

## The Four Ingredients of a Fathers' Blessing

**Genesis 27:25-29 HCSB** Then he said, "Serve me, and let me eat some of my son's game so that I can bless you." Jacob brought it to him, and he ate; he brought him wine, and he drank. **26** Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come closer and kiss me, my son." **27** So he came closer and kissed him. When Isaac smelled his clothes, he blessed him and said: Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the LORD has blessed. **28** May God give to you--from the dew of the sky and from the richness of the land--an abundance of grain and new wine. **29** May peoples serve you and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brothers; may your mother's sons bow down to you. Those who curse you will be cursed, and those who bless you will be blessed.

### INTRODUCTION

When I Was:

4 yrs old My Daddy could do anything.

5 yrs old My Daddy knows everything.

6 yrs old My Dad is smarter than your dad

8 yrs old My Dad doesn't exactly know everything.

10 yrs old When my Dad grew up in the olden days things were sure different.

12 yrs old My Dad doesn't know anything about that, he's too old to remember.

14 yrs old My Dad is so old fashioned.

18 yrs old My Dad is really out of it.

25 yrs old My Dad knows about that, but he should, because he's been around so long.

30 yrs old Maybe we should ask Dad?

35 yrs old I won't do anything about that until I talk to Dad.

40 yrs old I wonder how Dad would have handled this?

50 yrs old I'd give anything if Dad were here now, so I could talk this over with him.

Some of you fondly remember your fathers. Others celebrate their fathers today who they still have with them. To all of you fathers, Happy Fathers Day. There's one thing that we all need from our fathers and from our Heavenly Father-- it's his blessing and smile of approval on our lives.

So this morning I'd like for you to turn to the 27th chapter of Genesis, to the story of Isaac bestowing his blessing to Jacob. Of course, the blessing was intended for the oldest son, Esau. But through deception the blessing was given to Jacob instead. Our focus is not the deception, however, it is on the blessing.

According to some who have studied this custom and tradition, the ancient Hebrew blessing contains FOUR INGREDIENTS that ought to be present in every home today. And when those FOUR INGREDIENTS are present, and practiced consistently, then our children grow up solid, secure and confident of themselves, able to go out into the world and function normally. But if those ingredients are absent in the home, then too often the child ends up like Esau, steeped in bitterness and anger.

So let me share with you the FOUR INGREDIENTS of Isaac's blessing – a Fathers Blessing.

### I. A MEANINGFUL TOUCH (v.22)

You are blessed if you have/had a father who touched you in a meaningful way. The first ingredient was a meaningful touch. Notice vs. 22, "Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him." Vs. 26 says, "Then his father Isaac said to him, `Come here, my son, and kiss me.'" This is not an isolated incident in scripture. Almost every time a blessing is bestowed in Hebrew culture, it involves touching - the laying on of hands, a kiss, an embrace - something that conveys acceptance and love.

The 10th chapter of the Gospel of Mark says that people brought children to Jesus so that He could touch them. Jesus took them and placed them on his knee, and laid His hands upon them, and the scripture says, "He blessed them." Jesus knew exactly what children need to feel loved and accepted. So He touched them and blessed them. Studies prove that touched babies and children develop much more quickly than untouched babies.

It's important to do that in our homes, too. When children are very small you can't communicate love with words because they don't understand words yet. But the best way to communicate love to a very small child is to demonstrate it by touching them, cuddling them, and holding them close.

Dads, don't ever stop touching your boys, your girls in a meaningful, loving way. Deep within their soul, your touch meets a felt need. Teenage girls and boys still need to be held by their daddies. Adult men even need to be touched lovingly.

## **II. A SPOKEN MESSAGE OF AFFECTION and LOVE (v.27b)**

You are blessed if you have/had a father who spoke love to you in some significant way. The second ingredient was a spoken message of affection and love. Listen as he blesses his son in the last part of vs. 27, "Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field. . ."

Now I suppose that today's child would not consider it a compliment to be told, "You smell like a field. I just wanted you to know that." But to an old outdoorsman like Isaac, who thought he was speaking to Esau, the smell of a field about ready for harvest was a great smell. It was a compliment, a positive message that communicated his love and affection.

You see, too often parents are quick to criticize and remind children of their mistakes. "You dummy, why did you spill the milk?" "You're lazy." Words of criticism that really don't accomplish much are often spoken. All they do is cause a child to withdraw. I think there is room for constructive criticism. But it's more important to communicate love through words that say, "You're worth something. You're such a good little boy or girl. I'm glad that God gave you to us. You're better than any Christmas present I could ever receive. Father's Day is special just because you're here." Those are words that communicate acceptance and love. And they need to be spoken over and over again, even when our children stumble and fall.

Illustration: Dan Benson, in his book "The Total Man," says that for every positive word that most dads say to their children, they say 10 negative ones. They're really good at words like "Don't" and "You can't" and "Stop that," and "No." But they're not very good at the positive words. Benson suggests that we could change the whole personality of our relationship with our children if we just learned to be positive, and influence things in a positive way.

## **III. THE ATTRIBUTING OF A HIGH VALUE IN PRAYER (v.28)**

You are blessed if you had/have a father who speaks/spoke your name in prayer. The third ingredient of the blessing was the attributing of a high value. Notice what Isaac says in vs. 28, "May God give you of heaven's dew and of earth's richness - an abundance of grain and new wine."

He's saying, "You're special, so God will give you the best He has to give." We're constantly being told that we should teach our children to have a good, positive self-image, to build up their self-esteem. It is true.

But it's not just by words. We teach high value in a number of ways. A lot of times when a child comes, we're so busy. We have one eye on the TV and one eye on them, and we can't concentrate on what they're saying. So when a child comes to talk to you, turn off the radio or TV set. Lay aside the newspaper, and look them in the eye. You'll see wonder after wonder when you look into a child's eyes, sparkling with excitement. They have so many things they're anxious to tell you. So look at them, and listen to what they have to say! That communicates value. "You're worth something. You're more important to me than the ballgame or newspaper. You're

an extremely valuable part of our family. I'm glad God gave you to us. And whenever you have something you need to talk about, I'm here to listen to you."

#### **IV. THE PICTURING OF A GLORIOUS FUTURE (v.29)**

You are blessed if you had/have a father who set you up to succeed. The fourth ingredient was the picturing of a glorious future. In vs. 29 Isaac says to Jacob, "May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed." Isaac is helping him to raise his sights and see that his future is bright.

We're to help our children find their niche, discover who they are, and why they've been made. God made them special. So as they're growing up, help them understand their gifts and talents, and what they're best suited to do in life. Counsel and guide them to become the kind of person God wants, and made them to be. The mistake most of us make as parents is we try to get our children to become what we want them to be, other than what God made them to be. Two great gifts you can give to your children: roots and wings.

Kids need help in deciding what it is they want to do, where it is they want to do it, and how to give it a whole-hearted effort while being careful to balance the other responsibilities in life.

#### **CONCLUSION**