



# INVERSE

Young Adult Bible Study Guide



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# WHAT MAKES INVERSE DIFFERENT?

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**Innovative Bible study.** inVerse is designed to empower every reader to become a skilled Bible student. Each chapter closely examines one main passage of Scripture before comparing other verses for added insight.

**Space to journal.** Every chapter of inVerse includes journal pages to empower Bible students to interact directly with the text and have space to record their own personal discoveries and insights.

**Difficult topics.** inVerse study guides feature some of the more challenging books of the Bible such as Leviticus and Romans and explore difficult topics such as human sexuality, religious liberty, and apologetics.

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Seems to be so relevant for us for today. - **Johan**  
(from Sweden)

“

It helps me to study Bible systematically and to take things out from the text not to read my thoughts into the text. - **Ana** (from Croatia)

“

The format which allows you to focus on the Bible passage of the week. Also, that it points to Jesus explicitly. - **Jose Luis**  
(from Mexico)

# Growth: Covenant Promises



September 28 – October 4

Read this Week's Passage: Genesis 15

Enjoy this sample chapter!



New Frontiers  
**inTro**

In a world filled with economic instability, political and personal challenges, we often find ourselves paralyzed at the moment of important decisions. Do we move forward in faith or retreat to what is familiar? The book of Joshua speaks directly to our lives and gives us an example of pressing forward in faith despite unresolved questions and overwhelming challenges.

Joshua's generation came to a pivotal moment in Israel's history when they had to decide if they were ready to move forward in faith, face the giants, and enter unfamiliar territory. The unknowns were overwhelming, the opposition fierce, the challenges intimidating. Everything hinged on their willingness to embrace the seemingly impossible assignment God had given them. The history in this book invites every believer today to conquer their doubts and fears and receive the blessings God offers.



**inTro**

Introduces the main passage of the week and the significance of its message.

of wander- as finally inheritance an four exercised faith wise, and Joshua was the instrument God used to make that promise a reality. To properly understand the book of Joshua, it's essential to first understand how God's covenant with Abraham came to be.

When God called Abraham to exchange familiarity and comfort for an adventure with Him, Abraham was already seventy-five years old. Without stopping to question the feasibility of leaving his homeland, Abraham followed God into unfamiliar territory. God declared that through Abraham and his descendants, He would fulfill a promise dear to the hearts of all those who loved and served Him. Back in the Garden of Eden, God had announced a plan to save sinful

humanity by sending a Deliverer who crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). Generation after generation had waited for the promised Seed (Descendent) to arrive. God renewed this promise when He appeared to Abraham and called him to be the progenitor of the promised One.

God was not simply offering Abraham a spot in the Messiah's ancestral lineage. His plan was grander than that. The covenant came with land—a fertile strip of prime real estate located at the intersection of three major continents: Africa, Asia, and Europe. The promise of numerous children and a strategically located, fertile territory meant Abraham would have an extraordinary legacy. Abraham would not only be one of the Messiah's direct ancestors but would also sire an entire nation whose sole purpose would be to prepare the world for the Messiah's arrival and then facilitate the spread of His kingdom when He appeared. In short, God promised to place Abraham and his descendants in a position to change the world. However, as Abraham accepted the calling and pitched his tents in the land of Canaan, there was one major thing he had yet to understand: accepting God's call to change the world meant allowing Him to develop His plans in His time, in His way, and according to His will. Abraham had to learn this lesson gradually, repeatedly, and painfully.

Abraham's story contextualizes the book of Joshua by offering us a glimpse into the requirements that ensure spiritual success. Abraham had to learn essential lessons of absolute surrender and total trust. These same characteristics gave Joshua and the Israelites success in their conquest of Canaan. If we want to

embrace the legacy God offers us, we need to rethink many of our long-held paradigms and assumptions and allow God to lead in unexpected ways. God has a significant calling for each of us. God's calling today requires no less surrender and trust than Abraham and Joshua cultivated. If we are willing to follow God's plan, God is more than willing to use us to do great things for Him.

**Abraham's story contextualizes the book of Joshua by offering us a glimpse into the requirements that ensure spiritual success.**



**inScribe**

Provides a prompt for writing out the text.



**inScribe**

Write out Genesis 15:12–16 from the translation of your choice. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map all of Genesis 15.

**Circle** repeated words/phrases/ideas.

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you.



