

About Patriarchal Blessings

What is it? How do I get one? Why is it important? Here are answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about patriarchal blessings.

Many members of the Church begin thinking about receiving their patriarchal blessings during their teenage years. The following information can help you understand and prepare to receive your patriarchal blessing.

What is a patriarchal blessing?

A patriarchal blessing has two main purposes. First, the patriarch will be inspired to declare your lineage—the tribe of Israel to which you belong. Second, guided by the spirit of prophecy, the patriarch will pronounce blessings and may also provide promises, cautions, or admonitions that apply specifically to you. Your patriarchal blessing may point out certain things you are capable of achieving and blessings you can receive if you exercise faith and live righteously.

Why is lineage important?

Every member of the Church belongs to one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Those who aren't literal descendants are "adopted" into the house of Israel through baptism. Knowing your lineage can be a helpful guide in your life, because belonging to one of the twelve tribes brings the blessings and missions specific to each tribe. The blessings Jacob gave his sons (the heads of each of the tribes) can be found in Genesis 49 [Gen. 49].

Who may give a patriarchal blessing?

Patriarch is actually an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood, just like elder or high priest, and a patriarch is called and ordained specifically to give patriarchal blessings. You will receive your blessing from the patriarch in your stake or one nearby if your stake doesn't have a patriarch. If you live where there are no stake patriarchs, your bishop or branch president will know how to help you make arrangements to receive a blessing. If you are a direct descendant of someone who is a patriarch (such as your grandfather), you may receive your blessing from him even if he doesn't live in your stake.

Who may receive a patriarchal blessing?

All worthy members of the Church are entitled to and should receive a patriarchal blessing regardless of how long they have been members.

How old do I have to be for a blessing?

There is no set age. You should be old enough to appreciate the sacred nature of the blessing.

How is the blessing given?

The patriarch will place his hands on your head and give the blessing through inspiration. It will be revealed direction for you. The blessing will then be transcribed so that you can have a written copy to study throughout your life. The Church will also keep a copy of your blessing in case you ever lose yours.

How do I get a patriarchal blessing?

Make an appointment for an interview with your bishop. He will determine your readiness and worthiness and either give you a recommend or help you prepare to receive one. After receiving your recommend, you may contact the patriarch to schedule an appointment. Ask your bishop or the patriarch who may accompany you to your blessing, such as your parents. And bring your recommend to the appointment.

How do I know if I'm ready?

The desire to receive a patriarchal blessing should come from a desire to know and live God's will for you. Curiosity or pressure from others isn't the right reason to get a blessing. The bishop will help determine if you are ready for the blessing.

How can I prepare?

You should do everything possible to draw closer to the Lord. Prayer, fasting, scripture study, meditation, and repentance can help. Concerns about worldly things should be left behind for such a sacred occasion.

What should I wear?

You should wear Sunday clothes.

When will the promises in my blessing be fulfilled?

Occasionally patriarchal blessings reveal things from our pre-earth life. But mostly they are guides for present and future living. Because blessings are eternal in nature, they may include possibilities beyond mortal life.

Will all the promises in my blessing be fulfilled?

All blessings are based on your faithfulness and the Lord's timing. Blessings may also be fulfilled in a variety of ways throughout your life, depending on your growth, capacity, and circumstances.

Should I let others read my blessing?

Your blessing is personal, between you and Heavenly Father. You might share your blessing with family members or others who are close to you. But blessings should be guarded and never compared with those of others.

A patriarchal blessing can be of great value throughout your life. Preparing for and living worthy of the promises in your blessing can bring you closer to your Heavenly Father in this life and help you return to Him in the next.

A Star to Follow

“A patriarchal blessing from an ordained patriarch can give us a star to follow, which is a personal revelation from God to each individual. If we follow this star, we are less likely to stumble and be misled. Our patriarchal blessing will be an anchor to our souls, and if we are worthy, neither death nor the devil can deprive us of the blessings pronounced. They are blessings we can enjoy now and forever.”

—**President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency,**
“Priesthood Blessings,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 63.

A Blessing Fulfilled

“Sometimes someone will worry because a promise made in a patriarchal blessing is not yet fulfilled. ... That does not mean that the blessing will go unfulfilled. It is well to know that things happen in the Lord’s due time, not always in ours. Things of an eternal nature have no boundaries. From the premortal existence to our existence beyond the veils of death, our life is an eternal life.” —**President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,** “The Stake Patriarch,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 45.

New Era March 2004