

“THE BLESSING OF A GRANDFATHER”

Genesis 48:8-16

Theme: Faithful servants of God aspire to pass his godly heritage to his children’s children.

There is a perspective prevailing in our culture that denies the authority and influence of elders. Youth is worshipped and new perspective are automatically better than “the old ways.” In some ways, technological advances have provided innovations that are improvements. However, the “life-experience” that older people have gained and the depth of perception that has been forged through “going around the block” provides wisdom, insight, and perspective that would save younger people great trouble should such influences be welcomed.

Grandfathers are men who have struggled through the difficulties of marriage, parenting, and life in ways that often bring regret & remorse. Yet, because of God’s grace their children have survived and most even thrive. While recognizing that some men remain poor examples of selfishness, indulgence, and neglect, most men ... Christian men ... have progressed in the process of a good God working to bring greater conformity to Christ. Whether you are a man who continues to struggle in defeat or a man who has known great progress in being conformed to the image of Christ, I desire to see the Spirit of God inspire you to abound still more in the kind of influence for Christ you are able to be in the lives of your children and grandchildren.

There is a special place in the heart of a man for his grandchildren. Someone once said: “If I knew grandchildren were so great, I would have had them before my kids!” Obviously, one of the reasons one enjoys grandchildren so greatly is that so much work has gone into your own children, you are merely reaping the benefits of what has been so painstakingly sown. Father, one of the thought processes you must own is what you desire to provide your posterity as an aged man. What influences, legacies, and heritage do you want to remain after you are gone?

[Proverbs 17:6](#)

[Psalm 103:17-18](#)

[Deuteronomy 4:23-26](#)

[Proverbs 13:22](#)

[Psalm 37:25](#)

[Joel 1:2-3](#)

I. THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE BLESSING – *48:8-16a*

A. A Heart for Grandchildren – *vv. 8-11*

1. Jacob rewards Joseph with the double portion of the blessing due to his faithfulness to the family.

2. Thus, a single portion is given to Ephraim and Manasseh – Joseph’s two sons adopted by Jacob.
3. Notice the affection Jacob has for the boys – “... *and he kissed them and embraced them*” – v. 10.
 - a. He shows physical affection for them (they’d have been 20 years of age).
 - b. He shows emotional and spiritual affection for them as well – v. 11.
4. Thus, to bless your grandchildren, there must be rapport built with them in love – takes exposure and time.

B. A Heritage of Godliness – v. 15a

1. Now he recalls the special relationship that existed between God and Jacob’s fathers – “*The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked ...*”
2. Webster defines “heritage” as something that is handed down from one’s ancestors or the past – “... *The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day.*”
3. In this case that which is handed down is the example of walking in the fear of God in faith.
4. Jacob viewed himself as pivotal in the transmission of a fear of the Lord to his posterity.
5. Grandfathers must view themselves in an identical role.

C. A Humility before God – v. 15b

1. Here he turns from the stability that His fathers gave to his own experience with the Lord.
2. What is striking is the imagery he uses to describe his relationship with God – Shepherd – his own profession, enabling him to know full well the tender care God had provided.
3. This shows his admission of complete dependency upon God – “... *all my life to this day.*”

D. A Harmony with God – v. 16a

1. The reference to the Angel would be the Angel of the Lord who redeems – Jehovah, or Jesus Christ used in parallel with “*God*” - יהוה־אלהים.

2. This reveals the sense of peace that Jacob had in his relationship with God – he had been redeemed, reconciled to God out of the poverty of soul into which he had been born – [1 Peter 1:17-19](#); [Ephesians 1:7](#).
3. In the same way that Jacob had been blessed by redemption, he now asks that God would “... *bless the lads.*”

II. THE GRACE IN THE BLESSING – [48:16b](#)

A. A Passing of Godly Character

1. Jacob here requests that his grandchildren might know the same privilege as did he – a godly heritage.
2. The issue of their names is that they represent the kind of character that those men had – thus he prays that God will produce in these boys similar faithfulness – “*And may my name live on in them, and the names of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac ...*”

B. A Preservation of Godly Character

1. “*And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth*” - I take it that this is the desire to see them sustain the line of godliness through to the grandchildren that these boys would have.
2. He prays that they would one day sit in a similar situation as he is and pass along godliness to their grandchildren – cp. [Hebrews 11:21](#).
3. Among the legends is the tale of a medieval sidewalk superintendent who asked three stone masons on a construction project what they were doing. The first replied “I am laying bricks.” The second described his work by stating: “I’m building a wall.” But it was the third laborer who demonstrated genuine esteem for his work when he said, “I am assembling a great cathedral.”

So What?

- Regardless how badly you have stumbled as a father, by God’s grace you are able to become a force for righteousness in the lives of your children and grandchildren.
- Consider how you are able to be an influence to the glory of God through genuine, authentic love for God resulting in obedience in your own life.
- Regret paralyzes but hope inspires – fix your hope on Christ, pray for your grandchildren, and love them toward Christ.