Draw **Arrows** to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases.



Explores the major themes and important details of the main passage.

Abraham left his home “where he was going” (Heb. 11:8) and realized things wouldn’t follow the path when famine hit, forcing him to Egypt, where he lied to Pharaoh and had to be rescued by God. An inauspicious start to his grand adventure, he picked himself up and continued to build his life around a relationship with God. As the years passed, Abraham’s faith was tested repeatedly. Neither he nor his wife Sarah were getting any younger, and they still had no children even though God had promised that his family would become an entire nation (Gen. 12:2). Adjusting to God’s timeline is often harder than believing He’s able to keep His promises. Faith requires belief, but it also requires patience and surrender.

After rescuing his nephew Lot from a dangerous hostage situation, Abraham returned home plagued by doubt and anxiety. As sweet as victory was, Abraham worried about the repercussions of his actions. God reached out to calm Abraham’s fears through a vision. “Do not be afraid,” He said. “I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward” (Gen. 15:1). Despite the assurance, Abraham still wondered why God had not given him a son. “Lord God, what will you give me, seeing I go childless?” he asked (v. 2). It was a plea for tangible evidence that God’s promise was genuine. God assured Abraham that he would have a child of his own. Regardless of appearances, Abraham chose to believe that promise, “and He accounted it to him for righteousness” (v. 6). Abraham exercised his faith

at He as that God Abraham 10:1-17). Whereas many cultures today formalize legal agreements by placing personal signatures on written contracts, ancient Mediterranean cultures often formalized covenants and treaties with the blood of a sacrifice. An animal’s dead body was a fitting symbol of what might happen to either party should they break their side of the promise. This sacrificial ceremony was God’s pledge that He would not forget or neglect any of the promises He had made to Abraham. God assured Abraham that his descendants would be as innumerable as the stars of the night and that He would give them land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Euphrates River. God called Abraham’s family to a special destiny. God would plant them in this place to be a blessing to the whole world.

**Questions to explore from this passage:**

What paradigm shift did Abraham need in order to align himself with God's purpose?

When have you had to adjust to God's timeline?

Journal your answers at the bottom of the preceding page.



**inTerpret**

Considers apologetic perspectives and difficult questions related to the passage.

If God's only purpose had been to give Israel a homeland for Abraham's descendants, He could have given them uncultivated land. Instead, God chose to give them a land in which several different peoples and groups already dwelled, knowing that receiving that land would necessitate many conflicts with those peoples. It's important to note that God was not careless or unmindful of the nations who had claimed the land. If God hadn't cared for those nations, He could've immediately cast them out and given Abraham's family the territory. Instead, God delayed the conquest of Canaan for over four hundred years, continually showing the nations His mercy despite their increasing wickedness. God told Abraham that his family would be fugitives in a foreign land and could not return to Canaan for several more generations because "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete" (Gen. 15:16). In other words, God was carefully measuring the wickedness of these nations and would give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants only when these nations passed the point of no return. Joshua's conquest of Canaan should be understood as a judgment from God against nations guilty of the worst crimes. The people of Canaan normalized and promoted pagan rituals that involved various forms of sexual promiscuity, incest, homosexuality, child sacrifice, and bestiality (Lev. 18:6–23). Child sacrifice was a common religious ritual in which they burned their children as sacrifices to demons (Ps. 106:37). These practices were mingled with witchcraft, communication

their example lest God judge them also (Lev. 18:24–30). God would use Israel as an instrument of judgment against the nations that had become hardened in wickedness.

When God told Abraham his family could not yet inherit the promised land, He framed the conquest of Canaan as a judgment against wicked people, comparable to the stories of the Flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 6:11–13; 19:13). Before God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham asked God the very question that many of us today ask about these difficult moments of divine judgment: "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" (18:23). Abraham wanted reassurance that God would not indiscriminately destroy the innocent along with the guilty: "Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (v. 25). As Abraham engaged in this dialogue with God, he chose to trust that God would be careful to do right in every case. That is the same decision that is left with each of us. Do we trust God to properly exercise justice and mercy?



After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what are the main takeaways you get from this passage?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

How much do you trust God's justice, even if it is delayed or doesn't make sense to you?

Memorize your favorite verse from Genesis 15:12-16. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.



Provides a list of verses outside the main passage to be cross-referenced for deeper insight and clarity.



