

THE PRIESTLY BLESSING

(No. 1139 – 2/12/17 – NLC)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. God gave the priests specific instructions (including the very words) by which they (and He) would bless the people:

Num. 6:22-27: ²²*The LORD said to Moses,* ²³*“Tell Aaron and his sons, **This is how you are to bless the Israelites.** Say to them: ²⁴“The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace.” ²⁷So they will put My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.*

- B. From the beginning God has been in the blessing business:

1. Adam & Eve (Gen. 1:28): **God blessed them...**
2. Noah & his sons (Gen. 9:1)
3. Abraham (Gen. 12:2-3): ²*“I will make you into a great nation and **I will bless you**; I will make your name great, and **you will be a blessing.** ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and **all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.**”* [More about Abraham later...]
4. Isaac, Jacob [Jacob understood the power of God’s blessing, so he stole his brother’s blessing & finally wrestled with God & obtained it]

- C. Christ came to fulfill and expand the Abrahamic blessing to ALL NATIONS (more later...)

II. SEVEN PARTS TO THE AARONIC BLESSING

- A. ***The LORD bless you*** (v.24)

1. God’s blessing on Abraham and his descendants would be openly and evidently manifested in every area of their lives:
Deut. 28:2-13: ²*All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God: ³You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. ⁴The fruit of your womb will be blessed [family], and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. ⁵Your basket and*

your kneading trough will be blessed [business]. ⁶You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out. ⁷The LORD will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you. They will come at you from one direction but flee from you in seven [victory]. ⁸**The LORD will send a blessing on your barns and on everything you put your hand to.** The LORD your God will bless you in the land He is giving you. ⁹The LORD will establish you as His holy people [spiritual], as He promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰**Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will fear you.** ¹¹The LORD will grant you **abundant prosperity**—in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground—in the land He swore to your forefathers to give you. ¹²The LORD will **open the heavens, the storehouse of His bounty**, to send rain on your land in season and to **bless all the work of your hands**. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. ¹³The LORD will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, **you will always be at the top, never at the bottom.**

2. Balaam was hired by Balak to curse Israel, but God had already commanded blessing and no curse could land on them:

Num. 23:19-24: [Balaam]: ¹⁹God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfill? ²⁰**I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot change it.** ²¹**“No misfortune is seen in Jacob, no misery observed in Israel. The LORD their God is with them; the shout of the King is among them.** ²²God brought them out of Egypt; they have the **strength of a wild ox.** ²³There is **no sorcery** against Jacob, **no divination** against Israel. It will now be said of Jacob and of Israel, ‘See what God has done!’ ²⁴**The people rise like a lioness; they rouse themselves like a lion that does not rest till he devours his prey and drinks the blood of his victims.”**

3. Jesus our Great High Priest came to bless:

a) **Luke 24:50-51:** ⁵⁰When He had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, **He lifted up His hands and**

blessed them. ⁵¹*While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.*

- b) **John 1:16-17:** ¹⁶*From the fullness of His grace we have **all received one blessing after another.*** ¹⁷*For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*
- 4. Through Christ the **blessing of Abraham** extended to the Gentiles:
 - a) **Acts 3:25-26:** ²⁵*And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, “Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.”* ²⁶*When God raised up His servant, **He sent Him first to you to bless you** by turning each of you from your wicked ways.*
 - b) **Rom. 10:8-13:** ⁸*But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: ⁹That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ¹¹As the Scripture says, “**Anyone** who trusts in Him will never be put to shame.” ¹²For there is **no difference between Jew and Gentile**—the same Lord is Lord of all and **richly blesses all who call on Him,** ¹³for “**Everyone** who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*
 - c) **Gal. 3:7-14:** ⁷*Understand, then, that **those who believe are children of Abraham.*** ⁸*The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” ⁹So **those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham,** the man of faith. ¹⁰*All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”* ¹¹*Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, “The righteous will live by faith.” ¹²The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, “The man who does these things will live by them.” ¹³Christ redeemed**

*us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” ¹⁴**He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.***

B. And keep you;

1. “Keep” [Heb. *shamar* = “to hedge about (as with thorns); to guard, protect, attend to, observe, preserve, watch over”].
2. **Ps. 121:1-8:** ¹*I lift up my eyes to the hills— where does my help come from?* ²*My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.* ³*He will not let your foot slip—* ***He who watches over you will not slumber;*** ⁴*indeed, He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.* ⁵*The LORD watches over you—the LORD is your shade at your right hand;* ⁶*the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.* ⁷***The LORD will keep you from all harm—*** *He will watch over your life;* ⁸***the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.***
3. [Balaam – no curse, misfortune, misery, sorcery!]
4. **John 10:27-29:** ²⁷*My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.* ²⁸*I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand.* ²⁹*My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of My Father’s hand.*
5. **John 17:11-12:** ¹¹*...Holy Father, protect them by the power of Your name—the name You gave Me—so that they may be one as We are one.* ¹²*While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name You gave Me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.*
6. **Jude 24:** *To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy...*

C. The Lord make His face shine upon you (v.25)

1. Speaks of God’s presence and approval
2. MSG: “God smile on you...”

3. God hides His face [withdraws His presence] as a sign of His displeasure:

Isa. 59:1-2: ¹*Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear. ²But your iniquities have separated you from your God; **your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.***

4. “Shine” [Heb. *or* = “to be luminous or glorious; to kindle or **set on fire**, shine”]
 - a) An allusion to the sun, which brings both illumination and heat!
 - b) God now shines in our hearts and shows us His glory in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6)

D. *And be gracious to you;*

1. Bestow kindness, favor (undeserved, unearned)

Joseph (Gen. 39:2-5): ²*The **LORD was with Joseph and he prospered...** ³When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him **success** in everything he did, ⁴**Joseph found favor** in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. ⁵From the time he **put him in charge** of his household and of all that he owned, **the LORD blessed** the household of the Egyptian **because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything** Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field.*

2. Favor lifts us, promotes us; I am the one Jesus loves—I am God’s favorite!

E. *The Lord turn His face toward you* (v.26)

1. “Lift up His countenance on you” (KJV)
2. Reinforces the 3rd blessing a 2nd time, with extra emphasis on God deliberately directing His full attention towards us

F. *And give you peace.*

1. “Peace” [Heb. *shalom* = “safe, well, whole, happy, welfare, health, prosperity, peace”]
2. **3 John 2:** *Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy **good health** and that **all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.***

3. Peace of God, peace with God, and peace with others
 4. Freedom from fear, worry, anxiety—quietness, rest
- G. ***So they will put My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them*** (v.27)
1. We put our name on things that belong to us—Israel would be distinguished as God’s possession, His treasure:
Ex. 19:5-6: ⁵“Now if you obey Me fully and keep My covenant, then out of all nations you will be **My treasured possession**. Although the whole earth is Mine, ⁶you will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.
 2. **Rev. 3:10-12:** [Philadelphia]: ¹⁰Since you have kept My command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth. ¹¹I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. ¹²Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of My God. Never again will he leave it. **I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from My God; and I will also write on him My new name.**
 3. **Rev. 14:1:** Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who **had His name and His Father's name written on their foreheads.**
 4. The gospel of Jesus Christ brings us into the fullness of blessing—it is everything promised to Abraham and more—it is a complete package of salvation, abundance & prosperity, favor, victory, God’s glorious presence, and EVERY spiritual blessing:
 - a) **Rom. 15:29 (NKJV):** *But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the **fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.***
 - b) **Eph. 1:3:** *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.***

III. CONCLUSION: STAND FOR THE BLESSING!