

Theme: God calls His people, and especially leaders, to bless brothers and sisters in Christ, passing on the covenant blessings God has promised to His people

## I. Intro - The Silver Scroll

- A. Mark Holmes sent a link to a video - <http://tinyurl.com/3yut54ea>
- B. I will post it to the blog this week
- C. It is about an archaeological discovery of two tiny silver amulets, hard to unroll - the oldest scrap of Hebrew Scripture we have found - 600-800 BC
- D. It contains the Aaronic blessing - which we are looking at today

## II. The Aaronic Blessing

- A. The purpose - blessing! (vv23,24,27)

The Lord said to Moses, <sup>23</sup> “Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to **bless** the Israelites. Say to them: <sup>24</sup> ““The Lord **bless** you and keep you; <sup>25</sup> the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” <sup>27</sup> “So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will **bless** them.” Numbers 6:22–27

  1. This is God’s command to His people!
  2. Bless - 3 times - command; words; fulfillment
  3. This is why blessing became a regular part of the worship of God’s people
  4. God has commanded that the blessing of His people should be a regular part of worship, and He extends His promised blessings when we do so.

## B. The source and giver of blessing - God Himself

The Lord said to Moses, <sup>23</sup> “Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: <sup>24</sup> ““The Lord **bless** you and keep you; <sup>25</sup> the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” <sup>27</sup> “So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will **bless** them.” Numbers 6:22–27

1. The opening phrase - The Lord bless you
2. Each line attributes the blessing to the Lord
3. “I will bless them” (v27)
4. All true blessing finds its source in God Himself.

## C. God’s blessing is spoken through humans

Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: Numbers 6:23

1. Aaron and the priests were to speak the blessing to the people of Israel who were under their care
2. God is the source and giver of the blessing, but He passes the blessing to us through others as they speak God’s Word of blessing over us.
3. Leaders have a special responsibility to speak blessing over those under their care
  - a. Aaron and his sons the priests were leaders
  - b. Melchizedek the Priest-King of Salem

Then Melchizedek king of Salem **brought out bread and wine**. He was priest of God Most High, <sup>19</sup> and **he blessed Abram, saying**, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. <sup>20</sup> And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.” Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. Genesis 14:18–20

1. Note the worship imagery - bread, wine, tithe
  2. Melchizedek is King and Priest - and a type of Christ
  3. Hebrews 7 makes much of this event
- c. The Levites were to bless the people
- At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and **to pronounce blessings in his name**, as they still do today. Deuteronomy 10:8
- d. David the King blessed the people
- After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, **he blessed the people in the name of the Lord Almighty....** <sup>20</sup> When David **returned home to bless his household....**" 2 Samuel 6:18, 20
1. As King, David blessed the people under his care
  2. As the leader in the home, he blessed those under his care
- e. Jesus' final act as He ascended - speak the blessing!
- When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, **he lifted up his hands and blessed them.** <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Luke 24:50–51
- f. The apostles speak blessings over the churches
- Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 1:2
- May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. 2 Corinthians 13:14
1. Many epistles begin and end with the apostolic blessing
  2. Blessing forms the beginning and the end of instruction in the new covenant!

- g. The last verse of Scripture is an apostolic blessing!  
The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen. Revelation 22:21
4. All believers can speak God's blessing over their brothers and sisters in Christ  
After spending some time there, they were **sent off by the brothers with the blessing of peace** to return to those who had sent them. Acts 15:33
    - a. This was not those in authority - all the believers in Antioch spoke a blessing on the apostolic messengers
    - b. All of us can speak blessing over our brothers and sisters, kids, grandkids, etc!
  5. God promises to bless His people as words of blessing are spoken over them - this is woven into all of God's covenant and the Scripture!

