

# Bible Families

A study of the faith, failures, joys, sorrows, blessings, and lessons of families in Scripture.

*For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

Romans 15:4 NKJV

It is easy for us to see the differences between us and people who lived thousands of years ago. It takes a little more thought to recognize the similarities. These lessons are aimed at helping us recognize the similarities. Recognizing the similarities then helps us to see that their strengths, weaknesses, problems, and solutions are usually the same as ours. With this knowledge, these people “still speak,” helping us to live by faith and walk with God.

*Lesson 1* Adam and Eve: God Builds the Home

*Lesson 2* Adam and Eve: The Permanence of Marriage

*Lesson 3* Adam and Eve: Marriage Problems and Solutions

*Lesson 4* Abraham and Sarah

*Lesson 5* Abraham’s Family

*Lesson 6* Various Godly Mothers

*Lesson 7* Various Godly Fathers

*Lesson 8* Various Godly Children

*Lesson 9* Herod and Herodius

*Lesson 10* Aquila and Priscilla

## Adam and Eve: God Builds the Home (Ps. 127:1)

The marriage of Adam and Eve established the first earthly “home” and in many ways it revealed God's intentions for the blessings of this relationship. Since the time of Adam and Eve neither the design, the blessings, nor the potential problems in marriage have changed. Let's begin this series of lessons with the most basic lesson we must learn about the home--the importance of recognizing God as the builder.

### 1. The foundation: God

#### A. *In the beginning, God* (1:1)

\* What can we learn about God from Genesis 1:1-25, before He builds the home?

#### B. *God formed man* (2:7)

\* What does Adam learn about God before God makes Eve?

\* What does Adam learn about life before God makes Eve?

v 15

v 18

v 20

#### C. *male and female He created them* (1:27)

\* Discuss *in the image of God He created him*

### 2. Pillars of the home: Man & Woman

\* What is the home composed of by the end of Day 6 (Gen. 1:27)?

\* Jesus reaffirmed that God joined *whom* in marriage (Mt. 19:4-5)?

\* What does the sequence of Creation teach us, according to Paul in 1 Tim. 2:12-13?

\* Discuss woman's role as a helper (consider Psalm 33:20; 70:5) and other passages related to her primary role.

\* Discuss Adam's role, including other related passages.

\* By the end of day 6, was Adam prepared with the skills, training, and experience to be a flawless leader? Discuss the husband's leadership today, on day one of his marriage.

\* Choose at least one of these and describe how it weakens the pillars of the home: pornography, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, pedophilia, bestiality.

\* Choose at least one of these and describe how it strengthens the pillars of the home: husbands loving as Christ (Eph. 5:25), husbands who nourish their wives (Eph. 5:29), husbands who cherish their wives (Eph. 5:29).

\* Choose at least one of these and describe how it strengthens the pillars of the home--wives who: love their husbands (Ti. 2:4), obey their husbands (Ti. 2:4, as Christ 1 Cor. 11:3; Jn. 8:29), are homemakers (Ti. 2:4; Pro. 14:1).

**Conclusion** In the beginning, God built a family starting with two people whose anatomy was not their only difference. Their differences could either aid or hinder their faith, marriage, and relationship with God. Is God building your family? Are you a pillar?

## **Adam and Eve: The Permanence of Marriage (Gen. 2:24)**

Because the history of marriage and mankind cannot be separated, there are an abundance of clichés and statistics related to marriage. If you've lived very long, you've seen marriages begin and end for a variety of reason. In Genesis 2, we are introduced to God's plan for the permanence of marriage.

### *1. Leave Father and Mother*

\*Adam and Eve had no earthly father or mother, so what is the benefit of 2:24?

\* How could a husband or wife fail to “leave” father or mother when they are married?

### *2. Cling To Your Mate*

\* God often compares His relationship to His people as a marriage.

- How do we cling to God?

- What does this teach us about cleaving to a mate?

\* What can cause some to cling to something or someone other than their mate?

\* What are some signs that modern families have forgotten or ignored God's intention that the spouses should be each others' primary source of companionship?

