 'steadfast' love to Abraham, meaning a love that changes often. (Gen 24:12)

✓ Answer: FALSE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 25:31)

Word choices: birthright · covenant · oath · envied

Jacob asks Esau to sell him his birthright, the special share owed to the firstborn son.

4. To look down on or think little of something is to ____ it. (Gen 25:34)

A) reap

B) envy

C) swear

✓ D) despise

Why: Esau eats and drinks and despises his birthright, showing how little he valued it.

5. In Genesis 26, the Philistines envied Isaac because his flocks and servants had grown so great. (Gen 26:14)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 26, Abimelech refuses to ever speak with Isaac again after learning Rebekah is his wife. (Gen 26:28–31)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 26:12)

Word choices: reaped · despised · birthright · steadfast

Isaac sowed seed in that land and reaped a hundred times as much in the same year.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · A Prayer Answered at a Well *[Close Reading · A Test with a Clear Answer]*

Close Reading · A Test with a Clear Answer Before Rebekah ever appears, the servant prays for a very specific sign: he will ask a woman for a drink, and the right one will offer to water his camels too, without being asked. A careful reader notices that Rebekah's actions in the next few verses match this test exactly, detail for detail, rather than roughly. Genesis often signals that an answer to prayer is genuine by having the event line up precisely with what was requested, not just generally. Watching for that kind of exact match is one way a reader can tell the passage wants the coincidence noticed, not overlooked.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What does Abraham's servant pray for as a sign at the well? (Gen 24:12–14)

- ✓ A) A woman who offers to water his camels too.
- B) A woman who is the first to leave the city gate.
- C) A woman who is carrying a jar of gold.
- D) A woman who greets him by name.

Why: The servant prays that the right woman will offer to water his camels as well as him.

2. What does Rebekah do that answers the servant's prayer? (Gen 24:18–20)

- A) She invites him to her father's house first.
- B) She asks him where he has traveled from.
- C) She offers to guide him to the next town.
- ✓ D) She gives him water, then waters his camels too.

Why: Rebekah gives the servant water and then draws water for all his camels.

3. Why does Esau agree to sell his birthright to Jacob? (Gen 25:29–34)

- A) He no longer wants to live in his father's tents.
- B) He plans to travel far away and needs money.
- ✓ C) He is hungry and wants Jacob's stew right away.
- D) He wants to test whether Jacob truly loves him.

Why: Esau, famished from the field, wants Jacob's stew immediately and gives up his birthright for it.

4. What does Isaac do when he settles again near Gerar? (Gen 26:18)

- A) He builds a new city with high walls.
- B) He divides his flocks equally with Abimelech.
- ✓ C) He re-digs the wells his father Abraham had dug.
- D) He asks Abimelech for a portion of farmland.

Why: Isaac re-digs the wells that had been dug in the days of his father Abraham.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 24–26. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 24–26)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Abraham's servant prays for a sign at the well in Nahor. 2) Rebekah travels back with the servant and marries Isaac. 3) Esau sells his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew. 4) The Philistines stop up the wells Abraham had dug. 5) Abimelech comes to Isaac to make a covenant of peace.

6. Rebekah's family discusses the servant's request before she leaves with him. (Gen 24:50–58)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. The LORD tells Rebekah that her older twin will rule over the younger one. (Gen 25:23)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A Story Pattern Genesis Uses More Than Once *[Literary Craft · Type-Scene]*

Literary Craft · Type-Scene A man travels, meets a woman at a well, and a marriage follows — this exact shape appears again later in Genesis, when Jacob meets Rachel at a well. Bible scholars call a repeated pattern like this a type-scene: a familiar shape of events that a writer can reuse, so that small differences between one telling and the next carry extra meaning. In Genesis 24, the pattern is not Isaac meeting Rebekah directly; a trusted servant meets her on Isaac's behalf, which says something about how carefully this particular marriage is being arranged. Recognizing a type-scene helps a reader notice what is genuinely new in a familiar shape, rather than missing it.

Term	What it means
Type-scene	A recognizable pattern of events a writer reuses more than once, so small differences carry extra meaning. Meeting a future spouse at a well happens more than once in Genesis.
Exact fulfillment	When an event lines up precisely, detail for detail, with something asked or predicted earlier. Rebekah's actions match the servant's prayer exactly.
Foil	A character whose choices contrast with another character's, making each one clearer by comparison. Esau's quick trade of his birthright contrasts with how much weight Genesis gives that birthright elsewhere.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is a type-scene? (Gen 24)

- A) A scene that happens only once in the whole Bible
- B) A list of characters with no events at all
- C) A scene with no connection to any other passage

✓ **D) A reused pattern of events that carries extra meaning**

Why: A type-scene is a recognizable pattern of events a writer reuses, so small differences carry extra meaning.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 24)

Word choices: *type-scene · fulfillment · foil · covenant*

A reused pattern of events, like meeting a spouse at a well, is called a **type-scene**.

3. What makes Rebekah's actions at the well an example of exact fulfillment? (Gen 24:15–20)

✓ **A) They match the servant's prayer detail for detail.**

- B) They happen in a completely different city.
- C) They are described without any earlier prayer at all.
- D) They contradict what the servant had asked for.

Why: Exact fulfillment means the event lines up precisely with what was asked, which is exactly what happens here.

4. Jacob and Rachel later meet at a well too, echoing the pattern in Genesis 24. (Gen 24)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

5. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 25)

Word choices: *foil · type-scene · fulfillment · oath*

A character whose choices contrast with another's is called a **foil**.

6. A foil is useful because it makes two characters seem completely identical. (Gen 25)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. How does Esau work as a foil in Genesis 25? (Gen 25:29–34)

- A) His actions are identical to Jacob's in every detail.
- ✓ **B) His quick trade shows how little he valued the birthright.**
- C) He appears only in a genealogy list with no actions.
- D) He refuses to speak with Jacob at any point.

Why: Esau's willingness to trade his birthright for a bowl of stew stands in sharp contrast to the birthright's real importance.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · A Well Was Never Just a Hole in the Ground [Archaeology · Material Life]

Archaeology · Material Life In a dry land, a working well was valuable property, and Genesis treats it that way: it records who dug each well, who filled it in, and what each one was named. Genesis 26 has Isaac re-dig his father's wells and give them back their old names — in the story, naming a well is how a family says the well is theirs. The wells Isaac names “Contention” and “Enmity” before he finally reaches “Room” let a reader track a dispute the chapter never has to explain in so many words.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 24–26 shows that God's promises to Abraham continue through Isaac's family.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

☐ Isaac tells the men of Gerar that Rebekah is his sister.

✓ **The LORD repeats his covenant promise to Isaac at Beersheba.**

☐ The Philistines stop up the wells Abraham had dug.

☐ Isaac sows in Gerar and reaps a hundredfold that year.

✓ **The LORD tells Rebekah that the older twin will serve the younger.**

✓ **The servant's prayer for a sign at the well is answered exactly.**

☐ Esau sells his birthright to Jacob for stew.

Why: The three selected details show the promise to Abraham's family continuing directly: an answered prayer, a spoken word about the twins' future, and the covenant repeated to Isaac. The other statements are true but describe a different part of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 24–26, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 24–26] Rebekah waters all ten of the servant's camels.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 24–26] Esau sells his birthright for bread and stew.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Rebekah is described as younger than Rachel.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 24–26] Isaac gives his new wells the names Esek and Sitnah.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Isaac travels all the way to Egypt during the famine.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Abimelech is described as Isaac's cousin.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 24–26 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Abraham's servant → **B) Prays for a sign at the well in Nahor**

Rebekah → **E) Waters the servant's camels and travels to marry Isaac**

Esau → **D) Sells his birthright for a bowl of stew**

Isaac → **C) Re-digs his father Abraham's stopped-up wells**

Abimelech → **A) Comes to make a covenant of peace with Isaac**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 24–26 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

The servant tests Rebekah with a very specific prayer instead of simply asking the first woman he meets **[C]**, which shows that **[D]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. because Abraham commanded him to test exactly ten women

B. because Rebekah had already been chosen by name beforehand

C. because a precise, unplanned answer would show this was not his own idea

D. Genesis frames the marriage as guided rather than left to chance

E. the servant did not actually trust his own errand

F. the whole meeting at the well was staged in advance

Why: Genesis 24 repeatedly has the servant credit the exact match to the LORD's guidance, framing an ordinary meeting at a well as something more than a coincidence.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

A Marriage Sealed with Gifts

In much of the ancient Near East, a marriage was not a private decision between just two people; it was an agreement between two households. A groom's family typically gave the bride's family a formal gift as part of the arrangement, sometimes called a bride price. The bride's family often gave gifts in return, and the bride herself was usually asked whether she agreed to go. Marriage contracts recovered from the ancient city of Nuzi describe exactly this kind of careful, multi-step arrangement, spelling out what each family would give. These documents show that such marriages were treated as serious legal agreements, not casual arrangements. A gift did not buy a wife the way a buyer purchases an object; scholars who study this custom across many cultures say it worked more like a formal seal on a new relationship between two families. A single set of contracts from one city cannot describe every wedding across the ancient Near East, but it does show that gifts, family agreement, and the bride's own consent were recognized, documented parts of how a marriage was properly made.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

✓ A) Evidence for a documented marriage custom

- B) A full biography of one Nuzi family
- C) Instructions for planning a modern wedding
- D) A description of a single gift's shape

Why: The passage uses Nuzi marriage contracts as evidence for a documented ancient marriage custom.

2. Where do the marriage contracts mentioned in the passage come from? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) A cave near the Dead Sea
- B) A tomb in Egypt
- C) A mountain in Anatolia

✓ D) The ancient city of Nuzi

Why: The passage names Nuzi as the source of the marriage contracts.

3. In this passage, “arrangement” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

✓ A) a careful plan

- B) a sudden, unplanned event
- C) a private, secret meeting
- D) a legal punishment

Why: A careful, multi-step arrangement is a careful, agreed plan between two families.

4. What does the passage say a gift in this custom was NOT? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Ever discussed between two families
- B) Given by the groom's family at all

✓ C) A simple purchase of a wife like an object

- D) Returned in any form by the bride's family

Why: The passage says a gift did not function like a buyer purchasing an object.

5. Why might a bride's own consent have mattered in this custom? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

- A) Consent was only required from the groom's side

✓ B) She was part of the agreement, not just its object

- C) No family ever discussed the marriage beforehand
- D) The bride never met her own family again

Why: The passage notes the bride was usually asked whether she agreed to go, making her part of the agreement.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

- A) A single scholar's personal opinion

✓ B) Marriage contracts from an ancient city

- C) A modern retelling with no ancient sources
- D) A legend with no physical evidence at all

Why: The passage points to actual surviving marriage contracts from Nuzi as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot these contracts show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

- A) They prove exactly how every marriage in history worked
- B) They cannot show anything reliable about the region

✓ C) They show a documented pattern, not every ancient wedding

- D) They show the exact price of every marriage ever made

Why: The passage is careful: the contracts show a documented pattern without claiming to describe every wedding across the ancient Near East.

Part 2

Jacob's Stolen Blessing & the Ladder to Heaven · Genesis 27–28

Overview

What Happens in Part 2

Genesis 27 opens with Isaac, old and nearly blind, sending Esau to hunt game so he can give Esau his formal blessing before he dies. Rebekah overhears and helps Jacob disguise himself as Esau, covering his arms with goatskins and dressing him in Esau's clothes. Isaac, suspicious but persuaded by touch, smell, and taste, blesses Jacob instead — giving him the place of authority over his brothers and the covenant promise. Esau returns moments later, and both he and Isaac realize what has happened; Isaac trembles violently but tells Esau the blessing cannot be taken back. Esau, furious, plans to kill Jacob once their father dies, and Rebekah sends Jacob away to her brother Laban in Haran, saying it is only until Esau's anger cools. Genesis 28 shows Isaac formally sending Jacob off, blessing him again and telling him to marry within Rebekah's family rather than the local Canaanites. Esau, noticing his parents' displeasure with his Canaanite wives, marries a daughter of Ishmael as well. On the journey, Jacob stops for the night and dreams of a ladder set up on the earth with its top reaching to heaven, angels going up and down it, and the LORD standing above it, repeating to Jacob the same covenant promise given to Abraham and Isaac. Jacob wakes in awe, sets up the stone he slept on as a marker, names the place Bethel, and vows that if God brings him back safely, the LORD will be his God and he will give back a tenth of everything.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for blessing, promise, and deep respect: blessing, deceived, trembled, vow, tithe, awesome, inherit
Bible Study	How Genesis lets a father's spoken blessing carry real, unchangeable weight once it is given
Scripture Discovery	A real kind of dream the ancient world recognized, and what a ladder reaching to heaven meant

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
27	The Stolen Blessing — Rebekah helps Jacob disguise himself as Esau so Isaac blesses him instead. Isaac trembles when he learns the truth but will not take the blessing back. Esau, furious, plans to

	kill Jacob once their father dies.
28	The Ladder at Bethel — Isaac sends Jacob away to find a wife among Rebekah's relatives, blessing him again. On the way, Jacob dreams of a ladder reaching to heaven and hears the LORD repeat the covenant promise. Jacob names the place Bethel and makes a vow.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · A Blessing You Could Not Take Back [Word Study · Ancient Legal Custom]

Word Study · Ancient Legal Custom When Isaac learns he blessed Jacob by mistake, he does not try to undo it — he tells Esau plainly that Jacob “shall be blessed.” That matches a real ancient custom. Legal documents from the city of Nuzi record cases where a father gave his inheritance decision out loud, sometimes while sick, and courts still treated that spoken decision as binding, the same way a written will is binding today. A formal spoken blessing was not just kind words; in this world, it functioned as a real legal act, which is exactly why Isaac cannot simply give Esau the same blessing over again.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
blessing	<i>n. · Gen 27:4</i>	A formal, spoken declaration of favor and future good, especially from a father	<i>“Isaac plans to give Esau his blessing before he dies.”</i>
deceived	<i>v. · Gen 27:35</i>	Tricked someone into believing something false	<i>“Isaac tells Esau that his brother has deceived him.”</i>
trembled	<i>v. · Gen 27:33</i>	Shook, especially from shock or strong feeling	<i>“Isaac trembled violently when he realized what had happened.”</i>
vow	<i>n. · Gen 28:20</i>	A serious, formal promise made to God	<i>“Jacob makes a vow at Bethel after his dream.”</i>
tithe	<i>n. · Gen 28:22</i>	A tenth part given, especially to God	<i>“Jacob promises to give God a tithe of everything he receives.”</i>
awesome	<i>adj. · Gen 28:17</i>	Causing wonder and reverent fear	<i>“Jacob says the place is awesome, the very gate of heaven.”</i>
inherit	<i>v. · Gen 28:4</i>	To receive as a permanent possession, often from a parent	<i>“Isaac blesses Jacob so that he will inherit the land promised to Abraham.”</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. A formal, spoken declaration of favor from a father is called a _____. (Gen 27:4)

- A) vow
- B) tithe
- C) dream

✓ **D) blessing**

Why: Isaac plans to give Esau this formal blessing before he dies.