**inSpect**

How do the following verses help us better understand God's purpose for Abraham's family and the land of Canaan?

God's promises to Abraham:

Genesis 12:1–9

Genesis 17:1–22

Genesis 22:15–18

Examples of God's intervention in wicked places:

Genesis 6:5–18

Genesis 18:17–33

Canaanite practices:

Leviticus 18:6–30

Deuteronomy 9:4–6

Psalms 106:36–38

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Genesis 15?

Review the verse you memorized from Genesis 15.



**inVite**

Centers the passage on Jesus and applies the principles to our daily lives.

When Abraham was ninety years old, God appeared to him and said, "I am Almighty God; walk before me and be blameless. And I will make a covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly." (vv. 1-2) Abraham had settled by the time he was nearly twenty-five years in Canaan, he was still a sojourner, but at least he had an heir: his son Ishmael, his own flesh and blood, his desperate attempt to help God keep His promises. After reiterating the terms of the covenant and establishing the rite of circumcision as a sign of consecration, God told Abraham that his wife Sarah would give birth to a son even though she was ninety years old (vv. 15, 16). Abraham's response was to fall on his face, laughing, and remind God that he already had a son, Ishmael (vv. 17, 18). Patiently, mercifully, God informed Abraham that He was not mistaken. Sarah would indeed have a son in her old age—a miracle child. Isaac's birth demonstrates God's ability to keep His promises regardless of the circumstances.

Isaac grew into a young man, and God tested Abraham's faith yet again. Appearing to Abraham in a vision, God requested the ultimate sacrifice: "Take now your son," He said, "your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you" (22:2). All of Abraham's hopes centered on his promised son, Isaac. God Himself had stated that Isaac was an integral part of the covenant, but then He required Abraham to surrender

Abraham  
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lead to  
) God  
t only  
am to  
Abraham  
sacrifice as a substitute, which Abraham  
discovered in a nearby thicket.

The ram God provided symbolized the culmination of the covenant. All the promises made to Abraham, including a son, the land of Canaan, and national greatness, converged on a single event: the Messiah, God's only Son, sacrificed for the sins of the world. The purpose of God's covenant with Abraham was to prepare the people and the place for when the Lamb of God would be introduced to the world (see John 1:29). Presenting Jesus to the world is still the purpose of God's covenant and calling for each of us. If, like Abraham, we trust God and embrace His promises, God can do great things through us, too.

**Questions to consider:**

Where is Jesus in this passage/story and how do you see Him differently or see Him again?

How has your faith been tested? What lessons did you learn?

Journal your answers at the bottom of the preceding page.



**inSight**

Presents a perspective from the writings of Ellen White on the passage or theme.

“As iniquity increases, and manifested against the law who truly love God will reach a state of holiness. Let us all the fact that we are fast approaching that crisis in human iniquity be necessary for God to inter-

## In his love and pity God would let light shine upon them in more distinct rays; he would give them opportunity to behold the working of his wondrous power, that there might be no excuse for their course of evil.

Amorites were inhabitants of Canaan, and the Lord had promised the land of Canaan to the Israelites; but a long interval must pass before his people should possess the land. He stated the reason why this interval must pass. He told them that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full, and their expulsion and extermination could not be justified until they had filled up the cup of their iniquity. Idolatry and sin marked their course, but the measure of their guilt was not such that they could be devoted to destruction. In his love and pity God would let light shine upon them in more distinct rays; he would give them opportunity to behold the working of his wondrous power, that

are visited upon them. The time came when judgment was inflicted upon the Amorites, and the time will come when all the transgressors of his law will know that God will by no means clear the guilty. “Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it will be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: but it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.”...

“Let us consider solemnly the dealings of God with nations and individuals, that we may avoid taking a course that will ruin us through transgression of the law of God. Let us treasure up every blessing, every heaven-sent ray of light, in warnings, in reproofs, in tokens of mercy given unto us. Let us not be among those who lightly regard God’s forbearance.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, May 2, 1893.



In your Sabbath School class (or Bible study), share insights from this week's main text and supporting verses. Consider these questions with the rest of the group.



**inquire**

Provides an organized outline with important questions and key takeaways to help Sabbath School teachers or small group study leaders.

his plans had a God had

to stretch stretched?