### *3. The two shall become one flesh*

According to Strong's Hebrew Dictionary, the Hebrew word translated “flesh” (#01320) has a range of meanings, both general and specific [“flesh (from its freshness); by extension, body, person; also (by euphem.) the pudenda of a man:--body, (fat, lean) flesh(-ed), kin, (man-)kind, + nakedness, self, skin”]. Two become one flesh by sharing the sexual relationship, but that is exclusively for those who cling to each other as husband and wife. When the sexual union is viewed as a gift from God, it becomes one of many bonds between spouses. People can be one flesh with someone but not cling to them, but this is sin (1 Cor. 6:16).

\* What are some of the purposes of God for the sexual relationship?

\* What role does being one flesh with your spouse play in the permanence of marriage?

### *4. What God has joined together Matt. 19:6*

- Jesus' commentary adds an important lesson to our understanding of the permanence of marriage—it is God who joins. Man and woman may claim to belong together, but if God does not join them then their claim is unlawful and illegal.

\* What role does God demand from the government regarding joining/marrying man and woman?

5. *What God has joined together..., let not man separate* Matt. 19:6

- \* What role does God demand from the government regarding separation/divorce of husband and wife?
  
- \* Does abandoning my spouse mean I am dismissed from the things I promised when God joined/married us?

Conclusion The permanence of marriage demonstrates the wisdom of God. Though twists it to make it appear evil, God meant it for good.

## Adam and Eve: Marriage Problems & Solutions Genesis 3:1-24

We don't know how much time passed from Genesis 2:25 until Genesis 3:1. We know that Satan could not sneak down to earth without God's knowledge, so the appearance of Satan in the Garden must be akin to Job 1:6-12, where Satan's actions are known to and limited by God. Also as in Job, Satan and God had very different plans for the outcome of Satan's working among men. Among the problems Satan caused was the beginning of marriage problems and conflict. How did he do that?

### 1. Damaging one spouse's relationship with God

The way Satan persuaded Eve to eat the fruit was by persuading her not to trust God (vss. 4-5). Think about how this was the beginning of her marriage troubles as you answer these questions:

\* Though nothing is said immediately about her relationship with God, how was it affected once she ate?

\* Paul says that she was deceived (1 Tim. 2:14). In what way was she deceived? How did that affect the consequences of her sin?

\* Find a passage that relates to the significance of a relationship with God in marriage---either how marriage is hindered without God or strengthened with God.

### 2. Failure to lead

In 1 Timothy 2:13, we learn that by making man first God was implying man's leadership in the family—in this case, Adam was the leader. At whatever point Adam knew that Eve ate the fruit, he had the responsibility to lead her. Read verses 6-12 and think about Adam's leadership

\* Eve somehow persuaded Adam, but his decision to eat was not the result of being deceived. How would you describe that kind of "leadership"?

\* After they ate, they heard God in the Garden. Comment on Adam's leadership at that point.

\* When God confronted Adam with his sin, what kind of a leader was he?

\* Reflect on these three occasions and comment on the challenges husbands must accept today as leaders.

### 3. My decisions affect my spouse

Eve's sin affected Adam. Adam's sin affected Eve. Their sins still affect us! Every sin changes me, even in the slightest of ways, and who I am affects my spouse, often more than either of us realize. For example, once Eve ate, regardless of whether Adam would or would not eat, their relationship would be affected. Imagine the possible outcomes and prepare to discuss how similar events affect marriages today:

\* Eve keeps her sin a secret, intentionally hiding this experience from him until it would be exposed by God

\* Eve seeks to persuade Adam to eat and he refuses, giving no reason for his refusal and saying nothing of her decision to eat.

\* Eve seeks to persuade Adam to eat and he refuses, humbly and patiently reminding her of God's goodness to them and promised severity.

\* Eve seeks to persuade Adam and he also eats.

#### 4. Avoid resentment and passing blame Gen. 3:1-24

\* Why might Eve resent Adam?

\* Why might Adam resent Eve?

\* Why might Adam or Eve resent God?

\* Select at least one of these potential cases of resentment, and discuss what would prevent or overcome resentment. (passages to consider: 1 Cor. 13; Eph. 5:22-33)

\* When might resentment trouble marriages today? How is it prevented or overcome?

#### Conclusion

If it has ever been difficult to imagine Adam and Eve as real people because their lives were so different than ours, maybe now we better see the overlap of their lives and ours—the same problems, solutions, and God!