2. In Genesis 27, Isaac happily gives Esau a second identical blessing once he learns the truth.

(Gen 27:33–37)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 27:35)

Word choices: *deceived · trembled · vowed · inherited*

Isaac tells Esau that his brother has deceived him and taken his blessing.

4. To shake, especially from shock or strong feeling, is to _____. (Gen 27:33)

- A) vow

✓ **B) tremble**

- C) inherit
- D) bless

Why: Isaac trembles violently once he realizes Jacob deceived him.

5. At Bethel, Jacob makes a vow that includes giving God a tithe of everything he receives. (Gen 28:20–22)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

6. Jacob says the place of his dream is an ordinary field, nothing special. (Gen 28:17)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 28:4)

Word choices: *inherit · deceive · tremble · tithe*

Isaac blesses Jacob so that he will inherit the land promised to Abraham.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · What Touch, Smell, and Taste Cannot Fix *[Close Reading · A Blind Father's Test]*

Close Reading · A Blind Father's Test Isaac tests the man in front of him three separate ways: he feels his arms for hair, he smells his clothes, and he tastes the food he brought. A careful reader notices that Isaac's doubt never fully goes away — he says the voice sounds like Jacob even while he is being convinced by touch and smell. Genesis lets the reader feel exactly how thin the disguise really is, so the blessing that follows lands as genuinely uncertain, not automatic. Watching where a character's doubt surfaces, and then watching what convinces them anyway, is one way a reader tracks how a scene actually works.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. How does Rebekah help Jacob disguise himself as Esau? (Gen 27:15–16)

- ✓ **A) Dresses him in Esau's clothes with goatskins on his arms.**
- B) She paints his face to look older and more tired.
- C) She teaches him to imitate Esau's exact voice.
- D) She sends him out at night so Isaac cannot see him at all.

Why: Rebekah dresses Jacob in Esau's clothes and covers his hands and neck with goatskins.

2. What convinces Isaac to bless the man in front of him despite his doubt? (Gen 27:22–27)

- A) A birthmark Isaac remembers from Esau's childhood.
- B) A letter Rebekah had written confirming it was Esau.
- C) The sound of Esau's own voice, which Isaac recognizes instantly.
- ✓ **D) His arms, his clothes, and the taste of the food.**

Why: Isaac is convinced by touch, smell, and taste, even though the voice sounds like Jacob's.

3. What does Isaac tell Esau once he realizes Jacob deceived him? (Gen 27:33–37)

- ✓ **A) The blessing has already been given and cannot be reversed.**
- B) He will bless Esau exactly the same way immediately.
- C) He did not actually mean what he said in the blessing.
- D) He will disown both of his sons because of the trick.

Why: Isaac tells Esau plainly that Jacob shall be blessed, since the blessing cannot be undone.

4. What does Jacob see in his dream at Bethel? (Gen 28:12–13)

- A) A river flowing from his father's tent to a distant land.
- B) A field full of animals bowing down before him.
- ✓ **C) A ladder to heaven, with angels and the LORD above it.**
- D) A city built entirely of stone in the middle of the night.

Why: Jacob dreams of a ladder set up on the earth, reaching to heaven, with angels going up and down it.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 27–28. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 27–28)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Rebekah helps Jacob disguise himself as Esau. 2) Isaac blesses Jacob, believing he is Esau. 3) Esau discovers the deception and is furious. 4) Isaac sends Jacob away to find a wife among Rebekah's relatives. 5) Jacob dreams of the ladder reaching to heaven at Bethel.

6. Esau marries a daughter of Ishmael after noticing his parents' displeasure with his other wives. (Gen 28:6–9)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. Jacob builds a stone altar at Bethel before he ever falls asleep there. (Gen 28:11–18)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A Ladder Meant to Be Noticed [Literary Craft · Symbol]

Literary Craft · Symbol Jacob is running from his brother, alone, sleeping on the ground with a stone for a pillow — about as far from home and safety as Genesis has shown him yet. A symbol is an object in a story that stands for something larger than itself, and the ladder reaching from earth to heaven works exactly that way here: a physical connection between exactly where Jacob is and exactly where God is, at the lowest, loneliest moment of his story so far. Jacob's own reaction — naming the place, setting up a marker — shows he reads it the same way: not just an interesting dream, but a sign that this ordinary, unnamed spot is not abandoned by God after all.

Term	What it means
Dramatic irony	When the reader knows something a character in the story does not. Isaac blesses the wrong son while believing, and partly doubting, that he has the right one.
Symbol	An object in a story that stands for something larger than itself. The ladder reaching from earth to heaven represents God's presence reaching Jacob even far from home.
Repetition	Restating the same words, promise, or pattern more than once, so a reader notices the connection. The LORD repeats the same covenant words to Jacob at Bethel that he gave earlier to Abraham.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is dramatic irony? (Gen 27)

- A) A character who knows everything the reader does
- ✓ B) The reader knows something a character does not
- C) A scene with no characters present at all
- D) An event no reader could ever predict

Why: Dramatic irony is when the reader knows something that a character in the story does not.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 27)

Word choices: *irony · symbol · repetition · vow*

The reader knowing something a character does not is called dramatic **irony**.

3. What does the ladder in Jacob's dream work as, in literary terms? (Gen 28:12)

- A) A minor detail with no larger meaning at all.
- B) A literal object Jacob carries with him afterward.

✓ **C) A symbol linking Jacob's low point to God's presence.**

- D) A joke meant to lighten a tense scene.

Why: The ladder is a symbol: an object standing for something larger, here God's presence reaching Jacob.

4. A symbol in a story is always explained directly by the narrator, in so many words. (Gen 28)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

5. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 28)

Word choices: *repetition · symbol · irony · tithe*

Restating the same promise so a reader notices the connection is called repetition.

6. The covenant words God speaks to Jacob at Bethel are brand new, never spoken to Abraham before. (Gen 28:13–14)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. Why does the repetition of the covenant promise at Bethel matter to a reader? (Gen 28:13–14)

- A) It shows God changed his mind about the earlier promise.
- B) It proves Jacob had never heard of the promise before.
- C) It has no real connection to anything said earlier.

✓ **D) It shows the promise carrying forward to a new generation.**

Why: Repeating the covenant words shows the same promise carrying forward from Abraham to Jacob.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · A Real Kind of Dream the Ancient World Knew [Archaeology · Ancient Near Eastern Belief]

Archaeology · Ancient Near Eastern Belief Jacob's dream fits a pattern ancient Near Eastern peoples recognized: a god appearing to speak a specific message, rather than sending strange images that need puzzling out. One of the oldest well-documented examples comes from Gudea, a ruler of the Mesopotamian city of Lagash, who recorded a dream from around 2100 BC in which a god gave him instructions for building a temple. Ancient readers encountering Jacob's dream would have recognized exactly what kind of dream this was, even though the message itself, and the God who gives it, are unlike anything in Gudea's account. Genesis is drawing on a real, ancient category of experience, not inventing one.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: "Genesis 27–28 shows the covenant promise moving forward to Jacob even through a deeply flawed family situation." — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

☐ Esau marries a daughter of Ishmael.

✓ **Jacob vows that the LORD will be his God if he returns safely.**

✓ **The LORD repeats the covenant promise to Jacob at Bethel.**

☐ Jacob names the place of his dream Bethel.

☐ Esau plans to kill Jacob once their father dies.

✓ **Isaac tells Esau that Jacob's blessing cannot be taken back.**

☐ Rebekah helps Jacob disguise himself with goatskins.

Why: The three selected details show the covenant itself moving forward: the blessing standing once given, the promise repeated directly to Jacob, and Jacob's own vow in response. The other statements are true but describe different parts of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 27–28, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Not stated there] Esau is described as the older twin by only a few minutes.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Rebekah travels with Jacob all the way to Laban's house.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 27–28] Isaac trembles violently when he learns the truth.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 27–28] Jacob sets up the stone he slept on as a marker.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 27–28] Jacob promises to give a tenth of everything back to God.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Isaac dies immediately after blessing Jacob.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 27–28 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Rebekah → **B) Helps Jacob disguise himself as Esau**

Isaac → **E) Tells Esau the blessing cannot be reversed**

Esau → **C) Plans to kill Jacob once their father dies**

Jacob → **A) Dreams of a ladder reaching to heaven at Bethel**

The LORD → **D) Repeats the covenant promise first given to Abraham**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 27–28 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis lets Isaac's doubt about the disguise show through even as he ends up convinced by touch, smell, and taste **[B]**, which shows that **[F]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

- A. because Isaac secretly knew the whole plan in advance
- B. because it shows how thin and uncertain the trick actually was**
- C. because the narrator wants to blame Esau instead of Jacob
- D. the blessing was never really in doubt at any point
- E. Isaac's blindness has no real effect on the scene
- F. the blessing lands as genuinely uncertain, not automatic**

Why: By letting Isaac's doubt surface even while he is being convinced, Genesis makes the outcome feel genuinely uncertain rather than a foregone conclusion, which sharpens the whole scene.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

A Dream the Ancient World Would Recognize

Ancient Near Eastern peoples recognized a specific kind of dream: one in which a god appears and speaks a clear message, rather than sending strange pictures that need puzzling out. One of the oldest well-documented examples comes from a Mesopotamian ruler named Gudea, who governed the city of Lagash. In a text usually dated to around 2100 BC, Gudea describes a god appearing to him in a dream and giving him specific instructions for building a temple. Because Gudea wrote his account centuries before Genesis takes place, his dream cannot prove anything about Jacob's own experience at Bethel. What it does show is that the ancient world already had a recognized category for exactly this kind of dream, long before Genesis was written down. A reader encountering Jacob's dream at Bethel would not have found the idea of a god speaking a clear message in sleep strange or new. They would have recognized the shape of it right away. Even so, the message Jacob receives, and the identity of the God who gives it, remain entirely their own, unlike anything in Gudea's much older account.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full biography of a Mesopotamian ruler
- ✓ B) A recognized ancient dream category
- C) Instructions for how to build an ancient temple
- D) A description of Jacob's entire life story

Why: The passage uses Gudea's dream as evidence for a real, recognized ancient dream category.

2. Who is named as an example of this kind of dream? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Abraham, in an earlier part of Genesis
- B) A king of Egypt during a famine
- ✓ C) Gudea, a ruler of the city of Lagash
- D) A prophet living near the Dead Sea

Why: The passage names Gudea, ruler of Lagash, as the example.

3. In this passage, "instructions" most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- ✓ A) clear directions
- B) a vague, unclear feeling
- C) a written law with punishments
- D) a question with no clear answer

Why: The god gives Gudea specific instructions, meaning clear directions to follow.

4. What does the passage say Gudea's dream CANNOT do? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ **A) Prove anything about Jacob's own experience at Bethel**

B) Show that the ancient world recognized this dream type

C) Come from centuries before Genesis takes place

D) Describe a god giving a clear message in sleep

Why: The passage is careful to say Gudea's dream cannot prove anything about Jacob's own experience.

5. Why might an ancient reader have found Jacob's dream unsurprising in its basic shape?

(SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

A) No one before Jacob had ever reported a dream at all.

✓ **B) This kind of dream was already a recognized category.**

C) Ancient readers never paid attention to dreams in stories.

D) The dream was identical to Gudea's in every detail.

Why: The passage says this dream type was already recognized, so its basic shape would not surprise an ancient reader.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

A) A single scholar's personal opinion with no source

B) A modern retelling with no ancient sources at all

✓ **C) A specific, roughly dated ancient text**

D) A legend with no connection to any real ruler

Why: The passage points to Gudea's actual dated text as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what is genuinely different about Jacob's dream compared to Gudea's? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

A) The fact that Jacob was also asleep at the time

B) The fact that a dream was involved at all

C) The general shape of a god delivering a clear message

✓ **D) The message and the identity of the God who gives it**

Why: The passage says the message and the God's identity are Jacob's own, even though the dream category is shared.

Part 3

Jacob's Marriages and a Growing Family · Genesis 29–30

Overview

What Happens in Part 3

Genesis 29 follows Jacob to a well near Haran, where he meets Rachel, Laban's younger daughter, and rolls the stone away to water her flock. Laban welcomes him as family, and Jacob agrees to serve seven years in exchange for marrying Rachel. On the wedding night, Laban substitutes Leah, his older daughter, instead; Jacob discovers the trick only the next morning. Laban explains that the younger cannot be married before the older, and gives Jacob Rachel as well a week later, in exchange for seven more years of service. Leah, aware she is loved less than her sister, bears four sons in a row — Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah — each name tied to something Leah says about her situation. Genesis 30 opens with Rachel, still childless, envying her sister; she gives her servant Bilhah to Jacob, and Bilhah bears two sons Rachel counts as her own. Leah, no longer bearing children herself for a time, gives her servant Zilpah to Jacob as well, and Zilpah bears two more sons. Leah later bears two more sons and a daughter, Dinah, and Rachel finally bears a son of her own, Joseph. With his large family grown, Jacob asks Laban to let him return home, and the two negotiate new wages: Jacob will keep every speckled, spotted, and dark-colored animal born from Laban's flocks from now on. Jacob uses a breeding method involving branches, and his own flocks grow very large, while Laban's grow weaker.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for service, family, and increase: served, wept, conceived, hated, wages, increased, speckled
Bible Study	How Genesis explains almost every one of Jacob's sons through the reason given for his name
Scripture Discovery	A real ancient wedding custom, and a widespread ancient belief about breeding animals

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
29	Tricked into Two Marriages — Jacob meets Rachel at a well and serves Laban seven years to marry her. Laban substitutes Leah instead, then gives Jacob Rachel too for seven more years of

	service. Leah bears four sons while Rachel remains childless.
30	A Family Grows — Rachel and Leah each give Jacob a servant to bear children on their behalf. More sons are born, Rachel finally bears Joseph, and Jacob negotiates new wages with Laban before his flocks grow very large.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · A Wedding Lasted a Week, Not an Afternoon *[Word Study · Ancient Custom]*

Word Study · Ancient Custom After Jacob discovers he has married Leah, Laban tells him to finish out her bridal week before receiving Rachel too. Genesis 29 mentions completing a bridal week without stopping to explain what that means — the idea of a wedding measured in days, not hours, is simply treated as ordinary. A multi-day wedding feast shows up elsewhere in the Bible's own world too: Samson's wedding in the book of Judges also lasts seven days. A detail mentioned this briefly, with no explanation attached, is often a sign of how deeply a story is rooted in an ordinary custom of its own time.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
served	v. · Gen 29:20	Worked for someone, especially for a set period of time	<i>"Jacob served seven years in exchange for marrying Rachel."</i>
wept	v. · Gen 29:11	Cried, especially with strong emotion	<i>"Jacob kissed Rachel and wept aloud."</i>
conceived	v. · Gen 29:32	Became pregnant	<i>"Leah conceived and bore a son, naming him Reuben."</i>
hated	v. · Gen 29:31	Strongly disliked, the opposite of loved	<i>"When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb."</i>
wages	n. · Gen 30:28	Payment given for work	<i>"Laban tells Jacob to name his wages, and he will pay them."</i>
increased	v. · Gen 30:30	Grew larger in number or amount	<i>"Jacob's flocks increased greatly after their new agreement."</i>
speckled	adj. · Gen 30:32	Marked with many small spots of color	<i>"Jacob asks for every speckled and spotted animal as his wages."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. To work for someone, especially for a set period of time, is to ____ them. (Gen 29:20)

A) conceive

✓ B) serve

C) increase

D) hate

Why: Jacob serves Laban seven years in exchange for marrying Rachel.

