New Hope Sermon The Aaronic Blessing Graphical user interface, application, Word

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Today, in our fractured, tormented, uncertain world, the Aaronic blessing is a lighthouse of safety and security directly from the Lord Himself. So I want to go deeper together in unpacking its meaning.

Here it is, with the Hebrew words under each English phrase:

**The LORD bless you and keep you**

(Yverkah’kha Adonai v’yeeshm’rekha; – יְבָרֶכְךָ יְיָ וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ׃)

Adonai is written and said in this phrase instead of the tetragrammaton, YHVH, which is not said in order to avoid profaning God’s name. The word “bless” here means “to affirm or revere” and the word “keep” means “to protect or watch”.

**The LORD make His face to shine upon you**

(Ya’ayr Adonai panav ‘aylekha – יָאֵר יְיָ פָּנָין אֵלֶיךָ)

“Face” here is a noun and can be either “face”, literally or “front” as well.

**And be gracious unto you**

(Veekhoonekha; – וׅיחֻנֶּךָ׃)

Translated here as “gracious”, this word means “to show pity or favor”.

**The LORD lift up His countenance upon you**

(Yeesa’ Adonai panav ‘aylekha – יׅשָּׂא יְיָ פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ)

This is an idiom (a saying) meaning “He looks at you with peace and blessing”.The Concordia Self-Study Bible translates this as looks on you with acceptance and favor.

**And give you peace.**

(V’yasaym l’kha shalom. – וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֺם)

Beyond just peace, s*halom’s* meaning also includes wholeness and completeness.

NLT translates this blessing as

May the Lord bless you and protect you.  
25May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you.  
26May the Lord show you his favor and give you his peace.’

The Amplified Bible translates this as:

The Lord bless you and watch, guard, *and* keep you;

25The Lord make His face to shine upon *and* enlighten you and be gracious (kind, merciful, and giving favor) to you;

26The Lord lift up His [approving] countenance upon you and give you peace (tranquility of heart and life continually).

**The Lord**

The name of the Lord is repeated 3 times, to make it clear that this kind of blessing comes only from God. The Lord, Adonai, himself blesses His people and commissioned the priests to pass that blessing onto them each time they gathered in worship together. Now, as kings and priests commissioned by Him, we are to similarly pass this blessing on to others.

**Bless you and keep you**

The blessing God wants to pour over His people involves active protection, a watching and guarding protection. It also involves God’s affirmation– His love and identification of them as his people. The picture is gathering of them under His own care and safety, asa a mother hen gathers her chicks under her wings.

**The Lord make His face to shine on you**

When God shines His face on us, we are able to walk in His light and the darkness swirling around us or insinuated to us by the powers of evil, has to flee. His light also shows us the paths he wants us to walk in. It is enlightening and directive.

**And be gracious to you**

Throughout the New Testament the writers invoke God’s grace as a gift for those who follow him. That grace involves His kindness, mercy and favor. It is all wrapped up in His love that the Spirit wants to pour into our hearts (Rom.5:5). And it can be multiplied in our lives along with His peace. (2 Pet. 1;2)

**The Lord give you His peace.**

In the Old Testament God’s peace meant shalom – a total inner well-being and wholeness. In the New Testament that peace is given by Christ as His peace – “not as the world gives” but an inner assurance and insurance of God’s sovereignty over all troubles and sufferings (John 14:27. It is, indeed, a tranquility of heart and mind – a direct opposite of when our anxious thoughts are overtaking us (Ps.94:19). God’s peace “brings consolation and joy to our soul.”

This is God’s gift package to each of His followers and to each of our communities of faith. Remember, it was given in community, for community. May we open it daily and walk in the privilege of God’s favor in the coming weeks.

In His name and for His sake. Amen

Here is the blessing again in the NLT. I suggest that you memorize and claim it in faith each day. Then you will also be able to pass it on to others.

May the Lord bless you and protect you.  
25May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you.  
26May the Lord show you his favor and give you his peace.’

Receive it, beloved. Let it be the lighthouse God intends for direction, safety and secure passage.

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