## Abraham and Sarah

Both Abraham and Sarah are given as examples of faith (Heb. 11:6-19), yet they were not born as great pillars of faith. At times they allowed a lack of faith, plans of man's wisdom, and the influence of culture to lead them from obedience to God. Yet they also exemplified their faith and overcame their faults, as they grew as God's children. What can we learn from the marriage of Abraham and Sarah?

### 1. Leadership

\* Think of a leader you highly respect (in family, church, work, government, etc.). Name two qualities that contributed to their success as a leader.

\* How does a man become “qualified” to lead the home?

\* Read Genesis 12:4-5, 12-20; 13:8-9, 18; 16:1-6; 24:1-8

- Select two of the above passages and describe Abraham's leadership in each case.

- What are some of the consequences that resulted from his leadership in each case?

- Use at least one of the traits you chose above (a leadership trait you have seen in others), and describe how that helped or would have helped Abraham.

*For personal study* Using at least one of those traits you have noticed in others, can you think of an occasion in your home where that trait was demonstrated or was absent? What were the consequences?

### 2. Submission

A. *Leave...cling* Gen. 2:24a; 12:4-5

\* By leaving his family, Abraham was submitting to God. Describe the submission God required of Sarah.

\* We are not told Sarah's attitudes and thoughts regarding this move. Describe what *might have* made this move difficult for Sarah to accept with godly submission.

B. *Conditional submission* Gen. 12:12-20; Col. 3:18; 1 Cor. 11:3

\* How did Sarai fail God, Abram, and herself in Gen. 12:12-20?

\* When are wives put in similar circumstances today?



C. *A gentle and quiet spirit* 1 Pet. 3:1-6

\* Judging by Genesis 16:5, was a gentle and quiet spirit a natural or an acquired trait of Sarah?

\* Name an occasion in Sarah's life that might have challenged her gentle, quiet spirit.

\* Name something in Abraham's life or character that strengthened Sarah's gentle, quiet spirit. (Husbands, traits like this is among the best ways to strengthen your wife's faith)

3. God's plan versus man's "perhaps" Gen. 16:1-2

\* Was Sarai's plan for a child through Hagar by faith? Why or why not?

\* When are husbands & wives today tempted to add a "perhaps" to God's plan for the family?

\* What are the results of man today adding "perhaps" to God's plan for the family?

4. The effect of culture on the home Gen. 16:2

*Background* Read about "The Nuzi Tablets" and Abraham online, in a Bible encyclopedia or dictionary, or a commentary on Genesis 16. Summarize what you find.

\* What made the solution to Sarah's problem offered by culture so appealing?

\* Is the practice of a culture *always* sinful? List some examples.

\* What passage(s) remind(s) us to guard against the evil influence of the culture in which we live? List some examples.

*For personal study* What struggles that were present in Abraham and Sarah's family are also your struggles?

**Conclusion** Hebrews 11 is not elevating people, it is emphasizing the kind of faith God is looking for from man. The kind of faith that blessed Abraham and Sarah's marriage can have the same affect in your home!

## Abraham's Family

Ezekiel 18:14 describes the change that can come when a child recognizes the sin of his father. If children today do not closely and honestly examine the life of their parents then they often will follow the example of their parents into sin. We see both the faith and faults of Abraham and Sarah displayed in their children and grandchildren. This is a sober reminder to “train a child up in the way that he *should* go” (Prov. 22:6, emp DH).

1. Isaac and Rebekah's Favoritism: Provoking Children To Wrath Gen 25:19-34 (v28); 27:5-17; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:20-21. Isaac should be commended for having one wife and not following in his father's footsteps into polygamy. However, Isaac made some mistakes that he may have learned from his mother, Sarah—favoritism. Notice how many relationships were damaged, at least in part, by Isaac and Rebekah's favoritism.

A. Between each other

\* How did Isaac and Rebekah choose their favorite? What weakness in them does this reveal?

\* How far was Rebekah willing to go to see her hopes for Jacob accomplished? What does this say about how her favoritism had eroded her respect for Isaac?

B. Between siblings, Jacob jealous of Esau

\*What is the first evidence of Jacob's jealousy?

\* Upon what other occasion did partiality cause further division between Jacob and Esau?