2. In Genesis 29, Jacob discovers he has married Leah on the very same night, before morning.

(Gen 29:25)

✓ Answer: FALSE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 29:32)

Word choices: *conceived · increased · served · hated*

Leah conceived and bore a son, naming him Reuben.

4. Payment given for work is called _____. (Gen 30:28)

✓ A) wages

B) a blessing

C) a birthright

D) an oath

Why: Laban tells Jacob to name his wages, and he will pay them.

5. In Genesis 30, Jacob's flocks increased greatly after his new agreement with Laban. (Gen 30:30–43)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 29, Leah is loved exactly the same as Rachel from the very beginning. (Gen 29:30–31)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 30:32)

Word choices: *speckled · increased · wages · wept*

Jacob asks for every speckled and spotted animal as his wages.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · A Name for Every Reason [Close Reading · A Pattern Worth Tracking]

Close Reading · A Pattern Worth Tracking Almost every one of Jacob's sons in Genesis 29–30 gets a name tied to a specific reason his mother gives at the moment of birth — Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, and several more each come with their own short explanation. A careful reader who tracks these reasons side by side notices they are not random: several of Leah's early sons' names connect to being unloved, while later names shift tone. Reading each naming moment on its own is one thing; lining several of them up together lets a reader see the whole family's story emerging through nothing but a list of names.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What does Jacob agree to do in exchange for marrying Rachel? (Gen 29:18–20)

- A) Give Laban half of his future flocks.
- B) Build Laban a new house.
- C) Travel back to Canaan immediately.

✓ **D) Serve Laban for seven years.**

Why: Jacob agrees to serve Laban seven years in exchange for marrying Rachel.

2. What does Laban do on the wedding night instead of giving Jacob Rachel? (Gen 29:23–25)

- A) He asks Jacob to wait one more year.
- B) He cancels the wedding entirely.

✓ **C) He gives Jacob Leah instead.**

- D) He sends both daughters away that night.

Why: Laban substitutes Leah for Rachel, and Jacob does not discover it until morning.

3. Why does Laban say he substituted Leah for Rachel? (Gen 29:26)

- A) Rachel had already left to live elsewhere.
- B) Leah had specifically asked to marry first.

✓ **C) The younger cannot be married before the older.**

- D) Jacob had not yet finished his seven years.

Why: Laban explains it is not the custom to give the younger daughter before the firstborn.

4. What new wage arrangement do Jacob and Laban agree to in Genesis 30? (Gen 30:31–34)

- A) Jacob receives a fixed sum of silver each year.

✓ **B) Jacob keeps every speckled and spotted animal born from now on.**

- C) Jacob and Laban divide every animal equally.
- D) Jacob receives half of Laban's existing flock immediately.

Why: Jacob and Laban agree that Jacob will keep every speckled, spotted, and dark-colored animal born from now on.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 29–30. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 29–30)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Jacob meets Rachel at the well and agrees to serve seven years. 2) Laban substitutes Leah for Rachel on the wedding night. 3) Jacob marries Rachel as well, after a bridal week for Leah. 4) Rachel and Leah each give Jacob a servant to bear children. 5) Rachel finally bears a son of her own, Joseph.

6. Rachel gives her servant Bilhah to Jacob because Rachel herself is childless. (Gen 30:1–3)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. By the end of Genesis 30, Jacob's flocks have grown weaker while Laban's have grown stronger. (Gen 30:43)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · Deceiver, Deceived [Literary Craft · Reversal]

Literary Craft · Reversal Jacob, who disguised himself to take his brother's blessing, now finds himself married to the wrong sister by someone else's disguise and darkness. A reversal is a sudden turn where a character experiences the very thing they once did to someone else. Genesis never states the connection directly — no verse says “now Jacob knows how Esau felt” — but a reader who remembers Genesis 27 while reading Genesis 29 can hardly miss it. Letting a reversal go unstated instead of explained is its own kind of literary choice, trusting the reader to make the connection alone.

Term	What it means
Significant naming	When a name is given for a specific, stated reason connected to the story. Almost every one of Jacob's sons receives a name tied to something his mother says at the moment of birth.
Reversal	A sudden turn where a character experiences the same kind of treatment they once gave someone else. Jacob, who deceived his father, is now deceived by Laban.
Contrast	Placing two people or things side by side so their differences stand out more sharply. Leah's and Rachel's places in Jacob's love are repeatedly set against each other.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is significant naming? (Gen 29–30)

✓ **A) A name given for a specific, stated reason**

- B) A name chosen at random with no reason given
- C) A name that never appears again in the story
- D) A name shared by every character equally

Why: Significant naming is when a name is given for a specific, stated reason connected to the story.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 29–30)

Word choices: *naming · reversal · contrast · wages*

Giving a name for a specific, stated reason is called significant naming.

3. How does Genesis 29 work as a reversal of Genesis 27, without ever saying so directly? (Gen 27, 29)

- A) Jacob openly compares his own trick to Laban's.
- B) Esau appears in Genesis 29 to comment on it.
- C) The text explicitly labels the scene a reversal.

✓ **D) Jacob the deceiver is now deceived by Laban.**

Why: Jacob, who once deceived his father, now experiences deception himself, though Genesis never states the connection directly.

4. A reversal in Genesis 29 is directly explained by the narrator, in so many words. (Gen 29)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

5. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 29)

Word choices: *contrast · naming · reversal · hated*

Placing two people side by side so their differences stand out is called contrast.

6. The contrast between Leah and Rachel appears only once, in a single verse. (Gen 29–30)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. What does the contrast between Leah and Rachel help a reader notice? (Gen 29:30–31)

- A) That the two sisters are described identically.
- B) That Genesis never mentions either sister again.

✓ **C) How sharply each sister's situation is set apart.**

- D) That Jacob treats both sisters with equal love.

Why: The contrast sharpens how differently each sister's situation is described, especially around love and children.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · A Widespread Ancient Belief About Breeding [Word Study · Ancient Belief]

Word Study · Ancient Belief Jacob's plan in Genesis 30 involves showing striped branches to breeding animals, hoping to influence the pattern of their offspring. This reflects a real belief that lasted for centuries: many ancient and later cultures believed that what a pregnant mother saw could shape her offspring's appearance. Writers as old as Aristotle and Hippocrates in ancient Greece discussed the same idea, and it remained widely believed well into more recent centuries before being set aside. Genesis 30 does not explain whether the method itself worked; it simply records what Jacob tried. The detail fits a real, widely shared ancient belief, not an idea invented only for this story.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 29–30 shows a family growing through real tension between two sisters, not a simple, untroubled story.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

- ☐ Jacob serves Laban a total of fourteen years for his two wives.
- ✓ **Rachel gives her servant Bilhah to Jacob out of her own envy.**
- ☐ Jacob and Laban agree on a new wage arrangement.
- ✓ **Several of Leah's sons' names are directly tied to feeling unloved.**
- ☐ Leah bears a daughter named Dinah.
- ✓ **Leah is described as loved less than her sister Rachel.**
- ☐ Rachel finally bears a son of her own, Joseph.

Why: The three selected details show the real tension driving this family: Leah's lesser love, Rachel's envy, and the names that carry that pain directly. The other statements are true but describe different parts of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 29–30, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

- ✓ **[Stated in Genesis 29–30] Jacob serves Laban seven years, then seven more.**
- ✓ **[Not stated there] Rachel is described as Laban's only daughter.**
- ✓ **[Stated in Genesis 29–30] Laban says the younger cannot marry before the older.**
- ✓ **[Not stated there] Jacob confronts Laban immediately on the wedding night.**
- ✓ **[Not stated there] Leah travels back to Canaan before Jacob does.**
- ✓ **[Stated in Genesis 29–30] Jacob's flocks increase greatly under the new wages.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 29–30 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Jacob → **D) Serves Laban fourteen years for his two wives**

Laban → **E) Substitutes Leah for Rachel on the wedding night**

Leah → **A) Bears four sons in a row, each name tied to a reason**

Rachel → **B) Gives her servant Bilhah to Jacob, then bears Joseph**

Jacob's flocks → **C) Increase greatly under the new wage agreement**

Why: Each match connects a person (or group) with what Genesis 29–30 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis lets the reversal between Genesis 27 and Genesis 29 go completely unstated by the narrator **[B]**, which shows that **[E]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

- A. because the two chapters have no real connection at all
- B. because it trusts the reader to notice the connection alone**
- C. because Jacob himself explains the connection out loud
- D. only directly stated connections count as real literary meaning
- E. a story can build meaning through pattern, not just direct statement**
- F. Genesis avoids ever repeating a situation twice

Why: By never stating the connection outright, Genesis relies on the reader's own memory of Genesis 27 to feel the reversal in Genesis 29 as a reversal, which is itself a real literary choice.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

A Week-Long Wedding in the Ancient World

When Laban tells Jacob to complete Leah's bridal week before receiving Rachel as well, Genesis does not pause to explain what a bridal week was. That kind of brief, unexplained mention is itself a clue: it reads like a detail the story treats as ordinary rather than something exotic worth pausing over. A multi-day wedding celebration, rather than a single short ceremony, appears again elsewhere in the Bible's own world. In the book of Judges, Samson's wedding feast is also described as lasting seven days, with a riddle told to guests across that whole span of time. Two separate accounts describing a wedding measured in days, not hours, point toward a shared custom rather than a detail invented separately for each story. Neither account explains the custom in full. That fits how ordinary, well-known customs are usually mentioned in ancient writing: briefly, without stopping to spell out something already familiar.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full biography of Samson's entire life
- ✓ B) Evidence for a real, multi-day wedding custom
- C) Instructions for planning a modern wedding
- D) A description of one specific wedding gift

Why: The passage uses two biblical accounts as evidence for a real multi-day wedding custom.

2. What second wedding does the passage compare to Jacob and Leah's? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) A wedding described later in the New Testament
- ✓ B) Samson's wedding in the book of Judges
- C) A wedding recorded outside the Bible entirely
- D) Isaac and Rebekah's wedding earlier in Genesis

Why: The passage names Samson's wedding feast in Judges as the second example.

3. In this passage, "mention" most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) a long, detailed explanation
- B) a formal legal document
- ✓ C) a brief reference
- D) a complete denial

Why: A brief, unexplained mention is a short reference, not a full explanation.

4. According to the passage, why might a detail be left unexplained in ancient writing? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ **A) It is treated as ordinary rather than exotic.**

- B) The writer forgot to include an explanation.
- C) The detail was considered unimportant to anyone.
- D) Ancient writers never explained any customs at all.

Why: The passage says a familiar custom is mentioned briefly because it is treated as ordinary, not exotic.

5. What can two separate accounts describing the same kind of custom suggest? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

- A) That one account copied the other by accident
- B) That the custom was invented twice independently
- C) That neither account can be trusted at all

✓ **D) A real, shared custom rather than an invented detail**

Why: The passage suggests two separate accounts of the same custom point toward something real and shared.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

✓ **A) Two biblical wedding accounts, compared side by side**

- B) A single scholar's personal opinion, with no source
- C) A modern retelling with no ancient sources at all
- D) An artifact excavated from an ancient wedding site

Why: The passage compares two biblical accounts of weddings as its evidence.

7. What is the passage careful to say about how fully these accounts explain the custom? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

- A) Both accounts explain the custom in complete detail.
- B) Only Samson's account explains the custom at all.
- C) The custom is explained fully outside the Bible.

✓ **D) Neither account explains the custom in full detail.**

Why: The passage notes that neither account explains the custom in full, consistent with how familiar customs are usually mentioned.

Part 4

Flight, Wrestling, and Reconciliation · Genesis 31–33

Overview

What Happens in Part 4

Genesis 31 opens with Jacob noticing Laban's sons' growing resentment and hearing God tell him to return to Canaan. Jacob leaves secretly with his wives, children, and flocks while Laban is away shearing sheep; Rachel, without telling Jacob, takes her father's household idols. Laban pursues Jacob for seven days, but God warns him in a dream not to harm Jacob. Laban confronts Jacob and searches the camp for his idols but does not find them, since Rachel has hidden them and does not get up. Jacob and Laban settle their grievances and set up a heap of stones as a witness between them, agreeing neither will cross it to harm the other; they part peacefully the next morning. Genesis 32 follows Jacob as he prepares to meet Esau again, sending messengers ahead and, hearing Esau is coming with four hundred men, dividing his camp into two groups and sending generous gifts of livestock ahead to appease him. That night, alone, a man wrestles with Jacob until daybreak; unable to overcome Jacob, the man touches his hip socket, wrenching it, yet Jacob still will not let go without a blessing. The man renames him Israel, and Jacob names the place Peniel, saying he has seen God face to face. Genesis 33 shows Esau running to meet Jacob, embracing and weeping with him rather than attacking him. Jacob presents his family and his gifts; Esau at first declines them but accepts at Jacob's insistence. The brothers part peacefully, each going his own way, and Jacob eventually settles near the city of Shechem, buying land and building an altar there.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for escape, struggle, and reunion: fled, pursued, witness, wrestled, prevailed, limped, bowed
Bible Study	How Genesis builds real tension before Jacob and Esau finally meet again
Scripture Discovery	A real ancient way of sealing an agreement with stones, and real objects behind a strange detail

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
31	Leaving Laban — Jacob leaves secretly with his family and flocks; Rachel takes her father's household idols without telling him. Laban pursues but is warned by God not to harm Jacob. The

	two set up a stone heap as a witness and part peacefully.
32	Wrestling at Peniel — Preparing to meet Esau, Jacob sends gifts ahead and divides his camp. That night, a man wrestles with him until daybreak, wrenches his hip, and renames him Israel.
33	Reconciled with Esau — Esau runs to meet Jacob and embraces him instead of attacking. Jacob's gifts are accepted, the brothers part peacefully, and Jacob settles near Shechem.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom • A Real Way to Seal an Agreement with Stones *[Word Study • Ancient Custom]*

Word Study • Ancient Custom When Jacob and Laban settle their dispute, they do not just shake hands; they pile up stones and call the heap a witness between them. Using a standing stone or a stone heap to mark an agreement or a boundary was a real, long-lasting Near Eastern practice. Carved boundary stones called kudurru, used in Babylonia to record land agreements and invoke the gods as witnesses against anyone who moved them, are a documented example of the same basic idea, even though they come from a different, later period than Jacob and Laban's own stone heap. Marking an agreement with something physical, permanent, and hard to argue with afterward was a real, recognizable way of making a promise stick.

