



#59972

SEASONS OF LIFE
A Bible Study about Families

Let's take a Biblical family and trace its "seasons" – noting how after 6,000+ years, we still have things in common.

Genesis 24 – Abraham arranges for his son's marriage

A very serious, carefully planned endeavor

Blessed by God -- verses 42, 48, 56 "...the Lord has granted success to my journey..."

How can we relate to Abraham's "dilemma" regarding Isaac's wife-to-be?

Genesis 25:9 – Going home for a funeral

Notice that Isaac and Ishmael were together, although seemingly estranged from childhood. Did this coming together last? (See 25:18)

Has God ever used a funeral to bring reconciliation among family members in your experience?

Genesis 24:62-66 – Establishing a new family

What God-pleasing emotion for a new marriage do you see in these verses?

Do you wish that a truly God-pleasing love be shared by your adult married children?

25:20 -- How old was Isaac when he married Rebekah?

25:21 -- What God-pleasing thing did Isaac do for his wife?

25:26 -- How long did he and Rebekah have to wait before God answered the prayer?

Should husbands and wives pray for each other? Have you seen answers to such prayers?

Genesis 25:24-28 -- Twins, yet so different!

Tell about the differences you see in the brothers in these verses.

Tell about the differences you see in the parents in these verses.

Genesis 26 -- God renews the covenant promise; Isaac's family becomes very wealthy; Isaac again demonstrates his love for Rebekah (v. 8; Isaac lives in peace with his neighbors
Esau turns 40 and marries 2 Hittite women, (vv. 34-35), a source of grief to his parents

How can children today bring grief to parents in dating practices, choosing a mate, etc.? What can parents do in these circumstances? How early should parents begin praying for a godly mate for their child?

Genesis 27 – “Winter season” of Isaac's life

Read verses 1-4. *What promise of God did Isaac choose to disregard? (25:23)*

Does verse 5 show a deterioration of a marriage? How?

Verses 6-29 The conspiracy plays itself out, and Jacob (the Deceiver) comes away with the blessing.

Esau follows instructions; hears the hard truth that Jacob has already been given what he thought was his; he cries bitterly, and in verse 41 – *What kind of revenge did Esau plan for his brother?*

Verses 42-46 Rebekah tries to save Jacob's life.

Does she tell her husband the full truth?

Genesis 28:1-5 Isaac blesses Jacob and endorses the plan for getting him a wife.

Genesis 29-31 tells the story of Jacob working under his uncle Laban. After 20 years, he finally returns to his father and Esau, and their reunion is detailed in chapter 32.

In this family's story, what can we learn about:

Making bad choices?

Family division?

Paying for deceit? How did Jacob pay? How did Rebekah pay?

God's forgiveness? Will He forgive and heal our families?
Ephesians. 2:1-6, Luke 17:1-4

See Psalm 37:25-29

“Research from a wide variety of sources has revealed there are six characteristics which are found in virtually all **healthy families**.

1. Healthy families have a real **commitment** to each other. In a crisis, they bond, and they help one another through times of difficulty and change.
2. Healthy families spend **time** together. They genuinely enjoy being around each other. They want to be with one another often as well as for quality times.
3. Healthy families **appreciate** each member of the family for their unique gifts, qualities, and characteristics. They express that appreciation in many different ways, and they do so often and openly.
4. **Communication** occurs within healthy families. They speak to one another honestly, directly and often. Their communication is loving and constructive. They speak the truth in love.
5. Healthy families practice **conflict resolution**. Their goal is not to avoid every crisis, disagreement, or pain, but rather to deal with it in positive, constructive ways.
6. Healthy families have **faith!** They believe in God and have a genuine desire to love and serve God – even if there is a difference in denomination. When they make a commitment to express their faith in God by serving one another, the family becomes the primary way in which a love for Scripture and the facts of faith are passed down from generation to generation.”

[From *Roots and Wings* by Elaine Bickel, Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, 1999]

Scriptures are from the New International Version