C. Between son and daughter-in-law 28:6-9

\* What reason is given for Esau choosing a wife from Ishmael's descendants? What affect would that have upon the marriage?

D. Between adult child and parent 28:6-9

\* Whose approval was Esau most concerned with? not at all concerned with?

\* Read Ephesians 6:1-3. How does favoritism make the duty of honoring and obeying parents more difficult for the child?

How ought children respond to their parents who are unfaithful to the duties of parenthood?

E. Between Esau and God.

- There is no record of Esau serving God, nor did his seed, the Edomites, 2 Chron. 25:20

\* How ought children respond to God when they have parents who are unfaithful to God and to the duties of parenthood?

## 2. Jacob follows faulty footsteps

“Here is my maid. . .” 30:3ff

Polygamy Gen. 29:30; 30:4

Favoritism 33:1-2; 37:3-4

\* How can we avoid making the same mistakes that our parents made?

*For personal study* Think of other Bible characters who failed to learn from the mistakes of their family (parents, grandparents, etc)

## 3. Esau’s family built on faulty foundation

- Abraham arranged for Isaac not to marry a Canaanite women (Gen. 24:3). We do not know whether Isaac tried to prevent Esau from this. While the circumstances of Esau's choice of Hittite women as wives is not given, we can be sure that he was not thinking spiritually.

A. Foolish reason for marriage Gen. 28:8-9

\* What motive is given for Esau taking additional wives from the family of Ishmael? Is that a sound basis for a strong family?

B. Ungodly mates Gen. 26:34-35; 27:46.

\* What are some possible reasons why Esau chose a wife from the Hittites?

\* In our culture, the parents do not choose the child's spouse, so we cannot follow Abraham's example (Gen. 24:3). What can parents do today to guide their children to choose a godly mate?

C. Esau's wives a “weariness” (sons of Heth were Hittites, among the Canaanites Gen. 15:16).

- That Esau's family disapproved of his wives, was likely obvious. Esau grew up in a divided home and the problems grow. Gen. 36:1ff; 2 Chron. 25:20 record the wicked descendants of Esau whose spiritual heritage was rooted in Esau's failure to seek God.

\* What are some possible reasons why the wives of Esau were a grief to the mind of Isaac and Rebekah?

*For personal study* Consider the relationship between Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth (Ruth 1:3-18). While there is much we cannot know about why Naomi’s sons chose wives from Moab instead of returning to Israel to find a spouse, is there anything we can learn about the relationship between a Jewish mother-in-law and Gentile daughter-in-law?

**Conclusion** None of us can look into the future and know what our family will do in the future. What we can know is that our faith will have an influence on that in some way. Is that a comforting or fearful thought?

## Godly Mothers

Not everyone who seeks to be a mother is given that opportunity, but all who are permitted to be a mother are given the opportunity to be a godly mother. The Bible preserves a portion of the lives of various women who made the pursuit of godliness one of their highest priorities. What qualities were essential in that pursuit?

### 1. Jochebed: Fearless faith Ex. 2:1-10; Heb. 11:23

- Amram, a descendant of Levi, and Jochebed were the parents of Moses (Ex. 6:20). Miriam and Aaron were his two older siblings (Ex. 2:4; 7:7; Num 26:59). While we know very little about the mother of Moses, we can draw some conclusions by what information is available.

\* What do we learn about the character of Jochebed when we are told that she hid her son “by faith”?

\* List the things that Jochebed risked or gave up because she feared and trusted God more than man.

\* What may parents today have to risk or surrender for the sake of the well-being of their children?

### 2. Hannah: Commitment to serving God 1 Sam. 1:1-2:10, 19-21

- While an entire biography of the life of Hannah is not provided, we can see her service to God and her family. Being dedicated to God meant she committed her son to God, after years of waiting to have a child. As much as she would want him at home, she had already committed him to God. She would not go back on her word, for as strong as her love for Samuel was, she had a greater commitment to God.

\* What do we learn about Hannah that benefit modern mothers?

\* How would our society benefit from mothers who share the commitment of Hannah?

\* In what ways will this spirit of commitment help the Lord's church to grow?