Word	Part of Speech • Ref	Definition	Example
fled	v. • Gen 31:21	Ran away, especially secretly or in danger	<i>"Jacob fled from Laban without telling him."</i>
pursued	v. • Gen 31:23	Chased after someone or something	<i>"Laban pursued Jacob for seven days."</i>
witness	n. • Gen 31:48	Something that proves or confirms an agreement	<i>"Laban says the heap of stones will be a witness between them."</i>
wrestled	v. • Gen 32:24	Fought by grappling, holding, and struggling with someone	<i>"A man wrestled with Jacob until daybreak."</i>
prevailed	v. • Gen 32:28	Won or succeeded in a struggle	<i>"The man tells Jacob he has prevailed, or struggled and won."</i>
limped	v. • Gen 32:31	Walked unevenly because of an injury	<i>"Jacob limped as the sun rose over him."</i>
bowed	v. • Gen 33:3	Bent forward as a sign of respect	<i>"Jacob bowed to the ground seven times as he approached Esau."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. To run away, especially secretly or in danger, is to _____. (Gen 31:21)

- A) pursue
- B) wrestle
- C) bow

✓ **D) flee**

Why: Jacob flees from Laban's household without telling him.

2. In Genesis 31, Laban catches up to Jacob within a single day. (Gen 31:23)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 31:48)

Word choices: *witness · pursuit · blessing · birthright*

Laban says the heap of stones will be a witness between them.

4. To fight by grappling and struggling with someone is to ____ with them. (Gen 32:24)

- A) flee

✓ **B) wrestle**

- C) bow
- D) pursue

Why: A man wrestles with Jacob all night until daybreak.

5. In Genesis 32, Jacob walks away from his encounter completely unharmed. (Gen 32:31)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

6. In Genesis 33, Esau attacks Jacob the moment he sees him approaching. (Gen 33:4)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 33:3)

Word choices: *bowed · fled · wrestled · prevailed*

Jacob bowed to the ground seven times as he approached Esau.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · Waiting for What You Cannot Control *[Close Reading · Building Tension]*

Close Reading · Building Tension Before Jacob ever sees Esau again, Genesis slows down: messengers go ahead, gifts are counted out and sent in waves, the camp is split in two, and Jacob prays out loud, afraid. None of this changes what Esau will actually do — that is completely outside Jacob's control. A careful reader notices that the chapter spends far more space on Jacob's preparation and fear than it does on the reunion itself. Slowing down before an uncertain event, rather than rushing to it, is one way a story builds real tension for the reader as well as the character.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. Why does Jacob decide to leave Laban's household? (Gen 31:1–3)

✓ **A) He hears God tell him to return to Canaan.**

B) Laban orders him to leave immediately.

C) His wives refuse to stay any longer.

D) His flocks have all been taken by Laban's sons.

Why: Jacob leaves after God tells him directly to return to the land of his fathers.

2. What does Rachel do without telling Jacob before they leave? (Gen 31:19)

A) She sends a message ahead to Esau.

✓ **B) She takes her father's household idols.**

C) She hides Jacob's best flocks from Laban.

D) She tells Laban exactly where they are going.

Why: Rachel takes her father Laban's household idols without telling Jacob.

3. What does Jacob do to prepare for meeting Esau again? (Gen 32:7–8, 13–15)

✓ **A) He divides his camp and sends gifts of livestock ahead.**

B) He hides his entire family and flees a second time.

C) He sends a message refusing to meet Esau at all.

D) He asks Laban to come along for protection.

Why: Jacob divides his camp into two groups and sends generous gifts of livestock ahead to Esau.

4. What happens when the man wrestling Jacob cannot overcome him? (Gen 32:25)

A) He immediately gives up and walks away.

B) He calls out for other men to help him.

C) He offers Jacob silver to stop fighting.

✓ **D) He touches Jacob's hip socket, wrenching it.**

Why: Unable to prevail, the man touches Jacob's hip socket and wrenches it.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 31–33. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 31–33)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Jacob leaves Laban's household secretly with his family. 2) Laban pursues Jacob and they set up a stone witness. 3) Jacob wrestles with a man until daybreak and is renamed Israel. 4) Esau runs to meet Jacob and embraces him. 5) Jacob settles near the city of Shechem.

6. Laban finds his household idols when he searches Jacob's camp. (Gen 31:33–35)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. Esau refuses every gift Jacob offers him and accepts nothing at all. (Gen 33:10–11)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A Struggle That Leaves Its Mark [Literary Craft · Significant Naming]

Literary Craft · Significant Naming Jacob's very name recalls him grasping his brother's heel at birth, and can suggest someone who gets ahead by grabbing or tricking. At Peniel, after a night spent physically struggling rather than deceiving, Jacob is given a new name: Israel. Genesis explains the name on the spot, tying it directly to struggling. A name given for a stated reason, right at the moment it is earned, asks a reader to hold the old name and the new one side by side rather than simply swapping labels. Jacob's limp afterward works the same way — a permanent, physical reminder attached to a single night that changed how he is named for the rest of the story.

Term	What it means
Suspense	A feeling of tension a story builds by slowing down before an uncertain event. Genesis spends far more space on Jacob's fear and preparation than on his actual reunion with Esau.
Significant naming	When a name is given for a specific, stated reason connected to the story. Jacob is renamed Israel right at the moment he finishes wrestling until daybreak.
Symbol	An object or detail in a story that stands for something larger than itself. Jacob's limp becomes a lasting, physical symbol of the night he wrestled at Peniel.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is suspense, as a literary term? (Gen 32)

- A) A calm feeling with no tension at all
- B) An event explained fully before it happens
- C) A character who feels no fear at any point

✓ **D) Tension a story builds before an uncertain event**

Why: Suspense is the tension a story builds by slowing down before an uncertain event.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 32)

Word choices: *suspense · naming · symbol · witness*

Tension a story builds before an uncertain event is called suspense.

3. How does Genesis 32 build suspense before Jacob meets Esau? (Gen 32:3–21)

✓ **A) It spends far more space on Jacob's fear and preparation.**

B) It skips straight to the reunion with no lead-up.

C) It tells the reader exactly what Esau will do in advance.

D) It removes Jacob from the story until the reunion.

Why: The chapter dwells on Jacob's preparation and fear rather than rushing to the reunion.

4. Jacob's new name, Israel, is given with no reason attached at all. (Gen 32:28)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

5. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 32)

Word choices: *naming · suspense · symbol · prevailed*

Giving a name for a specific, stated reason is called significant naming.

6. Jacob's limp after Peniel is never mentioned again anywhere in his story. (Gen 32:31)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. How does Jacob's limp work as a symbol? (Gen 32:31)

A) It has no connection to the wrestling match at all.

✓ **B) It becomes a lasting reminder of the night at Peniel.**

C) It disappears completely within the same chapter.

D) It only matters to Esau, not to Jacob himself.

Why: The limp becomes a permanent, physical symbol tied to the night Jacob wrestled at Peniel.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Small Statues, Really Excavated [Archaeology · Material Evidence]

Archaeology · Material Evidence Rachel takes her father's household idols without Genesis ever explaining why, but the objects themselves are well documented outside Genesis. Archaeologists have excavated small household figurines, made of clay, wood, and metal, at sites across the ancient Near East. Scholars have long argued about why objects like these mattered enough to steal: an older proposal tied owning them to property inheritance, but a widely-cited 1962 study argued instead that they marked who counted as head of the family. Genesis itself never states Rachel's own reason for taking them, and what the story assumes — that a household kept small idols worth stealing and worth searching for — matches a real, physically excavated ancient practice, whichever explanation is correct.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 31–33 shows real danger giving way to real peace, without pretending the danger was never serious.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

✓ **Esau runs to meet Jacob and embraces him instead of attacking.**

☐ Rachel takes her father's household idols without telling Jacob.

☐ A man wrestles with Jacob until daybreak at Peniel.

✓ **Laban pursues Jacob for seven days before they settle their dispute.**

☐ Jacob settles near the city of Shechem.

✓ **Jacob divides his camp in two, fearing Esau might attack.**

☐ Jacob is renamed Israel after the struggle.

Why: The three selected details trace real danger giving way to real peace directly: Laban's pursuit resolved, Jacob's real fear of Esau, and Esau's actual embrace instead of an attack. The other statements are true but describe different parts of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 31–33, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 31–33] Jacob and Laban set up a heap of stones as a witness.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Laban physically harms Jacob during their confrontation.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 31–33] Jacob's hip is wrenched during the wrestling match.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 31–33] Esau initially declines Jacob's gifts, then accepts them.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Esau brings his own household idols to the reunion.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Jacob and Esau travel together for the rest of their lives.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 31–33 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Rachel → **D) Takes her father's household idols without telling Jacob**

Laban → **A) Pursues Jacob, then sets up a stone witness with him**

The man at Peniel → **E) Wrestles with Jacob and renames him Israel**

Esau → **B) Runs to meet Jacob and embraces him**

Jacob → **C) Settles near Shechem after reconciling with Esau**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 31–33 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis spends far more space on Jacob's fear and preparation than on the actual reunion with Esau **[A]**, which shows that **[F]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. because slowing down before an uncertain event builds real tension

B. because the reunion itself was considered unimportant

C. because Jacob's preparation lasted longer than the whole book

D. pacing has no real effect on how a reader feels

E. only the ending of a scene ever matters to a reader

F. a story can shape how tense an event feels through its pacing

Why: By dwelling on Jacob's fear and preparation rather than rushing to the reunion, Genesis uses pacing itself to build real suspense before Esau's actual, peaceful reaction lands.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

Stones That Speak for an Agreement

When Jacob and Laban finally settle their dispute, they do not rely on a spoken promise alone. They pile up stones into a heap and both agree it will stand as a witness between them. Using a standing stone, or a heap of stones, to mark an agreement or a boundary was a real, long-lasting practice across the ancient Near East. In Babylonia, carved boundary stones called kudurru recorded land agreements in permanent writing, invoking the region's gods as witnesses and warning against anyone who moved the marker later. These particular carved stones come from a different, later period than Jacob and Laban's own story, so they cannot prove exactly what a stone heap meant in the patriarchs' own time. What they do show is a real, recognizable idea used across a long span of Near Eastern history. Marking an agreement with something physical and hard to move gave a promise a kind of permanence. A spoken word alone, on its own, could not do the same.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full biography of a Babylonian king
- B) Instructions for carving an ancient inscription
- C) A description of one single boundary dispute

✓ **D) A real practice of marking agreements with stone**

Why: The passage uses kudurru stones as evidence for a real ancient practice of marking agreements with stone.

2. What are the carved Babylonian boundary stones in the passage called? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Ziggurats
- B) Ostraca

✓ **C) Kudurru**

- D) Steles of Ur

Why: The passage names these carved boundary stones kudurru.

3. In this passage, “permanent” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) hidden and hard to find
- B) spoken instead of written

✓ **C) lasting**

- D) temporary and soon forgotten

Why: Writing meant to last and warn future generations is permanent, not easily changed.

4. What does the passage say the kudurru stones CANNOT prove? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ A) What a stone heap meant in the patriarchs' own time

B) That ancient peoples used stones to mark agreements

C) That the stones invoked gods as witnesses

D) That the stones came from ancient Babylonia

Why: The passage says the kudurru, from a later period, cannot prove exactly what Jacob and Laban's own stone heap meant.

5. Why might marking an agreement with stone have mattered to ancient peoples? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

A) Stone markers were required by every ancient government.

B) Spoken agreements were never trusted in the ancient world.

✓ C) A physical marker was harder to move than a spoken word.

D) Stone was the only material available for any writing.

Why: The passage says a physical, hard-to-move marker gave a promise a kind of permanence a spoken word could not.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

A) A single scholar's personal opinion

✓ B) Carved boundary stones from ancient Babylonia

C) A modern retelling with no ancient sources

D) A legend with no physical evidence at all

Why: The passage points to actual carved kudurru stones as its evidence.

7. What is the passage careful to say about the kudurru stones and Jacob and Laban's own agreement? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

A) They describe the exact same agreement in full detail.

B) They were carved by Jacob and Laban themselves.

✓ C) They come from a different, later period of history.

D) They have no connection to marking agreements at all.

Why: The passage is careful to note the kudurru stones come from a different, later period than Jacob and Laban's story.

Part 5

Joseph the Dreamer · Genesis 35–37

Overview

What Happens in Part 5

Jacob settles near Shechem for a time. Then, in Genesis 35, God tells him to go up to Bethel and build an altar there. Jacob has his household put away their foreign idols and purify themselves first; at Bethel, God appears to Jacob again, confirms his name Israel, and repeats the covenant promise. Traveling on, Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin, and Jacob sets up a pillar at her grave. Isaac then dies at a great age, and Esau and Jacob bury him together. Genesis 36 briefly records Esau's own descendants, who grow into a great people called Edom, settling in a different region from Jacob's family. Genesis 37 turns to seventeen-year-old Joseph, whom Israel loves more than his other sons and gives a special robe. Joseph's brothers resent this favoritism, and their resentment grows when Joseph tells them of two dreams that suggest he will one day rule over them. When Joseph comes to check on his brothers in the field, they seize him and conspire to be rid of him; at Reuben's suggestion, they throw him into an empty pit instead of killing him outright, and then, at Judah's suggestion, sell him to a caravan of traders bound for Egypt for twenty shekels of silver. The brothers dip Joseph's robe in goat's blood and let Jacob believe a wild animal has killed him. Jacob mourns deeply and refuses to be comforted, while Joseph is sold in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for worship, planning, and grief: purify, pillar, conspired, pit, sold, mourned, blessed
Bible Study	How a story lets the reader know something a character in the story does not
Scripture Discovery	Ancient trade goods carried by caravan, and what a slave typically cost in this era

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
35	Return to Bethel — God tells Jacob to return to Bethel and build an altar; Jacob's household puts away its idols first. God confirms Jacob's name Israel and repeats his covenant promise. Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin, and Isaac later dies at a great age.

36	Esau's Descendants — Esau's family grows into a great people called Edom, settling apart from Jacob's family in a different region.
37	Joseph Sold into Slavery — Israel's favoritism toward Joseph, and Joseph's own dreams of ruling over his brothers, deepen his brothers' resentment. They sell him to traders bound for Egypt and deceive Jacob into believing he is dead.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · What a Caravan Actually Carried [Word Study · Ancient Trade]

Word Study · Ancient Trade The traders who buy Joseph are described carrying gum, balm, and myrrh down to Egypt. These were valuable goods moving along a documented ancient trade route between Canaan and Egypt. Balm and myrrh were used as perfume, medicine, and in embalming, and both are named elsewhere in the Bible as gifts fit for kings. A caravan carrying aromatic goods toward Egypt, a major market for exactly this kind of luxury import, matches this trade pattern rather than a vague, unspecified journey. The detail places Joseph's sale inside a working economy, not just a dramatic scene.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
purify	v. · Gen 35:2	To make clean, especially in preparation for worship	<i>"Jacob tells his household to purify themselves before going to Bethel."</i>
pillar	n. · Gen 35:14	An upright stone or post set up as a marker or memorial	<i>"Jacob sets up a pillar at the place where God spoke to him."</i>
conspired	v. · Gen 37:18	Planned secretly together to do something wrong	<i>"Joseph's brothers conspired against him to kill him."</i>
pit	n. · Gen 37:24	A deep hole in the ground	<i>"The brothers throw Joseph into an empty pit."</i>
sold	v. · Gen 37:28	Given to someone else in exchange for payment	<i>"The brothers sold Joseph to the traders for twenty shekels of silver."</i>
mourned	v. · Gen 37:34	Showed deep sorrow, especially over a death	<i>"Jacob mourned for his son many days."</i>
blessed	v. · Gen 35:9	Given words of favor and future good, especially by God	<i>"God appeared to Jacob again at Bethel and blessed him."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. To make clean, especially before worship, is to ____ yourself. (Gen 35:2)

A) conspire

B) mourn

✓ C) purify

D) bless

Why: Jacob tells his household to purify themselves before they go up to Bethel.

