Inschluss®

Adoption and foster care from the child's point of view

Bless me, me, too, my father!

Longing for the father's blessing (1/2)

24.01.2022

Perhaps you know the story of Jacob and Esau, which should be called "the story of Esau and Jacob", for Esau was the firstborn. But Jacob played an active role and deceived his brother and took from him the blessing of the father for the firstborn (read in the Bible, Genesis 27). And this is still evident today, in the fact that we do not call the name of Esau, but the name of Jacob first!

But now let's talk about the story: When Esau learns from his father that his brother cheated him of the blessing – what does he do? Does he immediately run away furiously to kill his brother (which he was actually up to: Genesis 27:41)? No, but … let's have a look at the text:

"When Esau heard his father's words, he cried with a loud and bitter cry, and said to his father: Bless me, also me, my father!"
(The Bible, Genesis 27:34)

(There was something going on! I would have liked to be there. More moving than cinema!)

Esau is furious, getting aware of the importance of his father's blessing for him. "Important" is an understatement. I cannot find the words. Esau's "loud and bitter cry" shows: For him, it is all about everything! Everything or nothing!

Isaac answers Esau and says that his brother has taken the blessing away from him; well, there is nothing more to be done, one might think, but not Esau! He is not satisfied with his father's answer, he asks his father:

"Didn't you keep a blessing on me?"
(Genesis 27:36)

Isaac answered him, that with his blessing he had made Jacob the master over his brethren, and asked him what else he could do for him: What is the matter?

Esau wants only one thing from his father, he wants his blessing, he wants it, he wants it at all costs, and therefore he asks a third time:

"Do you have only this one blessing, my father? Bless me, also me, my father! And Esau raised his voice and wept."

V.i.S.d.P.: Dr. Ralf Lengen, Bleichertstraße 14, 12277 Berlin, 030 34 33 74 77

(Genesis 27:38)

Esau's tenacity, his weeping, his crying, his openness – all this finally pays off: his father blesses him (Genesis 27:39f.)

Why am I telling this? Well, I want to show to you and to me: The blessing is the greatest thing a child can get from his father. And: It is worth asking for this blessing, three times if necessary, with weeping, howling and screaming.

What is a blessing at all? I simplify (and don't bring references). A blessing in the Old Testament, referring to a child (large or small), consists of one of the following four elements, often several of them:

1. To name who and what the child is: traits, character traits, actions (preferably with goodwill)
2. To name who and what the child will be: perspectives, traps (the more positive, the more welcome!)
3. To give good wishes on the way
4. To lay the hand on the head or another part of the body — a touch that touches!

Through the blessing a child feels accepted, belonging, secure, ready for the future, what can be more important in the hardships of life?

Yes, but why is it so important that the Father is the one who pronounces such a blessing? Someone else could do the same! For example, a good friend or a celebrity. – Well, to whom in the concert hall / in the gym / in the stadium or just in the swimming pool does the child look when it shows something? Which eyes does it look for? Those of the parents! And here again even more the eyes of the father. Allow me not to explain this further, but simply to assume it as a given: the child looks to the father in order to receive from him the blessing, the recognition.

Yes, but during puberty and later, the judgement of friends is more important to him! The judgement of the father does not count! – Superficially, perhaps, but believe me: the child wants the father's blessing.

But what if the father is a drinker, a murderer, a drug dealer, a monster, the evil in person? – Even then, even then, the father's blessing for the child is existential. The power of blessing does not depend on the moral conduct and

condition of the Father (which is not perfect with any father, as can be seen with Isaac).

Okay, but what does this have to do with our theme of "adoption and care"? – A lot!! Because the adopted child, the foster child, will not have received the blessing of the first father in 98.756 percent of the cases (estimated by me!). Because it does not know him or has no contact with him, because the first father is absent.

There's something missing, something big.

But the child may have received the blessing of the adoptive father, the foster father – yes, and that is very beautiful. But this blessing cannot replace that of the first father.

And the bad thing: The child not only did not receive the blessing of the first father, but also a negative message, almost a kind of curse. Because the message of the first father, the absent father, to the child is, "You are not important to me. I don't care how you're doing and how you're doing." (at least that's what the child thinks) If your own father has not wanted you, if he has not done everything to keep the family together and to be a father to you – what on earth can be a substitute to this negative message of the only instance, from which one expects unconditional acceptance?

That's not a nice ending, I know, but what else do I have to tell you and me? The blessing of the first father — it lacks us who were adopted or given into foster care.

Is there no solution? — Maybe! I would like to outline three ways that could help us (and also non-adoptive children, many of whom also did not receive the father's blessing), in the next article.

I hope that as many children as possible, whether adopted or not, will be granted the request of their hearts: "Bless me, also me, my father!"

to part 2: Longing for the father's blessing