### 3. Mary: Maidservant of the Lord Lk. 1:26-38; 2:33-35; Jn. 19:25-27

- In language similar to that spoken of Noah (Gen. 6:8), Mary is told, “you have found favor with God,” as the announcement of Jesus' future birth is made to her (Lk. 1:30). We don't know at exactly what point Mary realized all of the implications that would come with her being “with child” yet “not knowing a man,” but they became vivid, exemplified by the reaction and thoughts of Joseph (Matt. 1:18-25). Apparently, whatever trials she faced as a result of this event, she endured them as the “maidservant of the Lord” (Lk. 1:38).

\* Name some specific trials that Mary endured because she was the mother of Jesus.

\* Name some specific challenges that Christian mothers face, that are not a concern to mothers who have no/little concern for serving God.

\* How did Mary, and how can Christian mothers today, endure these trials?

4. Lois/Eunice: Passing the torch Acts 16:1-3; 2 Tim. 1:3-5; 3:14-15

- We occasionally sing the song, "Faith of Our Fathers." This song does not mean that our faith is in our "fathers" but that we share the same faith for which those of the past suffered and died. Among our "fathers" are a number of godly mothers and grandmothers, such as Lois and Eunice. We know nothing of Lois' husband. Eunice was a believer while her husband is just called a Greek. Exactly how their husbands viewed the faith of their wives, we do not know, but we do know that these two godly women were faithful in teaching Timothy faith in God from his childhood.

- As Timothy was invited to join Paul, Lois and Eunice could not have anticipated all the good that Timothy would do. If they could, no doubt the decision would have been easy for him to go. By their work with Timothy, they not only passed the torch of faith to him, but they also had a part in it being passed to men and women then and now by Timothy's work (2 Timothy 2:2).

\* What reasons could have caused Eunice to be tentative in encouraging Timothy to go with Paul?

\* What reasons could have caused Eunice to be supportive of Timothy's travel with Paul?

\* If we conclude that Lois and Eunice were supportive of Timothy's travel with Paul, what lessons can we learn from them?

\* Who benefited from Timothy's decision to leave home and travel with Paul in spreading the gospel? How did each benefit?

**Conclusion** Though mothers rarely grab the headlines of history, they play an essential role in life and a greatly important role in the development of faith in their families. Who can find a virtuous mother? Her price is far above rubies!

## Godly Fathers

Fatherhood, like motherhood, is a privilege not a right. Those who are given the opportunity to guide the development of children ought to do so mindful of the fact that their influence will outlast their lives.

1. Noah: A good home in a wicked world Gen. 6:8-22

\* Noah was a preacher of righteousness, yet when the flood came men were living as though it was not going to happen (2 Pet. 2:5; Matt. 24:37-38). What may we conclude about the responses Noah received?

\* Considering the responses he received, how would the world have viewed Noah's leadership and his children? How might that have influenced his children?

\* What should godly fathers today expect from the world and for what must they prepare their children?

2. Job: Balance in a busy life Job 1:1-5

- Using some of today's terminology, Job was the CEO of the largest business in the East, father of 10, and the spiritual leader of his family. Of course, during the time of Job, business and wealth were agriculturally based and the spiritual leadership was often provided by the head of the family meaning Job was a busy man. Yet even by reading a few verses within the first two chapters of the book of Job, we see that he was able to keep balance in all of the duties to which he was responsible.

\* What terms describe Job in 1:1? What do each mean?

\* From Job 1:1-5, 21; 2:10, list the things for which Job accepted responsibility and how he prioritized them.

\* Comment on the condition of homes which prioritize their lives in the following ways, and comment on the decisions fathers make that promote these priorities.

First:                      Second:                      Third:  
1. Wealth      Family                      God      \_\_\_\_\_

---

2. Wealth      God                      Family      \_\_\_\_\_

---

3. Family                      God                      Wealth      \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. Family                  Wealth                  God \_\_\_\_\_

---

5. God                      Family                  Wealth \_\_\_\_\_

---

6. God                      Wealth                  Family \_\_\_\_\_

---

\*\*\*One group of priorities is impossible to accomplish. It has never been done and never will be done. Which group is impossible and why is it impossible to prioritize life that way?

Conclusion Of course, God is the perfect role model for fathers, yet He noticed Noah and Job leadership. What does he see in your home?

## Godly Children

Often forgotten in a study of roles and responsibilities in the home is the duty of the children. Though they had no voice concerning being brought into their family, throughout their lives their choices have a significant impact on the family.