2. In Genesis 35, a 'pillar' is a kind of tent used for temporary shelter. (Gen 35:14)

✓ Answer: FALSE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 37:18)

Word choices: *conspired · purified · mourned · blessed*

Joseph's brothers conspired against him to kill him.

4. A deep hole in the ground is called a _____. (Gen 37:24)

✓ A) pit

B) pillar

C) robe

D) caravan

Why: Reuben suggests throwing Joseph into an empty pit instead of killing him.

5. In Genesis 37, the brothers sold Joseph to traders for twenty shekels of silver. (Gen 37:28)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 37, Jacob quickly accepts Joseph's death and moves on within a day. (Gen 37:34–35)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 35:9)

Word choices: *blessed · sold · purified · pillar*

At Bethel, God appeared to Jacob again and blessed him.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · What the Reader Knows That Jacob Doesn't *[Close Reading · A Gap in Knowledge]*

Close Reading · A Gap in Knowledge By the end of Genesis 37, a reader knows something Jacob does not: Joseph is alive, sold into Egypt, not killed by a wild animal at all. Jacob mourns believing the false story his own sons invented. A careful reader notices this gap — what the reader has been shown versus what a character inside the story actually believes. Genesis states plainly what happened to Joseph before it ever returns to Jacob's grief, so the reader watches Jacob mourn already knowing the full truth he does not have. Tracking who knows what, and when, is one way a passage builds genuine emotional weight.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. Why do Joseph's brothers resent him even before his dreams? (Gen 37:3–4)

- A) Joseph refuses to work in the fields at all.
- B) Joseph is the oldest of Israel's sons.
- C) Joseph asks Israel to send his brothers away.

✓ **D) Israel loves him more and gives him a special robe.**

Why: Israel's favoritism toward Joseph, shown through the special robe, already stirs his brothers' resentment.

2. What do Joseph's dreams suggest will happen? (Gen 37:5–9)

- A) His family will move permanently to Egypt.
- B) His father will disown him completely.
- ✓ **C) His brothers will one day bow down to him.**
- D) He will become a shepherd like his brothers.

Why: Both of Joseph's dreams picture his brothers bowing down to him.

3. What does Reuben suggest instead of killing Joseph outright? (Gen 37:21–22)

- A) Sending him back home immediately.
- ✓ **B) Throwing him into an empty pit.**
- C) Selling him to Potiphar directly.
- D) Hiding him in Jacob's own tent.

Why: Reuben suggests throwing Joseph into a pit instead of killing him directly.

4. What do the brothers do to deceive Jacob about Joseph? (Gen 37:31–33)

- A) They send a servant to describe a fake burial.
- B) They write a letter claiming Joseph ran away.
- ✓ **C) They dip Joseph's robe in goat's blood.**
- D) They ask Reuben to tell Jacob directly.

Why: The brothers dip Joseph's robe in goat's blood to make Jacob believe an animal killed him.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 35–37. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 35–37)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Jacob's household puts away its idols before going to Bethel. 2) Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin. 3) Joseph tells his brothers about his two dreams. 4) The brothers throw Joseph into a pit. 5) The brothers sell Joseph to traders bound for Egypt.

6. God confirms Jacob's name as Israel again at Bethel. (Gen 35:10)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. Judah suggests selling Joseph to the traders rather than leaving him in the pit. (Gen 37:26–27)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A Dream That Comes True Later [Literary Craft · Foreshadowing]

Literary Craft · Foreshadowing Joseph's two dreams — sheaves bowing, then the sun, moon, and stars bowing — point directly at events that have not happened yet in the story. When a passage plants a clear hint of something that will actually occur later, that technique is called foreshadowing. Genesis does not hide that these are real predictions; even Jacob and the brothers immediately understand what the dreams suggest. Foreshadowing does not remove suspense from a story; it changes what a reader is watching for, since a reader who notices the dreams reads the rest of Joseph's story waiting to see exactly how they come true.

Term	What it means
Foreshadowing	A clear hint, early in a story, of something that will actually happen later. Joseph's two dreams point directly at events that occur much later in his story.
Dramatic irony	When a reader knows something a character in the story does not. The reader knows Joseph is alive while Jacob mourns him as dead.
Symbol	A visible thing that stands for a bigger meaning beyond itself. Joseph's robe stands for his father's favor, then becomes false evidence of his death.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is foreshadowing? (Gen 37)

✓ **A) A clear hint of something that happens later**

B) A summary of events after they occur

C) A character's private, unstated opinion

D) A description with no connection to the plot

Why: Foreshadowing is a clear hint, early in a story, of something that will actually happen later.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 37)

Word choices: foreshadowing · irony · symbol · pillar

A hint of something that happens later in the story is called **foreshadowing**.

3. What makes Jacob's mourning in Genesis 37 an example of dramatic irony? (Gen 37:34–35)

A) Jacob and the reader learn the truth at the exact same moment.

B) Jacob is the only one who knows the full truth.

C) The passage never reveals what actually happened to Joseph.

✓ **D) The reader knows Joseph is alive while Jacob believes he is dead.**

Why: Dramatic irony here means the reader already knows Joseph is alive while Jacob mourns him as dead.

4. Joseph's robe functions as a symbol of his father's favor earlier in the chapter. (Gen 37:3)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

5. Foreshadowing means an event is described only after it has already happened. (Gen 37)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 37)

Word choices: *irony · foreshadowing · symbol · pit*

A reader knowing something a character does not is called dramatic **irony**.

7. How does the robe's meaning change across Genesis 37? (Gen 37:3–33)

A) It stays exactly the same symbol throughout the chapter.

B) It is never mentioned again after Joseph receives it.

✓ **C) It moves from a symbol of favor to false evidence of death.**

D) It becomes a symbol only after Joseph reaches Egypt.

Why: The robe shifts from a symbol of Israel's favor to the false evidence the brothers use to deceive him.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · A Price Scholars Connect to Its Own Time [Archaeology · Economic History]

Archaeology · Economic History Joseph is sold for twenty shekels of silver. Old Babylonian legal records, including documents from the city of Mari and the laws of Hammurabi, list a typical slave's price in roughly this same era at about twenty shekels, give or take a little; records from a few centuries later, at Nuzi and Ugarit, show prices closer to thirty shekels, and centuries after that, under the Assyrians and Persians, prices climbed far higher still. Because Genesis 37's number lines up with the earlier cluster rather than the later ones, some scholars point to it as a sign that the number belongs to an early period in this economy, rather than being a figure picked at random for the story.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 35–37 shows God's covenant continuing with Jacob's family even as real grief and real conflict unfold within it.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

✓ **God confirms Jacob's name Israel again at Bethel.**

✓ **God repeats his covenant promise to Jacob at Bethel.**

☐ Esau's family grows into the nation of Edom.

✓ **Jacob sets up a pillar to mark where God spoke to him.**

☐ The brothers sell Joseph to traders bound for Egypt.

☐ Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin.

☐ Joseph's brothers resent him for his father's favoritism.

Why: The three selected details show God's covenant being confirmed, repeated, and marked at Bethel. The other statements are true but describe a different part of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 35–37, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Not stated there] Reuben is described as the one who sells Joseph to the traders.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 35–37] Jacob's household puts away its foreign idols.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 35–37] Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Joseph is described as afraid throughout the pit and sale.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 35–37] Joseph is sold for twenty shekels of silver.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Potiphar is named as a relative of Jacob's family.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 35–37 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Jacob → **C) Sets up a pillar and is confirmed as Israel at Bethel**

Rachel → **A) Dies giving birth to Benjamin**

Joseph → **B) Given a special robe and shares two dreams**

Reuben → **E) Suggests throwing Joseph into a pit instead of killing him**

Judah → **D) Suggests selling Joseph to the traders**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 35–37 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis lets the reader learn Joseph is sold into Egypt before returning to show Jacob mourning him as dead because **[A]** , which shows that **[E]** .

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. the gap in knowledge makes Jacob's grief feel heavier to the reader

B. the passage forgot to mention Joseph's fate earlier

C. Jacob actually already knew the truth the whole time

D. Genesis never reveals any character's fate in advance

E. Genesis uses what a reader knows to shape how a scene feels

F. the order events are told in never affects a reader

Why: By telling the reader Joseph is alive before showing Jacob's grief, Genesis creates a real gap between what the reader knows and what Jacob believes, making the mourning scene land with more weight.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

What a Caravan Was Worth

Genesis 37 names specific goods carried by the traders who buy Joseph: gum, balm, and myrrh, headed toward Egypt. Balm and myrrh were valuable aromatic resins used across the ancient Near East for perfume, medicine, and embalming, and both appear elsewhere in ancient writing as gifts considered fit for royalty. Egypt, in particular, was a major market for these imported goods, since embalming alone required a steady supply of aromatic resin. A caravan traveling from Canaan toward Egypt carrying exactly this kind of cargo reflects a documented trade route, not a route invented only for this story. Old Babylonian records from roughly the same era also inform the number attached to Joseph's own sale. Slave prices in those records cluster near twenty shekels of silver, a price that climbed noticeably higher in later centuries, and some scholars point to this cluster as one sign that Genesis 37's price belongs to an early period rather than being chosen at random. A single trade route and a handful of price records cannot describe every transaction in the ancient world, but together they show that Genesis 37 sits inside an economically consistent setting.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full biography of one Egyptian trader
- B) Instructions for embalming a body today
- C) A description of a single caravan's route map

✓ **D) Evidence for an ancient trade route and price**

Why: The passage uses trade goods and price records as evidence for an ancient trade route and price.

2. What goods does the passage say the traders were carrying? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Wheat, barley, and oil
- ✓ **B) Gum, balm, and myrrh**
- C) Gold, silver, and bronze
- D) Wool, linen, and dye

Why: The passage names gum, balm, and myrrh as the goods the traders carried.

3. In this passage, “reflects” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) denies
- ✓ **B) mirrors**
- C) hides
- D) invents

Why: A caravan that reflects a documented trade route mirrors, or matches, that pattern.

4. Why was Egypt described as a major market for balm and myrrh? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Egypt produced no aromatic resin of its own ever.
- B) Egyptian law banned the use of any perfume.
- C) Egypt refused to trade with any caravan at all.

✓ **D) Embalming required a steady supply of aromatic resin.**

Why: The passage says embalming alone required a steady supply of aromatic resin, making Egypt a major market.

5. What do some scholars think the Old Babylonian price records suggest about Joseph's sale?

(SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

✓ **A) The price may point to an early period, not a random number.**

- B) The price was far higher than any recorded sale.
- C) No slave was ever sold for silver in that era.
- D) The price stayed fixed the same in every century after.

Why: The passage says some scholars point to the price cluster as a sign the number belongs to an early period, not a random figure.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

✓ **A) Trade goods and price records from documents**

- B) A single scholar's personal opinion
- C) A modern retelling with no ancient sources
- D) A legend with no textual evidence at all

Why: The passage points to trade goods and price records from ancient documents as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot this evidence show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading ·

Synthesis)

- A) It proves the exact date of Joseph's own sale

✓ **B) It shows a consistent setting, not every deal**

- C) It cannot show anything reliable about the era
- D) It shows the price of every slave ever sold

Why: The passage is careful: the evidence shows a consistent economic setting without claiming to describe every transaction ever made.

Part 6

Joseph in Egypt: Prison to Palace · Genesis 39–41

Overview

What Happens in Part 6

Genesis 39 follows Joseph into Potiphar's household in Egypt, where the LORD is with him and everything he does succeeds; Potiphar places him in charge of his entire house. Potiphar's wife repeatedly asks Joseph to do wrong with her; he refuses each time, and when she finally grabs his garment, he flees the house, leaving it behind. She uses the garment as false evidence and accuses Joseph, and Potiphar has him imprisoned. Even in prison, the LORD is with Joseph, and the keeper puts him in charge of the other prisoners. Genesis 40 introduces two of Pharaoh's officials, a cupbearer and a baker, imprisoned alongside Joseph. Both have troubling dreams on the same night, and Joseph interprets them with God's help: the cupbearer will be restored to his position in three days, and the baker will be executed in three days. Both happen exactly as Joseph said, but the cupbearer forgets Joseph once he is free. Genesis 41 opens two full years later, when Pharaoh has two troubling dreams of his own that none of his wise men can explain. The cupbearer finally remembers Joseph, who is brought from prison and interprets both dreams as one message: seven years of great abundance in Egypt, followed by seven years of severe famine. Joseph advises Pharaoh to store up grain during the abundant years, and Pharaoh, impressed, appoints Joseph second-in-command over all of Egypt, giving him his own signet ring, fine linen, and a gold chain. Joseph oversees the grain storage during the years of abundance, and when the famine begins exactly as predicted, Egypt alone has grain.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for refusal, waiting, and plenty: refused, prison, interpret, cupbearer, famine, abundance, succeeded
Bible Study	How the same kind of event, a pair of dreams needing interpretation, repeats across the whole story with real variation
Scripture Discovery	Separately attested pieces of ancient Egyptian custom for raising an official to high office

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
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39	Falsely Accused — The LORD makes Joseph succeed in Potiphar's household. Potiphar's wife repeatedly asks Joseph to do wrong; he refuses and flees when she grabs his garment. She falsely accuses him, and he is imprisoned, where the LORD remains with him.
40	Dreams in Prison — Joseph interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker, exactly as each comes true within three days. The cupbearer is restored to his position but forgets Joseph once freed.
41	From Prison to Palace — Two years later, Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams as seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine. Pharaoh appoints Joseph second-in-command over Egypt to prepare for it.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom • Pieces of a Real Egyptian Elevation *[Word Study • Ancient Egyptian Custom]*

Word Study • Ancient Egyptian Custom When Pharaoh raises Joseph to power, he gives him a signet ring, dresses him in fine linen, and places a gold chain around his neck. Each item had its own attested role in ancient Egyptian custom: a signet ring let its holder seal documents and issue orders with Pharaoh's own authority; fine linen marked high status visibly; and a gold collar, known as “gold of honor,” was a documented reward Egyptian officials received for exceptional service, shown in tomb paintings from more than one period. Genesis 41 does not invent these items; it draws Joseph's rise from recognizable pieces of Egyptian elevation custom, even though no single Egyptian text lists all three together as one fixed ceremony.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
refused	v. · Gen 39:8	Said no to something, especially something wrong	<i>“Joseph refused Potiphar's wife's repeated requests.”</i>
prison	n. · Gen 39:20	A place where people are held as punishment	<i>“Potiphar has Joseph put into prison.”</i>
interpret	v. · Gen 40:8	To explain the meaning of something, especially a dream	<i>“Joseph tells the officials that only God can interpret their dreams.”</i>
cupbearer	n. · Gen 40:1	A court official who served the king's wine	<i>“Pharaoh's cupbearer is imprisoned alongside Joseph.”</i>
famine	n. · Gen 41:30	A time when there is not enough food	<i>“Joseph warns Pharaoh of seven years of famine to come.”</i>
abundance	n. · Gen 41:29	A very large amount of something, more than enough	<i>“Egypt will have seven years of great abundance first.”</i>
succeeded	v. · Gen 39:3	Turned out well; achieved a good result	<i>“Whatever Joseph did, the LORD made it succeed.”</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. To say no to something, especially something wrong, is to ____ it. (Gen 39:8)

✓ A) refuse

B) interpret

C) succeed

D) accuse

Why: Joseph refuses Potiphar's wife's repeated requests to do wrong.

