



# "Blessings From Above"

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**"...The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had, in house and field. (Genesis 39:5)"**

What does a "blessing" signify? The presence of a blessing is a sign not just simply of God's favor on a certain individual such as Joseph, but also of God's actual existence in the world and of His Holy relationship with His people.

Blessings are expressions of love. A blessing can be either material (as in the case of Joseph's blessing) or spiritual. God made a covenant with Abraham, which explicitly included a promise of spiritual blessings. "I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. (Genesis 12:2)"

When Laban and Bethuel sent their sister Rebekah from Haran to become the wife of Isaac, they "blessed Rebekah and said to her, 'May you, our sister, become thousands of myriads; may your offspring gain possession of the gates of their foes. (Genesis 24:60)" It should be noted that they did not confer the blessing itself but they called upon God for her.

The high priest, Eli gives his blessing to Samuel when his mother, Hannah, brought Samuel to the Sanctuary of Shiloh. He called upon the Lord to bless Samuel in childhood.

Even those who are materially poor can possess great spiritual blessings. These blessings can be even greater and more meaningful than we can imagine. The Lord Jesus Christ when giving the "Sermon on the Mount" told all those surrounding Him, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God. (Luke 6:20)" This was a blessing directly associated with the Heavenly Kingdom.



*Jacob's ladder*

I would like to further closely examine a specific type of a blessing: the blessing of a parent. As you may know, God blessed Isaac with great prosperity, but in Isaac's old age he appeared to dwell on more material things such as his great love of venison that drew him to making a request of Esau for this particular type of meat prior to bestowing his blessing upon him. His love of venison may have led him to his giving the wrong son his blessing.

Yet, Isaac was no ordinary man. We know from Holy Scripture that when Isaac died he was "old and full of days. (Genesis 35:29)" Isaac was included with this description of God, "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." The prophet Amos goes so far as to use the name Isaac to stand for the "Nation of Israel."

According to the Holy Scriptures, Isaac is the only patriarch to marry only once, to keep no concubines, and to succeed in agriculture. In traditional Jewish literature he is further revered as the model for martyrs and intercedes with God for Israel more often than any other patriarch. Certainly, Isaac was no common man of the Old Testament.

Let's continue to examine closely the blessing of a parent with the example of Isaac. He has become feeble and his eyesight has grown very dim. Isaac wants to give a blessing to his first-born son Esau. This paternal blessing of a father to his child can be a powerful act. Once a blessing is bestowed upon another it can never be withdrawn. It can never be given again in the same manner to another. Blessings such as this assure us blessings can only come from God.

Blessings of a parent have enormous significance.



Rebekah loved Jacob best over Esau. Therefore, it was Rebekah who planned the tricking of Isaac over Esau's blessing. Why would a mother do such a thing for a blessing if it were of little importance? What did the blessing mean for her favorite son? For Jacob it meant the right to inherit the Land of Canaan, and it passed on the Divine promise to become the patriarch of the entire Nation of Israel. This promise was originally bestowed upon Abraham and then reaffirmed with Isaac.

Jacob received his father's blessing and fled from Esau's dangerous wrath. A blessing was of such importance that we know Esau became extremely angry with the potential for violence because it was stolen from him. In Jacob's future, he would wrestle with an angel who would rename him "Israel." We notice a changed man thereafter, one that becomes dedicated to the Lord. Hence with gaining his father's blessing, the blessing we discover both affects Jacob's destiny and his character.

How can we apply this to the lives of youth today? The answer lies in seeking the blessings of our parents. How in the modern world do we earn the blessings and love of our parents?

Evaluating the life of the Lord Jesus Christ as a youth in Nazareth may give us the first and most important clue. In the Holy Book of Luke 2:51-52 it is written:

"Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and favor with God and men."

The Lord Jesus Christ was subject to his parents meaning he showed humble obedience to them. Before the Holy Bible speaks to his wisdom and grace inherent in Him it speaks to his obedience to His parents. We further know that not only did He obey but also that He learned a trade from His earthly father as well.

Many points can be derived from the Lord Jesus Christ example:

- 1) Did you know that you learn self-control through parental guidance? "It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. (Lamentations 3:27)"
- 2) The youth who heeds the instructions of their parents will be happier. "The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:9)"
- 3) One of the best reasons for obeying your parents is that it pleases God. "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. (Colossians 3:20)"
- 4) Finally, youth will discover contentment, joy, and peace when they willingly obey their parents. "All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children. (Isaiah 54:13)"

Through obedience and love youth earn their parents' blessings. Through obedience and love youth not only respect and cherish their parents gaining their parents blessings, but they also learn how to love and submit to the Heavenly Father.

"We have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? (Hebrews 12:9)"

A youth who attains wisdom and stature and favor with God and man will treasure one of the greatest gifts of life, the blessings of his parents.

May God impart love, knowledge, and "blessings from above" to each of you.