A. Submissive in youth: Joseph & David Gen. 37:13-17; 1 Sam. 17:17-22

\* Read the two passages and share some observations (either positive or negative) about their instructions and response.

\* From these few verses, and others which you know, to what law were Joseph and David accountable? How important was that to them?

\* Were Joseph and David left to raise themselves? Were they sheltered and unable to function among ungodly men? Give verses to sustain your answer.

B. Faith when away from home: Joseph, Daniel Gen. 39; Daniel 1:8-16; 2:1-3, 19, 27-30; 6:4-24

\* Summarize the circumstances of Joseph or Daniel.

\* What shows that the faith of Joseph and Daniel was not an “inherited faith” but was rooted in personal conviction? Cite the verses.

\* What do we know about their parents that contributed to their faith?

\* How are our children in similar circumstances today?

\* What specific things should parents today prepare their children for? Describe how you did, are, or plan to prepare them.

C. Caring for Parents: Joseph Gen. 45:1-3, 9-11; 1 Tim. 5:4, 8,16; Mt. 15:4-6

\* When Joseph established himself apart from family, how do we know that he was still concerned for their wellbeing?

\* What does God think of those who neglect caring for their parents?

\* Why do some neglect this duty?

\* What words did Paul use to describe what children or grandchildren should do for parents or grandparents?



\* In what ways do grown parents commonly need their children's help today?

\* What are some of the blessings of the parent-child relationship in the latter years that are often overlooked in our society?

Conclusion Being a godly child extends beyond the phase of life commonly called "childhood," and there are lessons and blessings that likewise last a lifetime.

## Herod Antipas and Herodius (Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-28)

The Herods were considered Jews because their homeland was conquered by the Jews and all living therein, became proselytes (Josephus XIII, IX, 1). This is why Paul was so glad to stand before King Agrippa (Acts 26:1-3). This is Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 13:20-23). For our study, we are primarily concerned with Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great (Mt. 2:1ff), and Herodius, who left her first husband to be with Herod Antipas. Her first husband was Herod Antipas' brother, Philip. At the end of the lesson, you can read what Josephus said about Herod Antipas.

### 1. *It is not lawful for you to have her*

\* Read Mark 6:18. Herod had no right to marry Herodius according to whose law?

\* If it was not lawful for Herod Antipas to have her, then what would repentance require?

\* What is God's law regarding marriage today?

\* How do God's limitations on marriage, divorce, or remarriage benefit mankind?

### 2. *Obey your parents in the Lord* Mk. 6:21-28; Eph. 6:1

- The historian Josephus (a Jew born in 37AD in Jerusalem) writes about this event, and that Herodias' daughter was named Salome.

- The Romans are known for popularizing birthday celebrations, in addition to their general reputation for partying, including dancing--

“Dances in the Roman era described in texts and pictured in art appear to have been performed primarily for entertainment. They often emphasized burlesque, overtly erotic, comic and frightening elements. In Roman times dancers became professionals of low status, rather than respected artist and participants in religious events as was the case in Greece and dance lost its sacred public function and degenerated into more of spectacle and low-brow entertainment.”  
(<http://factsanddetails.com/world/cat56/sub399/entry-6334.html>)

\* While the type of dance Salome performed is not told, what information in the text provides some hints?

\* What conduct does Salome see from her parents?

\* For what reason might Salome be obedient to her parents?

\* For what reason does Paul tell children to obey their parents?

### 3. When a parent makes a mistake in judgment. Mt. 14:7

\* Once Herod made this rash vow and heard her request, how should he have responded?

\* Read Ephesians 6:4. Get a dictionary (preferably a Bible dictionary) and define:  
nurture (training)

admonition

\* How would you describe the training and admonition that Herod gave Salome?

\* Use Scripture to show what God expects of each parent when one of them makes a poor, but not necessarily sinful, decision.

*For personal study:* Can you recall a time when your parents or you, as a parent, made a poor judgment and needed to (or did) change your mind?

#### 4. When spouses disagree Mk. 6:19-20

You can probably imagine the look on Herod's face when Salome returned with his answer—he knew where that idea came from. Obviously Herod and Herodius had talked about this before and strongly disagreed. We do not know how much of a regular source of conflict this was between them before John's death, but it likely intensified after John's death as Herod knew Herodius had manipulated Salome. What a mess, yet many marriages today suffer from this "cat and mouse/my way at any cost" relationship.

