

THE BLESSING

INTRODUCTION

God calls us to become the kind of people through whom His blessings flow. Bless the people you work with, bless whoever God sends you through the day, bless the next generation; just bless everyone.

DISCUSSION

What does it mean to be a blessing?

EXPLANATION

How has God blessed us?
There are many people in Santa Maria starving for a blessing. What would happen if word got out that they could find it in God's people?

APPLICATION

Read Luke 6:32-36.
Would people who you live with (roommate, spouse, kids) say you are a blessing?
Why or why not?
Would the people you work with (or go to school with) say you are a blessing?
Why or why not?

MISSION

Are there any metaphorical toe-nails that you are painting?
How do people's names become safe in your mouth?
Is there anyone you know that would say that you are a blessing?

HOMEWORK FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Genesis 49:1-28.
Remember your words from the last day (or few days or week or month.)

- Where have you used words to manipulate?
- Where did you withhold words of love or encouragement that you should have spoken?

GENESIS

THE FINAL CHAPTERS

THE BLESSING

PART 68

GENESIS 47:27-GENESIS 48

Genesis 1:28
Genesis 47:27-31
Genesis 48:1-22

Genesis 1:22, 27-28
Genesis 12:2-3
Genesis 25:28
Genesis 27:34

Genesis 28:1, 8-9
Genesis 32:26
John 15:1-2

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

eKids! CAMP MEETING
Today at 12:45 in MPR

ELEMENT MOMS
5/30, 10am @ Rice Ranch

YOUTH MAGIC MOUNTAIN
June 1st, \$35
youth@ourelement.org

TEXT-IN YOUR VOTE
For Film & Theology
805-310-4229



GENESIS THE FINAL CHAPTERS: PART 68

THE BLESSING

Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Genesis 47:27 starts off with a brief statement that shows the positive experience of Jacob’s family in Egypt. The recurring idea of being fruitful, multiplying, and being a blessing is always associated with God’s divine blessing. Every time God blesses, it’s a gift of grace. The word for *bless* or *blessing* is used over 400 times just in the Old Testament alone.

God’s plan is to give *you* a blessing so you can *be* a blessing. The reason blessing is so central in the Bible is it’s the answer to an ultimate, inevitable human question. ...*Who has the good life?* Blessing is different than success because it starts with God, it doesn’t start with us. It’s grace. It is different than success because it’s given so you and I can bless the world.

As in the earlier patriarchal narratives, the blessing of the father is passed along to the next generation. Two features of this passage stand out.

- First, as with the earlier instances of the patriarchal blessings, it was the younger son, Ephraim, who was blessed as the firstborn rather than the older, Manasseh. In this respect the passage continues the well-worn theme that the blessing did not follow the lines of natural descent or natural right. The blessing was a gift bestowed on those who could not claim it as a right.
- Second, the blessing recorded in this chapter is largely subordinated and superseded by the blessing of Jacob that follows in the next chapter.

As Jacob reflected back on the blessing, he received and recounted it to his sons. He came back to the central idea of Genesis: God ultimately will bring about all that He has promised. All that had happened to the house of Jacob had been in God’s plan and was intended by Him “for good.”

The two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, are taken into the family of Jacob and were to be treated as his own. They, along with the other sons of Jacob, would inherit the promise of Abraham. Ephraim and Manasseh were counted among the

sons of Jacob and later became two of the most important of the tribes of Israel. In later biblical texts, these two names became synonymous with the northern kingdom of Israel, which stood in bitter opposition to the kingdom of Judah.

Jacob’s blessing is a storehouse of key thematic terms that direct the reader’s attention to several major themes at work in the book as a whole. God is identified as the “God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked.” Not only does the mention of Abraham and Isaac connect Jacob’s faith in God to his immediate forefathers, but it also helps tie together the faith of the earliest patriarchs in Genesis with that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

God is also described in Jacob’s blessing as the “God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,” and as the “Angel who has delivered me from all harm.” The blessing of the two sons picks up the theme of the promise to Abraham. The central concern of this section is to underscore the fact that Ephraim, the younger son, was given preeminence over Manasseh, the elder.

In understanding blessing today, there are two things we need to remember:

- 1) **Joyfully receive**...all the blessings God gives you. Spend your life looking for, acknowledging, embracing, and celebrating God’s blessing in your life. You will never be able to give to someone else what you do not have (or, more importantly, what you do not recognize). We must come to see ourselves as richly blessed by God.
- 2) **Joyfully give**...all the blessings God gives you. A community centered on Christ should be a place where that happens. Sometimes people may live alone or in a place where their family is broken and they are hungry for somebody to bless them.

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