2. In Genesis 39, Joseph chooses to go to prison willingly, without any accusation against him.

(Gen 39:19–20)

✓ Answer: FALSE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 40:8)

Word choices: *interpret · refuse · succeed · famine*

Joseph tells the officials that only God can interpret their dreams.

4. A court official who served the king's wine was called a _____. (Gen 40:1)

A) vizier

B) baker

✓ C) cupbearer

D) keeper

Why: Pharaoh's cupbearer is imprisoned alongside Joseph in Genesis 40.

5. In Genesis 41, Joseph warns Pharaoh of seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine. (Gen 41:29–30)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 39, everything Joseph does fails because the LORD has abandoned him. (Gen 39:3)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 41:29)

Word choices: *abundance · famine · prison · cupbearer*

Joseph says Egypt will first have seven years of great abundance.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · The Same Kind of Event, Three Times *[Close Reading · A Pattern Across Chapters]*

Close Reading · A Pattern Across Chapters Joseph's own two dreams appear in Genesis 37. The cupbearer and baker each have a dream in Genesis 40. Pharaoh has two dreams in Genesis 41. A careful reader notices this is not one isolated event but a pattern repeated across the whole story, always involving a pair of dreams and the need for interpretation. Each repetition is not identical: the stakes grow larger and the outcome shifts, from Joseph's own future, to two prisoners' fates, to the future of an entire nation. Tracking a pattern like this across several chapters, not just one, helps a reader see how the whole story is built, not just how one scene works.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What happens to Joseph in Potiphar's household before the false accusation? (Gen 39:2–6)

- A) He immediately requests to be sent back to Canaan.
- B) He refuses to work and is punished right away.
- ✓ C) **Everything he does succeeds under Potiphar.**
- D) He asks Potiphar for his freedom repeatedly.

Why: The LORD makes everything Joseph does succeed, and Potiphar puts him in charge of his whole house.

2. What does Joseph do when Potiphar's wife grabs his garment? (Gen 39:12)

- ✓ A) **He leaves the garment behind and flees the house.**
- B) He stays and argues with her at length.
- C) He reports her immediately to Potiphar himself.
- D) He hides in the house until nightfall.

Why: Joseph leaves his garment in her hand and flees the house.

3. What does Joseph correctly predict for the cupbearer? (Gen 40:12–13)

- ✓ A) **He will be restored to his position in three days.**
- B) He will be released but never work for Pharaoh again.
- C) He will remain in prison for several more years.
- D) He will be executed alongside the baker.

Why: Joseph interprets the cupbearer's dream as restoration to his position within three days.

4. What does Joseph advise Pharaoh to do after interpreting his dreams? (Gen 41:33–36)

- A) Send all of Egypt's grain to neighboring nations immediately.
- ✓ B) **Appoint someone wise to store up grain during the abundant years.**
- C) Ignore the warning since dreams cannot be trusted.
- D) Wait until the famine begins before making any plan.

Why: Joseph advises Pharaoh to appoint someone to oversee storing grain during the seven abundant years.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 39–41. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 39–41)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Potiphar's wife falsely accuses Joseph, and he is imprisoned. 2) Joseph interprets the cupbearer's and baker's dreams. 3) The cupbearer is restored but forgets Joseph. 4) Pharaoh has two troubling dreams no one can explain. 5) Joseph is appointed second-in-command over Egypt.

6. The cupbearer remembers Joseph immediately after being restored to his position. (Gen 40:23)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. Joseph tells Pharaoh that interpreting dreams is something he can do on his own, apart from God. (Gen 41:16)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · From the Lowest Point to the Highest [Literary Craft · Reversal]

Literary Craft · Reversal In one chapter, Joseph moves from a forgotten prisoner to the second most powerful man in Egypt. A sudden, dramatic change in a character's fortune, especially from very low to very high, is called a reversal. Genesis 41 does not soften how far Joseph has fallen before it happens: he is still in prison, still forgotten, right up until the moment Pharaoh sends for him. The sharper the contrast between where a character starts and where they end up, the more forceful the reversal feels. Watching for exactly where a reversal begins helps a reader feel the full distance a character has traveled.

Term	What it means
Reversal	A sudden, dramatic change in a character's fortune, especially from a very low point to a very high one. Joseph moves from forgotten prisoner to Egypt's second-in-command within a single chapter.
Pattern across chapters	A repeated structure, like a pair of dreams needing interpretation, that appears more than once across a whole story with real variation each time.
Delayed fulfillment	When something asked for or predicted does not happen right away, but only after a real gap of time. Joseph asks to be remembered, but waits two more years before it happens.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is a reversal, as a literary term? (Gen 41)

- A) A character who never changes at all
- B) A description of a place with no characters
- C) An event that happens exactly as expected

✓ **D) A sudden change in a character's fortune**

Why: A reversal is a sudden, dramatic change in a character's fortune, especially from low to high.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 41)

Word choices: *reversal · pattern · delay · famine*

A sudden change from a low point to a high point is called a reversal.

3. What makes the pair-of-dreams event in Genesis 37, 40, and 41 a pattern across chapters?

(Gen 37–41)

A) It happens only a single time in the whole book.

✓ **B) It repeats more than once, each time with variation.**

C) Each dream is described in identical wording.

D) It never involves any interpretation at all.

Why: A pattern across chapters repeats a structure, like paired dreams, more than once with real variation.

4. Joseph waits two full years after asking the cupbearer to remember him. (Gen 41:1)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

5. Delayed fulfillment means a prediction never actually comes true. (Gen 40–41)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 40–41)

Word choices: *delayed · reversal · pattern · abundance*

A prediction that comes true only after a real gap of time shows **delayed** fulfillment.

7. Why does Joseph's reversal in Genesis 41 feel so forceful to a reader? (Gen 41:14–41)

A) The chapter never actually describes his imprisonment.

✓ **B) It keeps him at his lowest point until it happens.**

C) Pharaoh already knew Joseph before the dreams.

D) The reversal happens gradually over many years.

Why: Genesis 41 keeps Joseph at his lowest point right up until Pharaoh sends for him, sharpening the reversal.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Egypt's Real Answer to Famine: Grain Storage [Archaeology · Ancient Economy]

Archaeology · Ancient Economy Joseph's plan — storing surplus grain during good years to survive bad ones — matches a documented, practical feature of ancient Egyptian government. Egypt's harvests depended heavily on the Nile's yearly flood, and a weak flood could mean a poor harvest across the whole land. Egyptian officials are known to have overseen large state granaries, storing surplus grain precisely to guard against exactly this kind of shortfall. A single famine narrative cannot describe every Egyptian harvest across thousands of years, but the basic strategy Genesis 41 describes — a trusted official managing centralized grain storage — reflects how Egypt's government actually worked to protect against a bad flood year.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 39–41 shows God remaining with Joseph and working through him even during his lowest circumstances.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

☐ Egypt experiences seven years of abundance followed by famine.

☐ Potiphar's wife falsely accuses Joseph.

✓ **The LORD makes everything Joseph does succeed, even in Potiphar's house.**

☐ Pharaoh gives Joseph a signet ring, fine linen, and a gold chain.

✓ **Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams correctly with God's help.**

✓ **The LORD remains with Joseph in prison, and he is put in charge there too.**

☐ The cupbearer forgets Joseph for two full years.

Why: The three selected details show God's continued presence with Joseph in Potiphar's house, in prison, and in the dream interpretation itself. The other statements are true but describe a different part of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 39–41, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Not stated there] Potiphar has Joseph executed for the false accusation.**

✓ **[Not stated there] The cupbearer is named as Joseph's close friend.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 39–41] Joseph flees Potiphar's house, leaving his garment behind.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 39–41] The baker is executed exactly as Joseph predicted.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Pharaoh's dreams are never actually explained.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 39–41] Pharaoh gives Joseph a signet ring and a gold chain.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 39–41 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Potiphar's wife → **C) Falsely accuses Joseph after he flees**

The cupbearer → **E) Restored to his position, but forgets Joseph**

The baker → **B) Executed exactly as Joseph predicted**

Pharaoh → **A) Appoints Joseph second-in-command over Egypt**

Joseph → **D) Interprets dreams correctly with God's help**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 39–41 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis repeats the pair-of-dreams pattern across Joseph's own dreams, the prisoners' dreams, and Pharaoh's dreams because **[C]**, which shows that **[F]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. the writer ran out of new material to include

B. every character in Genesis has exactly two dreams

C. the repeated structure lets a reader see the story's stakes grow each time

D. the dreams have no real connection to each other

E. only Joseph's own dreams matter to the story

F. Genesis builds meaning through a pattern repeated on purpose

Why: The paired-dream pattern repeats from Joseph's own future, to two prisoners' fates, to an entire nation's future, and this deliberate structure lets a reader see the story's stakes growing each time it returns.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

Made Ready for a New Official

When ancient Egypt raised a new official to a very high position, several recognizable customs marked the change, even though no single surviving text lists them together as one fixed ceremony. Egyptian records separately describe three elements: placing a signet ring on an official's hand, dressing him in fine linen, and awarding a gold collar called "gold of honor." The signet ring mattered most of all. Once it was given, the official could seal documents and issue orders that carried the full authority of Pharaoh himself, as if Pharaoh had signed them personally. Fine linen robes and a gold collar signaled the same authority visibly, so that anyone who saw the official would recognize his new rank at a glance. Tomb paintings and administrative records from ancient Egypt show each of these three elements used for officials raised to real power, across more than one period of Egyptian history. A description in one ancient story cannot describe every appointment that ever took place in Egypt, but the items it lists match documented pieces of Egyptian elevation custom, each independently attested outside the story itself.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full biography of one Egyptian official
- B) Instructions for making a modern ring
- ✓ C) Evidence for pieces of a real elevation custom
- D) A description of a single tomb's layout

Why: The passage uses Egyptian records as evidence for separate, documented pieces of an elevation custom.

2. What three items does the passage name? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) A crown, a sword, and a shield
- B) A scroll, a lamp, and a staff
- C) A robe, sandals, and a belt

✓ D) A ring, linen, and a gold collar

Why: The passage names a signet ring, fine linen, and a gold collar as the three items.

3. In this passage, "signaled" most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) hid completely
- B) questioned openly
- ✓ C) showed clearly
- D) delayed briefly

Why: Linen and a gold collar signaling authority means they showed it clearly to anyone watching.

4. Why did the signet ring matter most of all? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ **A) It let orders carry Pharaoh's own authority.**

B) It was the only item made of real gold.

C) It was given only after many years of service.

D) It had no real function beyond decoration.

Why: The passage says the ring let the official's sealed documents carry Pharaoh's full authority.

5. Why might fine linen and a gold collar have mattered beyond decoration? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

A) They were required by law to be worn at all times.

✓ **B) They let others see the official's new rank.**

C) They had no visible difference from ordinary clothing.

D) They were given only to visiting foreign officials.

Why: The passage says these items let anyone who saw the official recognize his new rank at a glance.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

A) A single scholar's personal opinion

B) A modern retelling with no ancient sources

C) A legend with no physical evidence at all

✓ **D) Tomb paintings and administrative records**

Why: The passage points to tomb paintings and administrative records as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot this evidence show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

A) It proves the exact date of every appointment

B) It cannot show anything reliable about Egypt

C) It shows the custom was only used once

✓ **D) It shows separate customs, not one fixed script**

Why: The passage is careful: the evidence shows documented pieces of custom without claiming one fixed ceremony script.

Part 7

Brothers Reunited & Family Journeys to Egypt · Genesis 42–46

Overview

What Happens in Part 7

Genesis 42 opens with famine reaching Canaan; Jacob sends ten sons to Egypt for grain, keeping only young Benjamin home. Joseph, now Egypt's governor, recognizes his brothers at once, but they do not recognize him. He accuses them of being spies, holds Simeon as security, and demands they return with Benjamin to prove their word. Genesis 43 shows the family's grain running out again; Judah personally pledges Benjamin's safety to Jacob, and Jacob finally agrees to let him go. Joseph welcomes the brothers, weeps privately at the sight of Benjamin, and hosts them at a feast. Genesis 44 has Joseph test them once more: he has his own silver cup hidden in Benjamin's sack, then sends servants after the brothers to accuse them of theft. When the cup is found, Judah offers himself as a slave in Benjamin's place rather than let their father lose another son. Genesis 45 shows Joseph, moved by Judah's plea, unable to control himself any longer: he sends out his attendants, weeps aloud, and reveals his identity. He forgives his brothers, telling them God sent him ahead of them to preserve life, and sends them back to bring Jacob and the whole family to Egypt. Genesis 46 records God speaking to Israel in a vision at Beersheba, telling him not to be afraid to go down to Egypt, since God will go with him and bring his descendants back again. Jacob's whole family, seventy persons in all, journeys to Egypt, where Joseph meets his father and instructs his brothers on what to tell Pharaoh, since shepherds are considered beneath settled Egyptian society.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for testing, revealing, and traveling: recognized, spies, pledge, wept, forgave, vision, journeyed
Bible Study	How an author designs repeated tests to reveal whether a character has truly changed
Scripture Discovery	A documented ancient divination custom, and Egypt's own attested attitude toward foreign shepherds

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
42	Grain and Suspicion — Joseph's brothers travel to Egypt for grain; he recognizes them, but they do

	not recognize him. He accuses them of being spies and holds Simeon until Benjamin is brought.
43	Benjamin's Journey — Judah pledges Benjamin's safety, and Jacob agrees to let him go on the second trip. Joseph weeps privately at the sight of Benjamin and hosts the brothers at a feast.
44	The Silver Cup — Joseph tests his brothers by hiding his cup in Benjamin's sack. Judah offers himself as a slave in Benjamin's place rather than let Jacob lose another son.
45	Joseph Reveals Himself — Overcome by Judah's plea, Joseph reveals who he is, weeps aloud, and forgives his brothers, saying God sent him ahead to preserve life.
46	The Journey to Egypt — God tells Israel in a vision not to be afraid to go to Egypt. The whole family, seventy persons, journeys there, and Joseph meets his father.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom • A Cup, and a Claim About It *[Word Study • Ancient Divination Custom]*

Word Study • Ancient Divination Custom When Joseph's steward accuses the brothers of stealing Joseph's cup, he adds that Joseph uses it “for divination ” — reading meaning into the patterns oil or wine makes in water. Genesis never confirms that Joseph himself actually practiced this; the claim comes from the steward's accusation, not from the narrator. What the detail does capture accurately is that reading a cup this way was a real, attested Near Eastern custom, known from Mesopotamian omen texts describing exactly this practice with oil poured into water. The steward's line reflects a custom his audience would have recognized, whether or not Joseph ever actually relied on it himself.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
recognized	v. · Gen 42:8	Realized who someone was	<i>“Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.”</i>
spies	n. · Gen 42:9	People sent secretly to gather information about an enemy	<i>“Joseph accuses his brothers of being spies.”</i>
pledge	n. · Gen 43:9	A solemn promise given as personal security	<i>“Judah offers himself as a pledge for Benjamin's safety.”</i>
wept	v. · Gen 45:2	Cried, especially with strong emotion	<i>“Joseph wept aloud when he revealed who he was.”</i>
forgave	v. · Gen 45:5	Chose not to hold a wrong against someone	<i>“Joseph forgave his brothers instead of seeking revenge.”</i>
vision	n. · Gen 46:2	Something God shows a person, especially at night	<i>“God spoke to Israel in a vision at Beersheba.”</i>
journeyed	v. · Gen 46:5	Traveled from one place to another	<i>“Jacob's family journeyed to Egypt with all their belongings.”</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. To realize who someone is, is to ____ them. (Gen 42:8)

✓ A) recognize

B) pledge

C) forgive

D) journey

Why: Joseph recognizes his brothers, though they do not recognize him.