\* Name some things that will aid spouses in being of the same mind and judgment in the process of making decisions.

\* Use Scripture to show what God expects of each spouse when the husband makes a sinful decision?  
husband:

wife:

\* Use Scripture to show what God expects of each spouse when the husband makes a judgment his wife does not prefer?

husband:

wife:

\* Read Romans 12:9-21. Select any three verses and comment on their application to spouses who disagree.

**Conclusion** This family's "dirty laundry" has been hung for all to see, but the consequences of sin in any family is equally tragic. God is a rewarder of those that diligently seek His help in the home!

”Josephus on John the Baptist” from [www.livius.org/sources/content/josephus/jewish-antiquities/josephus-on-john-the-baptist/](http://www.livius.org/sources/content/josephus/jewish-antiquities/josephus-on-john-the-baptist/)

[18.109] About this time Aretas, the king of the Arabian city Petra, and Herod Antipas had a quarrel. Herod the tetrarch had married the daughter of Aretas [called Phasaelis], and had lived with her a great while. But when he was once at Rome, he lodged with Herod [Philip], who was his brother indeed, but not by the same mother (this Herod was the son of the high priest Simon's daughter).

[18.110] Here, he fell in love with Herodias, this other Herod's wife, who was the daughter of Aristobulus their brother, and the sister of Agrippa the Great. Antipas ventured to talk to her about a marriage between them; when she admitted, an agreement was made for her to change her habitation, and come to him as soon as he should return from Rome: one article of this marriage also was that he should divorce Aretas' daughter.

[18.111] So Antipas made this agreement and returned home again. But his wife had discovered the agreement he had made before he had been able to tell her about it. She asked him to send her to Machaerus, which is a place in the borders of the dominions of Aretas and Herod, without informing him of her intentions. So, Herod sent her thither, unaware that his wife had perceived something.

...

[18.116] Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God as a just punishment of what Herod had done against John, who was called the Baptist.

[18.117] For Herod had killed this good man, . . .

## Aquila and Priscilla

1 Pet. 3:7 says that husband and wife may be heirs together of the grace of life. Of course, to be an heir at all, one must be a child of God (Gal. 3:26-29). Although the information that we have about Aquila and Priscilla is limited, the details that we do have are worthy of consideration for Christians today.

### 1. Working Together for Physical Things Acts 18:1-3

\* Because they were Jews, Aquila and Priscilla had to leave their home in Rome. Name the attitudes, actions, and interactions needed by each spouse during life-changing decisions like this one.

Husband

Wife

\* We know nothing about the process of their decision to move to Corinth. From 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, what common sins in that city might add strain to their work and marriage?

\* What sins are common in our culture that add strain to the lives of Christian who seek to fulfill the God-given duty in both work and marriage?

\* Choose any two things from 2 Peter 1:5-7 and discuss how those things strengthen spouses in decisions related to physical things (finances, type of work, time devoted to work, work changes, moving, etc).

### 2. Working Together for Spiritual Things Acts 18:18-19, 24-26

\* Assuming they accompanied Paul to learn, help, and grow, name some specific areas which Aquila could learn, help, or grow, or name some specific areas which Priscilla could learn, help, or grow by traveling with Paul.

\* How can Paul's influence be seen in their work in Ephesus?

\* Give some examples of what spouses can do together today and how they benefit by doing those things together. Discuss what happens when a spouse does those things alone.

### 3. Hospitality Acts 18:3

\* What extra burden was it for Aquila and Priscilla to host Paul in their home for at least several weeks? What were the potential benefits?

\* What Bible verses place this responsibility (hospitality) upon all Christians?

\* To whom are we taught to be hospitable?

\* Why would Peter add “without grumbling” to his instructions in 1 Peter 4:9?

\* Since it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35), what blessings accompany saints who are hospitable (i.e. what are our lives missing if we are not currently hospitable)?

**Conclusion** Like many people in the Bible, I wish I knew more about Aquila and Priscilla. Of course, God has told us what we need to know, so let's imitate what is preserved about their faith and marriage.