### III. A Closer Look at the Aaronic Blessing

- A. The form of the blessing
- <sup>24</sup> The Lord bless you  
and keep you;
  - <sup>25</sup> the Lord make his face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you;
  - <sup>26</sup> the Lord turn his face toward you  
and give you peace." Numbers 6:24–26
1. The blessing is poetry - to add grandeur, gravity
  2. Three lines, each with two parts (the second explains and expands the effect of the first part)
  3. The subject in each line - the LORD
  4. Each line gets longer, building to the finale

יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ  
 יֵאָר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחֲנֶךָ  
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

## B. The content of the blessing

1. Provision - bless (v24)  
The Lord **ble**ss you and keep you; Numbers 6:24
2. Protection - keep (v24)  
The Lord bless you and **keep** you; Numbers 6:24
3. Pardon - gracious (v25)  
the Lord **make his face shine upon you** and be **gracious** to you; Numbers 6:25
  - a. Face to shine is to look with favor
  - b. This is expressed in God being gracious to us
  - c. The reason the Gospel is the central blessing is that if we are going to be blessed at all, God must be gracious and forgive our sins which deserve judgment rather than blessing.
4. Presence - turn His face toward you (v26)  
the Lord **turn his face toward you** and give you peace.” Numbers 6:26
5. Peace - shalom! (v26)  
the Lord turn his face toward you and give you **peace**.” Numbers 6:26
  - a. Shalom - the ultimate blessing to which all has been heading!
  - b. Shalom is more than the absence of hostility; it is the presence of all that is right and good

- c. To experience shalom is to experience life as it was meant to be, in a harmonious relationship with God, others, and creation.
- d. The experience of full shalom awaits the new heavens and earth, but God’s blessing gives us a foretaste of that shalom now.

## C. The result of the blessing - God’s Name, blessing on us

So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them. Numbers 6:27

1. God promises to put His Name on us, marking us off as His own special people
2. God promises to actually place His blessing on us
  - a. The blessing is not a mere formality, nor is it wishful thinking or positive mental energy.
  - b. God gives His covenant promise to actually place His blessing on us as we receive it in faith
    1. Provision
    2. Protection
    3. Pardon
    4. Presence
    5. Peace

## IV. Applying the Word

### A. Do I receive God’s covenant blessing each week?

1. This is part of our worship each week because it is prescribed by God for us as His people!
2. This is part of our worship because it has a rich history in the worship of God’s people across the ages

3. This is part of our worship because it is a foretaste of the eternal blessing Jesus will speak over us in the new heavens and new earth
4. But this is not some magical lucky rabbit's foot!
  - a. The recent statement from the RCC about blessing same-sex unions is nonsense! They were right 2 years ago - we can not ask God to bless our active sin!
  - b. As always, we must actively receive from God in faith - they do not work ex opera operato!
5. But do not let this foolishness make you lose sight of the rich biblical teaching that God wants to bless you!
6. Do I believe God actually blesses me through the weekly benediction/blessing?
7. Do I pay attention and actively receive the blessing each week?

B. Do I speak God's blessing over others?

1. Leaders are called to do this in the church, but all believers can speak blessing over others
2. We are all priests in the new covenant!
3. It is good to speak blessings over people we love
4. Parents - speak blessings over your children!
5. Spouses - speak and pray blessings over each other
6. It is so easy to focus on negatives, complain, and 'pray' about what we don't like in others - but God calls us to speak the blessing over one another!

7. You are blessed each week - speak and pass that blessing on to others!

C. The Table of Blessing

1. Like Melchizedek, Jesus sets out Bread and wine!
2. Like Melchizedek, He speaks a blessing over us!
3. Come, eat, drink, and receive the blessing!

### The Blessing of God

Numbers 6:22-27  
 December 31, 2023  
 Communion  
 Numbers 6:24-26

Teaching keywords: blessing, covenant, leadership, worship; tongue and words

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 יְאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחֲנֶךָ  
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The Lord bless you and keep you; <sup>25</sup> the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” Numbers 6:24–26

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