2. In Genesis 42, Joseph accuses his brothers of being spies. (Gen 42:9)

✓ Answer: TRUE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 43:9)

Word choices: *pledge · recognize · forgive · vision*

Judah offers himself as a pledge to guarantee Benjamin's safety.

4. A solemn promise given as personal security is called a _____. (Gen 43:9)

A) spy

B) vision

✓ C) pledge

D) journey

Why: Judah gives Jacob his personal pledge that he will bring Benjamin back safely.

5. In Genesis 45, Joseph wept aloud when he revealed his identity to his brothers. (Gen 45:2)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 46, God tells Jacob to be afraid of going to Egypt. (Gen 46:3)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 46:5)

Word choices: *journeyed · pledged · recognized · wept*

Jacob and his whole family journeyed to Egypt with all their belongings.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · A Dream, Fulfilled Years Later *[Close Reading · A Pattern Across the Book]*

Close Reading · A Pattern Across the Book Back in Genesis 37, teenage Joseph dreams that his brothers' sheaves of grain bow down to his own. His brothers hate him for it. Years later, in Genesis 42–43, those same brothers bow before Joseph in Egypt, not recognizing him, exactly as the dream showed. A careful reader who remembers Genesis 37 sees something a first-time reader misses: a detail planted many chapters earlier is being fulfilled in this very scene. Tracking a detail across the whole book, not just one chapter, is part of how a reader follows a long story's real shape.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What does Joseph do to his brothers on their first visit to Egypt? (Gen 42:9–17)

- A) He immediately reveals who he is to them.
- B) He refuses to sell them any grain at all.
- ✓ C) He accuses them of spying and holds Simeon.
- D) He sends them home without speaking to them.

Why: Joseph accuses his brothers of spying and holds Simeon until they return with Benjamin.

2. What does Judah personally pledge to Jacob about Benjamin? (Gen 43:8–9)

- A) He will stay in Canaan and let Benjamin travel alone.
- B) He will ask Joseph to release Simeon instead.
- C) He will refuse to travel to Egypt at all.
- ✓ D) He will bear the blame forever if Benjamin isn't returned.

Why: Judah pledges to bear the blame forever if he fails to bring Benjamin back safely.

3. What is found in Benjamin's sack that leads to his arrest? (Gen 44:12)

- ✓ A) Joseph's silver cup.
- B) A letter written by Joseph.
- C) Stolen grain from the storehouse.
- D) Money belonging to an Egyptian official.

Why: Joseph's own silver cup is found hidden in Benjamin's sack.

4. What does Judah offer instead of letting Benjamin become a slave? (Gen 44:33)

- A) All of his own possessions as payment.
- B) To let Joseph punish all the brothers equally.
- C) To return to Canaan and tell Jacob everything.
- ✓ D) Himself, to remain as a slave in Benjamin's place.

Why: Judah offers to remain as a slave in Benjamin's place so Benjamin can go home.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 42–46. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 42–46)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Joseph accuses his brothers of being spies and holds Simeon. 2) Judah pledges Benjamin's safety so Jacob lets him travel to Egypt. 3) Joseph's silver cup is found in Benjamin's sack. 4) Joseph reveals his identity and forgives his brothers. 5) Jacob's whole family journeys to Egypt.

6. Joseph sends all his Egyptian attendants out of the room before revealing his identity. (Gen 45:1)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. God promises Jacob that he will go with him to Egypt and bring his descendants back again. (Gen 46:3–4)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · The Moment Everything Changes [Literary Craft · Recognition Scene]

Literary Craft · Recognition Scene When Joseph's brothers stand before him in Egypt, they see only a powerful Egyptian official; they have no idea he is Joseph. A moment in a story where a character's true identity becomes known to other characters is called a recognition scene. Genesis draws this out across several chapters: Joseph recognizes his brothers in Genesis 42, but he does not reveal himself until Genesis 45, when he can no longer control his emotions. Stretching the gap between what the reader already knows and what the characters finally learn builds real tension, and makes the eventual reveal land with far more force.

Term	What it means
Recognition scene	A moment where a character's true identity becomes known to other characters, often changing the whole direction of a story. Joseph reveals himself to his brothers in Genesis 45.
Full circle	When an earlier detail, dream, or event is fulfilled precisely later in the story, closing a loop that began much earlier. Joseph's brothers bowing before him fulfills the dream he had as a boy in Genesis 37.
Character test	A situation an author has a character face that is designed to reveal whether they have truly changed. Joseph repeatedly tests his brothers to see if they have changed since selling him into slavery.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is a recognition scene, as a literary term? (Gen 45)

- A) A scene with no characters present at all
- B) A moment where nothing in the story changes
- ✓ C) **A character's true identity becomes known**
- D) A description of a place with no people

Why: A recognition scene is a moment where a character's true identity becomes known to others.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 45)

Word choices: *recognition · test · circle · reversal*

A moment where a character's true identity becomes known is called a recognition scene.

3. What earlier detail from Genesis 37 comes full circle in Genesis 42–43? (Gen 37, 42–43)

✓ **A) Joseph's brothers bow before him, fulfilling his boyhood dream.**

B) Joseph's brothers formally apologize in an Egyptian court.

C) Jacob travels to Egypt to confront Joseph directly.

D) Benjamin is sold into slavery just as Joseph was.

Why: Joseph's brothers bowing before him fulfills the dream he had as a boy in Genesis 37.

4. Joseph reveals his identity the very first time he sees his brothers in Egypt. (Gen 42–45)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

5. A character test is designed to reveal whether a character has truly changed. (Gen 44)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 44)

Word choices: *test · recognition · circle · vision*

Hiding the cup in Benjamin's sack works as a character test for the brothers.

7. Why does Joseph design a series of tests instead of revealing himself right away? (Gen 42–44)

A) Because he does not yet recognize them.

✓ **B) To see whether his brothers have truly changed.**

C) Because Pharaoh orders him to test all travelers.

D) Because he plans to keep Benjamin as a slave.

Why: Joseph's repeated tests are designed to reveal whether his brothers have genuinely changed since selling him.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Egypt's Own View of Shepherds [Archaeology · Ancient Attitudes]

Archaeology · Ancient Attitudes Before the brothers meet Pharaoh, Joseph tells them shepherds are “an abomination to the Egyptians” (Gen 46:34), so they should be direct about their trade. Egyptian texts and art from this broad era show a documented pattern of favoring settled valley life over nomadic herding: royal inscriptions and wisdom texts describe wandering “Asiatic” herders unfavorably, and Egyptian tomb art regularly marks foreign herdsmen as visibly different from Egyptians, through beards, dress, or posture. Scholars still debate exactly what drove this attitude — occupation, ethnicity, or religious custom likely all played some part — but Joseph's warning to his brothers matches a real, attested current in how settled Egyptian society viewed people like them.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 42–46 shows God working through painful, carefully designed tests to reveal real change and preserve life.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

✓ **Joseph tells his brothers that God sent him ahead to preserve life.**

☐ Joseph recognizes his brothers before they recognize him.

✓ **Judah offers to stay as a slave in Benjamin's place.**

✓ **God tells Jacob not to be afraid to go down to Egypt.**

☐ Joseph weeps aloud when he reveals who he is.

☐ Judah pledges Benjamin's safety before the second trip.

☐ Jacob's whole family, seventy persons, journeys to Egypt.

Why: These three details show God working through a designed test that reveals real change (Judah's offer) toward the stated purpose of preserving life, and God's own reassurance to Jacob. The other statements are true but describe different details of the account, not this specific claim.

2. Stated in Genesis 42–46, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 42–46] Judah offers to remain as a slave in Benjamin's place.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 42–46] Joseph's silver cup is found in Benjamin's sack.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Joseph's brothers recognize him the moment they see him.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Pharaoh has Joseph's brothers imprisoned for lying to him.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Benjamin is blamed for planning the theft himself.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 42–46] God tells Jacob he will go with him to Egypt.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 42–46 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Judah → **B) Offers himself as a slave in Benjamin's place**

Joseph → **C) Reveals his identity and forgives his brothers**

Simeon → **A) Held in Egypt until the brothers return with Benjamin**

Jacob → **E) Told by God not to be afraid to go to Egypt**

Benjamin → **D) The brother whose sack conceals the silver cup**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 42–46 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis has Joseph test his brothers repeatedly before revealing himself because **[A]**, which shows that **[D]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. the tests reveal whether his brothers have truly changed

B. the writer forgot to include the earlier reveal

C. Joseph does not actually recognize them until Genesis 45

D. Genesis builds meaning through deliberately designed events

E. the story has no real structure to its tests

F. only the reader's private response to the delay matters

Why: Joseph recognizes his brothers as early as Genesis 42, but Genesis has him design test after test before the reveal, showing that the delay is a deliberate way of testing real change, not a gap in the account.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

A Trade Egypt Looked Down On

When Joseph coaches his brothers on what to tell Pharaoh, he adds a warning. Shepherds, he says, are considered an abomination to the Egyptians. This detail is not an isolated insult invented for the story. Egyptian royal inscriptions and wisdom texts from this broad era describe wandering herders from the region east of Egypt, often called “Asiatics,” in unfavorable terms. These texts contrast the herders' nomadic life with the settled order of the Nile valley. Egyptian tomb art reinforces the same pattern visually: foreign herdsmen are regularly depicted with beards, clothing, and postures that mark them as clearly different from Egyptians, who are shown clean-shaven and in Egyptian dress. Scholars still debate exactly what drove this attitude, since occupation, ethnicity, and religious custom likely all played some part, and no single Egyptian text explains the attitude in full. Even so, the general pattern is documented across more than one kind of ancient evidence. This means Joseph's warning to his brothers reflects a real current in how settled Egyptian society viewed people who lived as they did.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full biography of one Egyptian pharaoh
- B) Instructions for herding sheep in Egypt today
- C) A description of a single Egyptian tomb painting

✓ **D) Evidence for a real Egyptian attitude toward herders**

Why: The passage uses texts and art as evidence for a documented Egyptian attitude toward foreign herders.

2. What does Egyptian tomb art do, according to the passage? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Shows Egyptians and foreign herdsmen dressed identically

✓ **B) Marks foreign herdsmen as visibly different from Egyptians**

- C) Never depicts any foreign people at all
- D) Depicts only Egyptian shepherds, never foreign ones

Why: The passage says tomb art marks foreign herdsmen as visibly different through beard, dress, and posture.

3. In this passage, “depicted” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) denied

✓ **B) shown**

- C) questioned
- D) erased

Why: Herdsmen depicted a certain way in tomb art means they are shown that way.

4. What do Egyptian royal inscriptions and wisdom texts say about wandering herders?

(SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) They praise them as ideal Egyptian citizens.
- B) They never mention them at all.
- ✓ C) They describe them in unfavorable terms.
- D) They describe them as native-born Egyptians.

Why: The passage says these texts describe wandering herders in unfavorable terms.

5. What does the passage say scholars still debate? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

- ✓ A) Exactly what drove this Egyptian attitude
- B) Whether Egyptian tomb art exists at all
- C) Whether Joseph ever lived in Egypt
- D) Whether shepherds existed in the ancient world

Why: The passage says scholars still debate exactly what drove the Egyptian attitude, since several factors likely played a part.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

- A) A single scholar's private opinion
- B) A modern retelling with no ancient sources
- C) Only Genesis's own account, with nothing outside it

✓ D) Ancient texts and tomb art together

Why: The passage combines ancient Egyptian texts and tomb art as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot this evidence show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

- A) It proves exactly why every Egyptian felt this way

✓ B) It shows a documented pattern, not a full explanation

- C) It cannot show anything reliable about Egypt
- D) It shows the attitude appears in only one text

Why: The passage is careful: the evidence shows a documented pattern without claiming to fully explain the attitude.

Part 8

Settled in Goshen: Blessings and Burial · Genesis 47–50

Overview

What Happens in Part 8

Genesis 47 opens with Joseph presenting his father and brothers to Pharaoh, who grants them the land of Goshen for their flocks. As the famine deepens, Egyptians spend their money, then their livestock, then their land itself in exchange for grain, until nearly all of Egypt's land belongs to Pharaoh except the priests' land, which is never sold. Jacob lives his final seventeen years in Egypt and, nearing death, makes Joseph swear to bury him in Canaan rather than Egypt. Genesis 48 shows Jacob blessing Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh; he deliberately crosses his hands to place his right hand on younger Ephraim instead of older Manasseh, despite Joseph's objection. Genesis 49 gathers all twelve sons so Jacob can bless each before he dies; Judah's blessing promises that the ruler's staff will not depart from his line, and Joseph's blessing promises fruitfulness and God's continued help. Genesis 50 closes the book: Jacob is embalmed by Egyptian physicians over forty days, and Egypt mourns him for seventy days, after which he is carried back to Canaan for burial as he requested. Afterward, Joseph's brothers fear he will finally take revenge now that their father is gone, but Joseph reassures them, saying that what they intended for evil, God intended for good, to preserve many lives. Joseph himself dies in Egypt at one hundred ten, is embalmed, and is placed in a coffin, asking that his own bones be carried out of Egypt when God eventually brings the family back to the land.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for settling, blessing, and provision: settled, famine, blessed, birthright, embalmed, mourned, swear
Bible Study	How a story's very last scene can answer a question the story raised many chapters earlier
Scripture Discovery	Documented Semitic settlement in the eastern delta region, and a careful look at Egypt's embalming and mourning custom

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
47	Settled in Goshen — Pharaoh grants Jacob's family the land of Goshen. As the famine worsens,

	Egyptians trade their money, livestock, and land for grain. Jacob, nearing death, makes Joseph swear to bury him in Canaan.
48	Ephraim Before Manasseh — Jacob blesses Joseph's two sons, deliberately placing his right hand on younger Ephraim instead of older Manasseh.
49	Jacob Blesses His Sons — Jacob gathers his twelve sons to bless each before he dies. Judah's blessing promises a lasting ruling line, and Joseph's promises fruitfulness and God's continued help.
50	Burial and Faithfulness — Jacob is embalmed, mourned, and carried to Canaan for burial. Joseph reassures his fearful brothers and later dies in Egypt, asking that his bones be carried out when God brings the family back.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom • A Documented Settlement in the Delta [Word Study • Ancient Egyptian Geography]

Word Study • Ancient Egyptian Geography When Pharaoh settles Jacob's family in the land of Goshen, most scholars place the region Genesis names in the eastern Nile Delta. Archaeologists excavating a site called Tell el-Dab'a, in that part of the delta, have uncovered a large ancient settlement of Semitic-speaking people: houses built in a Levantine style distinct from typical Egyptian architecture, donkey burials matching a known Amorite and Syrian custom, and seals and scarabs carved with Semitic names. The site cannot be proven to be the exact Goshen of Genesis, but it documents something real: Semitic families did live, in large numbers, in this part of Egypt across a broad span of centuries overlapping the era Genesis describes — not an invented setting.