**God's promises to Abraham:**

1. What promises did God make to Abraham? What was God's purpose for Abraham? Compare Genesis 15:12–16 with 17:1–22; and 22:15–18 and note the key elements of God's promise of children.
2. Why didn't God give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants sooner? What does this say about His longsuffering nature? Read Genesis 15:12–16.
3. What were some Canaanite practices that called for divine accountability? Why is justice sometimes the most merciful response? See Leviticus 18:6–30; Deuteronomy 9:4–6; and Psalm 106:36–38.
4. In what ways has God called you out of your comfort zone?

Compare Joshua 1:1–4 and Genesis 15:12–16 and see how the story of Joshua is a fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham.

2. What do you think God's promises to Abraham might have meant to Joshua? How might they have encouraged him in the conquest of Canaan?
3. Why was Canaan the ideal location for introducing the Messiah to the world? Look at a world map and see how Israel is located at the intersection of 3 continents (Africa, Europe, and Asia). It was the ideal place for God's people to be a light to the world.

**Abraham trusts God:**

1. What lessons can you learn from Abraham about how to face your fears and an uncertain future? Read Genesis 15:1–6 in light of Abraham's safety concerns that arose in the story of Genesis 14.

*Personal reflection: Which part of Abraham's story can you relate to the most? How can understanding God's leading in Abraham's life help you navigate any uncertainties you're facing?*

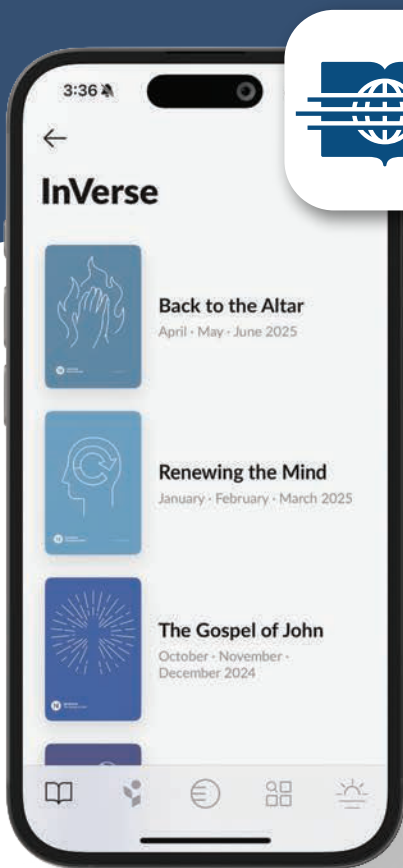
**Key takeaways to remember:**

- God is longsuffering with the wicked.
- We can trust God's promises even when there is delay.
- Remembering God's promises in the past will give us courage to do great things.

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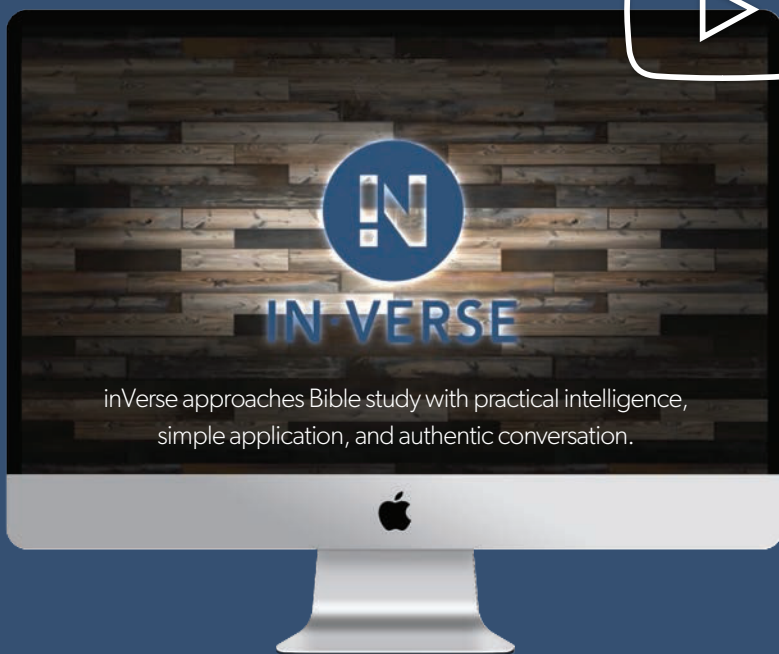


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