

PRAYING THE BLESSING OF AARON

NUMBERS 6:22-27

Sneeze, and someone is likely to say, “Bless you!” In the days of Moses and his brother Aaron, to speak words of blessing to someone was no empty formality. In Numbers 6:22-27, God provided specific instructions for how the Old Testament priests were to pronounce the Lord’s blessing on His people. This was all God’s idea and initiative, and shows us how He loves to bless His people:

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, ‘Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them:

The Lord bless you, and keep you;

The Lord make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you;

The Lord lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.’

So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them” (Numbers 6:22-27).

God’s blessing came through a mediator (Moses) and a priest (Aaron). The wonderful terms of this blessing still come to God’s people, but today they are granted through Jesus Christ, God’s greatest Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5) and Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16). All the benefits described here—being blessed and kept by God, etc.—are given to all who seek them through Jesus.

When a man has Christ as his Mediator with God, the New Testament says that man becomes part of God’s “royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9). As such a priest, the man has the authority to use the words of Numbers 6:22-27 to ask for the Lord’s blessing upon others. These are not magic words. The blessing of God does not result from the mere repetition of this or any other prayer (see Matthew 6:7). Still, it was God Himself who gave us this prayer. And we can expect God’s blessing to accompany sincere devotion to God’s will.

Have you prayed for God to bless you in these ways through Jesus? The greatest blessing from God is not His gifts but Himself. He sent Jesus to give us this blessing (see John 14:6). To all who come to this Mediator and Priest, God promises “I will bless them” (verse 27).

Will you pray this blessing for your church? These words weren’t originally addressed to individuals, but to God’s people as a whole. Likewise, today we should pray for God’s blessings upon His people worldwide, and especially for our own local church.

Will you pray this blessing for your family? Pray it for them in their hearing, not just in your private prayers. And place Jesus in the center of it.

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