Word	Part of Speech • Ref	Definition	Example
settled	v. • Gen 47:27	Made a home in a place	<i>"Israel settled in the land of Goshen."</i>
famine	n. • Gen 47:20	A time when there is not enough food	<i>"The famine grows so severe that Egyptians sell their own land."</i>
blessed	v. • Gen 49:28	Given words of favor and future good, especially by a father or God	<i>"Jacob blessed each of his twelve sons before he died."</i>
birthright	n. • Gen 48:5–6	The special privilege normally belonging to an oldest son	<i>"Jacob treats Ephraim and Manasseh as if they share in Joseph's own place among his sons."</i>
embalmed	v. • Gen 50:2	Preserved a body after death using a careful process	<i>"Egyptian physicians embalmed Jacob's body."</i>
mourned	v. • Gen 50:3	Showed deep sorrow, especially over a death	<i>"The Egyptians mourned Jacob for seventy days."</i>
swear	v. • Gen 50:25	To make a solemn promise	<i>"Joseph made his brothers swear to carry his bones out of Egypt."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. To make a home in a place is to ____ there. (Gen 47:27)

A) mourn

✓ B) settle

C) embalm

D) swear

Why: Israel settles in the land of Goshen in Genesis 47.

2. In Genesis 47, the famine grows so severe that Egyptians eventually sell their own land for grain. (Gen 47:20)

✓ Answer: TRUE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 49:28)

Word choices: *blessed · settled · mourned · swore*

Jacob blessed each of his twelve sons before he died.

4. The special privilege normally belonging to an oldest son is called a _____. (Gen 48:5–6)

✓ A) birthright

B) famine

C) burial

D) vision

Why: Jacob treats Ephraim and Manasseh as sharing in Joseph's own birthright among his sons.

5. In Genesis 50, Jacob's body is embalmed by Egyptian physicians. (Gen 50:2)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 50, Joseph takes revenge on his brothers once Jacob has died. (Gen 50:19–21)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 50:25)

Word choices: *swear · settle · bless · embalm*

Before he died, Joseph made his brothers swear an oath to carry his bones out of Egypt.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · A Question the Story Answers at the Very End [Close Reading · A Pattern Across the Book]

Close Reading · A Pattern Across the Book Back in Genesis 37, Joseph's brothers throw him into a pit and sell him into slavery, meaning him harm. At the very end of the book, in Genesis 50, those same brothers stand before Joseph again, afraid he will finally punish them now that Jacob is dead. Instead, Joseph gives the story's own answer to a question it raised fifty chapters earlier: what they intended for evil, God intended for good. A careful reader who remembers Genesis 37 hears this line land differently than a reader who does not — it directly answers the very first wrong done in the book. Watching for where a story circles back to answer its own earliest question is part of following a long book's real shape.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What happens to Egyptian land as the famine deepens in Genesis 47? (Gen 47:13–20)

- A) It is divided equally among all Egyptian farmers.
- B) It is given permanently to Jacob's family.
- C) It remains completely unaffected by the famine.

✓ **D) Nearly all of it comes to belong to Pharaoh.**

Why: As Egyptians trade money, livestock, and finally land for grain, nearly all of Egypt's land comes to belong to Pharaoh, except the priests' land.

2. What does Jacob make Joseph swear to do in Genesis 47? (Gen 47:29–31)

- A) Adopt all of Joseph's own sons formally.
- B) Give up his position in Pharaoh's court.

✓ **C) Bury him in Canaan rather than Egypt.**

- D) Remain in Egypt for the rest of his life.

Why: Jacob makes Joseph swear to carry him out of Egypt and bury him in Canaan.

3. What does Jacob do when he blesses Ephraim and Manasseh? (Gen 48:13–14)

✓ **A) He crosses his hands to bless Ephraim first.**

- B) He refuses to bless either of Joseph's sons.
- C) He blesses only the older son, Manasseh.
- D) He sends both sons back to Joseph unblessed.

Why: Jacob deliberately crosses his hands, placing his right hand on younger Ephraim instead of older Manasseh.

4. What does Joseph tell his brothers when they fear his revenge? (Gen 50:19–20)

✓ **A) What they meant for evil, God meant for good.**

B) He has already forgotten what they did to him.

C) He will punish them once Pharaoh allows it.

D) He no longer considers them to be his brothers.

Why: Joseph tells his brothers that what they intended for evil, God intended for good, to preserve life.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 47–50. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 47–50)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Pharaoh grants Jacob's family the land of Goshen. 2) Jacob makes Joseph swear to bury him in Canaan. 3) Jacob blesses Ephraim ahead of Manasseh. 4) Jacob blesses all twelve of his sons before he dies. 5) Jacob is embalmed, mourned, and carried to Canaan for burial.

6. Jacob's blessing on Judah promises that the ruler's staff will not depart from his line. (Gen 49:10)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. Joseph asks that his bones be carried out of Egypt when God eventually brings the family back to the land. (Gen 50:25)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · The Last Link in a Long Chain [Literary Craft · Resolution]

Literary Craft · Resolution A resolution is the point where a story's main tensions are finally settled, usually near the very end. Genesis 50 resolves a tension that began all the way back in Genesis 37: will Joseph's brothers ever answer for what they did to him? Genesis does not rush this moment; it lets the brothers voice their fear plainly before Joseph answers it. A satisfying resolution does not need to be a plot twist — it can simply be the clearest possible answer to the story's oldest open question, delivered by the one character who has earned the right to answer it.

Term	What it means
Resolution	The point where a story's main tensions are finally settled, usually near the end. Genesis 50 resolves the tension left open since Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery in Genesis 37.
Full circle	When an earlier detail, dream, or event is answered or fulfilled precisely later in the story, closing a loop that began much earlier. Joseph's forgiveness in Genesis 50 answers the wrong done to him in Genesis 37.
Farewell scene	A scene near a story's end where a dying or departing character speaks final words, often blessings or instructions that shape what happens afterward. Jacob's blessings in Genesis 49 are a farewell scene.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is a resolution, as a literary term? (Gen 50)

- A) The very first event described in a story
- B) A character who never appears again
- C) A description of a setting with no events

✓ **D) The point where a story's tensions are settled**

Why: A resolution is the point where a story's main tensions are finally settled, usually near the end.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 50)

Word choices: *resolution · farewell · circle · reversal*

The point where a story's main tensions are finally settled is called its resolution.

3. What earlier tension from Genesis 37 does Genesis 50 resolve? (Gen 37, 50)

- A) Whether Jacob will ever return to Canaan at all.
- B) Whether Pharaoh will ever meet Jacob in person.
- C) Whether Joseph will ever marry an Egyptian wife.

✓ **D) Whether Joseph will punish his brothers.**

Why: Genesis 50 resolves whether Joseph will punish his brothers, the tension left open since Genesis 37.

4. Genesis has the brothers voice their fear before Joseph answers it. (Gen 50:15–18)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

5. A farewell scene never includes blessings or instructions for the future. (Gen 49)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 49)

Word choices: *farewell · resolution · circle · reversal*

A scene where a dying character gives final blessings is called a **farewell** scene.

7. Why does Joseph's answer in Genesis 50 count as a strong resolution? (Gen 50:19–21)

- A) It introduces an entirely new conflict instead.

✓ **B) It directly answers the story's oldest open question.**

- C) It leaves the brothers' fear completely unaddressed.
- D) It happens before the brothers ever raise their fear.

Why: Joseph's answer directly resolves the story's oldest open question, voiced plainly by the brothers first.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Two Different Numbers, Two Different Things [Archaeology · Ancient Egyptian Burial Practice]

Archaeology · Ancient Egyptian Burial Practice Genesis 50 gives two different numbers for two different things: physicians spend forty days embalming Jacob's body, and Egypt then observes seventy days of mourning before the burial journey to Canaan. The most detailed ancient description of Egyptian embalming comes from the Greek historian Herodotus, writing centuries after Joseph's lifetime, who describes a careful process: removing certain organs, drying the body with a natural salt called natron, then wrapping it. Herodotus is describing the embalming procedure itself, not a separate mourning period, so his account should not be read as confirming either number in Genesis 50 directly. Because he wrote so long after Genesis is set, his account cannot describe the exact procedure used for Jacob himself; it shows how Egyptian embalming worked across a long span of history. Even so, Genesis 50's basic pattern — a lengthy, multi-day embalming process followed by a separate period of formal mourning — matches the general shape of Egyptian funerary custom described by other ancient sources, grounding this scene in how Egypt actually handled death.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 47–50 shows the story resolving its oldest tension: God using painful events, even ones caused by evil, to preserve life.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

☐ Egypt mourns Jacob for seventy days.

✓ **Joseph reassures his brothers and promises to provide for them.**

✓ **Joseph tells his brothers what they meant for evil, God meant for good.**

☐ Jacob blesses Ephraim ahead of his older brother Manasseh.

☐ Pharaoh grants Jacob's family the land of Goshen.

☐ Jacob makes Joseph swear to bury him in Canaan.

✓ **Joseph asks that his bones be carried out of Egypt someday.**

Why: These three details show the resolution itself: the stated reason evil was turned to good, Joseph's reassurance and provision, and his own forward-looking request tied to God's future promise. The other statements are true but describe different details of the account, not this specific claim.

2. Stated in Genesis 47–50, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

- ✓ [Stated in Genesis 47–50] Egyptians eventually sell their own land to Pharaoh for grain.
- ✓ [Not stated there] Pharaoh has Joseph's brothers imprisoned after Jacob dies.
- ✓ [Not stated there] Jacob refuses to bless any of his twelve sons.
- ✓ [Stated in Genesis 47–50] Jacob blesses Ephraim ahead of his older brother Manasseh.
- ✓ [Not stated there] Joseph is buried in Canaan immediately after his death.
- ✓ [Stated in Genesis 47–50] Joseph asks that his bones be carried out of Egypt someday.

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 47–50 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Pharaoh → **C) Grants Jacob's family the land of Goshen**

Jacob → **B) Blesses his twelve sons before he dies**

Ephraim → **A) Blessed ahead of his older brother Manasseh**

Joseph → **E) Reassures his brothers and promises to provide for them**

The Egyptians → **D) Mourn Jacob for seventy days**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 47–50 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis has Joseph directly answer his brothers' fear in Genesis 50 rather than leaving it unaddressed because [**C**], which shows that [**E**].

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

- A. the writer forgot the brothers ever wronged Joseph
- B. Joseph no longer remembers what happened to him
- C. the book resolves the tension it raised about him in Genesis 37**
- D. the ending has no real connection to the beginning
- E. Genesis builds toward answering its own earliest questions**
- F. only Pharaoh's approval determines how the story ends

Why: Joseph's reassurance in Genesis 50 directly answers the wrong done to him back in Genesis 37, showing that the book's ending is built to resolve its own earliest tension rather than simply stopping.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

Two Different Numbers

When Genesis records that Jacob's body was embalmed over forty days, then separately notes seventy days of Egyptian mourning, it is naming two different things, not one figure repeated twice. The most detailed ancient description of Egyptian embalming comes from the Greek historian Herodotus, writing centuries after Joseph's lifetime. Herodotus describes a careful, multi-step process: removing organs, drying the body with a natural salt called natron, and finally wrapping it. Herodotus is describing the embalming procedure itself, and his account should not be conflated with Genesis's separate number for the mourning period, since the two describe different stages. Because Herodotus wrote so long after Genesis is set, his account cannot describe the exact procedure used in Jacob's own burial; it shows how the custom worked across a long span of Egyptian history. Preserved bodies examined by modern researchers do confirm many of the embalming steps ancient writers described, giving historians physical evidence alongside the written accounts. Genesis does not describe the embalming procedure in any detail, but its basic pattern — a lengthy embalming period, then a separate, longer mourning period — matches the general shape of documented Egyptian funerary custom rather than a detail invented for the story.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full biography of Herodotus's life and travels
- B) Instructions for performing embalming today
- ✓ C) Distinguishing two different Egyptian time periods
- D) A description of one specific Egyptian tomb

Why: The passage carefully distinguishes Genesis's embalming period from its separate mourning period.

2. According to the passage, who gives the most detailed ancient description of Egyptian embalming? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) The Egyptian king Pharaoh himself
- B) A modern team of archaeologists
- C) Genesis itself, in full detail

✓ D) The Greek historian Herodotus

Why: The passage names Herodotus as the source of the most detailed ancient description.

3. In this passage, “conflated” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) clearly separated
- B) completely ignored
- ✓ C) confused together
- D) publicly denied

Why: The passage warns Herodotus's account should not be conflated, or confused together, with Genesis's separate mourning figure.

4. What does the passage say Herodotus is actually describing? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Both the embalming and the mourning together.
- ✓ B) The embalming procedure, not a mourning period.
- C) Only the burial journey back to Canaan.
- D) A ceremony that has nothing to do with burial.

Why: The passage says Herodotus describes the embalming procedure itself, not a separate mourning period.

5. What does the passage say actual preserved bodies show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

- A) They contradict everything ancient writers described.
- ✓ B) They confirm many steps ancient writers described.
- C) They show embalming was never actually practiced.
- D) They provide no evidence beyond written accounts.

Why: The passage says preserved bodies confirm many of the specific steps ancient writers described.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage combine to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

- ✓ A) Ancient written accounts and physical evidence
- B) A single modern scientist's private notebook
- C) Two competing legends with no real evidence
- D) Only Genesis's own account, with nothing outside it

Why: The passage combines Herodotus's ancient written account with physical evidence from preserved bodies.

7. What is the passage careful to say about Genesis's two numbers? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

- A) They are simply the same number written twice.
- B) They prove the exact date of Jacob's burial.
- ✓ C) They describe two different stages, not one figure.
- D) They were invented later by Greek historians.

Why: The passage is careful: Genesis's forty days and seventy days describe two different stages, not one repeated figure.