



## Session 7

### Learning from their Highs and Lows: Family of Isaac and Rebekah

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With many examples of families around us, we may have to understand that, when we make decisions as parents, our diligent steps and missteps could impact our future generations. In this chapter, we are going to take a look at the back of the weave of the life of Isaac and Rebekah. We see how they carried on the legacy of faith of their parents, but how some of their missteps caused undesirable patterns which also got passed on to the next generation. However, we thank God for the hope He gives us through the Bible. As we study the Bible, we learn from their lives how to correct our ways and set the right precedent for a godly future generation.

#### Summary of the Video:

While comparing the lives of Abraham and Isaac his son, it is interesting to note that in many aspects history seemed to repeat itself. Here are a few key principles that we can learn from their family life.

1. Planning wisely to make sure that wealth does not bring grief to our children: In Genesis chapter 25 verses 5 and 6, we read that Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. But while he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them away from his son Isaac to the land of the east. He took this wise step so that after his death, wealth would not cause grief to his children. Today, as families, we must learn this from the wisdom of Abraham. Abraham planned well and ensured that his son would not be in trouble concerning his wealth and property. There are many families who go through severe conflicts and strife because their parents did not take this wise step about their wealth and property before their departure from this world. Such misstep by parents sometime ends up dividing the families.
2. Promises of God need to be backed up with Prayers and Obedience: Looking at Isaac and Rebekah's life and comparing it with the life of Abraham and Sarah, we find that history was repeating itself. Abraham faced famine and he moved to Egypt, and so did Isaac (Gen 26:1). Isaac was instructed by God not to go to Egypt but to stay in Gerar. Genesis 25:21 says that Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The LORD heard his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. We see that like Sarah, Rebekah also went through barrenness. Although Isaac had a promise from God, he needed to pray and depend on God to see that the promise would come to pass (Gen 25: 21, Gen 26:1-6). Likewise, Abraham also was mandated to obey and keep His decrees so that he could see the promise of God fulfilled in his life. Genesis 18: 19 says

that the Lord had chosen him, so that he will direct his sons and their families to keep the ways of the LORD by doing what is right and just. God promised that He would do for Abraham all that He had promised if he obeyed his commands. So, we learn that having God's promises do not insulate us from crisis or the promises of God do not happen automatically, but they need to be backed up with prayer and obedience to God.

3. Parental division playing favoritism has generational impact: Genesis 25: 38 says that Isaac who had a taste of wild game loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob. This had a generational impact. Sibling rivalry developed between Esau and Jacob because of this favoritism. In some cultures, and communities, parental discrimination is seen even based on gender. This kind of parental discrimination or favoritism can be very detrimental to children and can cause long lasting damage. We know how things got messed up between Esau and Isaac. Bible also records that Esau by choice married Hittite women and they became a grief to his parents. Such things can be a consequence when parents are divided over children and fail to provide right attention and guidance. So, we learn from this misstep of Isaac and Rebekah, that our parenting must never reflect favoritism between our children.
4. Peace makers have special favor from the Lord (26: 22) – Isaac was a peacemaker. This is during the time when Isaac's wealth grew, and he became very powerful. It is on the request of Abimelech that Isaac moved away. When he tried to dig two wells the people of Gerar opposed and fought with his servants. Isaac never contended with them but moved away and dug another well. This next time no one contended with them, and he called that well 'Rehoboth'. This shows that he did not fight with the people there even though it cost him hard work to dig two wells. Even in this he acknowledges the Lord, saying, 'now the Lord has made room for us and we will flourish in this land'. What an attitude Isaac had and what a peacemaker he was! "When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Proverbs 16:7). So, we too can be peacemakers and we will receive the favor of the Lord.

### Get Insight & Apply:

1. In what way does parental negligence to write a will or divide the property when they are alive, affect families today?
2. We have learnt in this chapter that while journeying with the Lord we need to depend on the Lord and pray through so that God's promises would be fulfilled in our lives. The narrative Bible tells us about the lives of Abraham and Isaac gives us an assurance and encouragement that God is faithful to his promises. (Scriptures to read: Romans 4:21, 2 Corinthians: 1:20, Hebrews 10:36). Discuss the following two aspects as a family.
  - List down things that deters us as families from depending on the Lord.
  - How can you strengthen your prayer life as individuals and families?

*Bible encourages us to endure and run with patience, and imitate those who through faith and patience inherited what was promised (Hebrews 6:11-12).*

*Discuss as a family what the scripture teaches about how patience and endurance can be built in our lives.*

3. How does parental favoritism over their children affect today's generation and how can we avoid making this mistake in our own families?
4. Scripture has much to tell us about "Peace", which is a fundamental element of God's Kingdom (Romans 14:17) and living this way pleases our God. Romans 5: 1, says that through Jesus Christ, we have been justified by faith and have peace with God. As a family, take a moment to introspect the following questions.
  - What are some of the things you feel that can contribute towards loss of peace in homes today?
  - Do you as a family experience lack of peace at times? Discuss as a family what are those factors and how they can be addressed.
  - What does the scriptures teach us on how to endeavor to live and grow in peace with each other within the family and with others? (Some scriptures for reference: Proverb 16:7, Isaiah 26:3, Galatians 5:22, Romans 12:17-18, James 3: 17-18, Romans 14:19 etc.,)

## **I WILL STATEMENT:**

In this chapter, from the family of Abraham and Isaac, we learnt about some of their wise acts and some of their mistakes. So, as you reflect on it, deliberate on how you can grow in your prayer life, live in peace as a family etc. Make an intentional effort to build our lives focusing on following the Lord. Write down as many "I Will" statements to help you put your learning into action. The God who watches over us and preserves generations will help you.

I WILL \_\_\_\_\_

## **Prayer:**

*Father God, thank you for helping us see the lives of your servants Abraham and Isaac and learn from their acts of wisdom and their mistakes. Help us that we may trust you, live a life of prayer and obedience, and thereby enjoy peace, and harmony with people around us. As parents may we be mindful that our children are a heritage from you, and endeavor to set the right precedent to raise a godly generation. In Jesus Name we pray. Amen.*