

A blessing that changed history: Birkat Kohanim

Parashat Naso ([B'midbar/Numbers 4:21-7:89](#)) 5782 B"H

Have you heard the beautiful song titled, "*The Blessing*," by Cody Carnes, Kari Jobe, and Elevation Worship?

The lyrics for the beginning of the song come directly from [Numbers 6:22-26](#).

Many of us know these verses as the "Aaronic Benediction."

But that is a very formal way of talking about these verses.

The LORD told Moses to tell *Aaron* and his sons to bless the children of Israel using these words, so from this we get the term "Aaronic."

"Benediction" is just a fancy word for a "blessing" but we usually associate it with an "ending" or "final blessing." Many church services end with a "benediction." *When I was small, that translated to, hurry and gather your crayons, it's almost time to leave.* Yes, I used to color in church.

The Aaronic Benediction (or Aaronic Blessing) is also known as the Priestly Benediction (yet another reason *pastors* tend to use this at the close of worship services).

In Hebrew, this blessing is called "*Birkat Kohanim*." (Also spelled *Cohenim* or rendered *HaKohanim*.)

It is a blessing that has withstood the test of time, continuing to minister to hearts around the world.

Birkat Kohanim: The Priestly Blessing

[“ADONAI bless you and keep you!](#)

[ADONAI make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you!”](#)

[ADONAI turn His face toward you and grant you *shalom!*” Numbers 6:24-26, TLV](#)

אֲדֹנָי בְּרַכְךָ וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ , אֲדֹנָי
אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה פְּנֵי אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּחַנֶּךָ

אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה פְּנֵי אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂא לְךָ שְׁלוֹם , אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה פְּנֵי אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּחַנֶּךָ



This blessing was particularly unique in the time in which it was originally transcribed. The other nations worshipped multiple deities and they did not have the sense of a personal connection or relationship with their gods in the way that the God of all Israel was so closely attentive and interactive with the Israelites.

Torah means “instruction.” This blessing was a part of the “instructions” that the LORD gave to the nation of Israel. The

Torah and its fulfillment have changed history, and the Birkat Kohanim has long been a part of the unfolding reality of salvation. The Birkat Kohanim remains central to Judaism, but since it is also now so beloved among Christians it is a wonderful starting point for believers to share with unbelieving Jews the Good News of Messiah.

Birkat Kohanim transliteration and translation

Would you like to learn how to say the Birkat Kohanim in Hebrew? Here is a transliteration:

Ye'varechecha *ADONAI* v'yishmerecha,
Ya'er *ADONAI* panav eleicha v'ichuneca
Yisah *ADONAI* panav eleicha v'yasem l'cha shalom. B'midbar
6:24-26

[“The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you
peace.” Numbers 6:24-26, NKJV](#)

The first track on [Adonai: The Power of Worship from the Land of Israel](#) begins with this very blessing if you would like to hear the Hebrew.

Why is this blessing so special and timeless?

The Birkat Kohanim has touched hearts for generations because of its simplicity but also because of its profundity.

Notice the repetition of the Divine Name YHVH 3 times. *In Hebrew, something repeated 3 times means pay attention! It is important!*

The LORD uses His instruments – saints willing to bless others to pronounce blessing in His Name. It isn't just any saying. **It is a blessing containing the Holy Name of God infused in each phrase. There is power in His Name – so there is power in this blessing.**

In fact, you continue reading [Numbers 6](#) through [verse 27](#), you will see that the LORD says, [“In this way, they are to place My Name over B'nei-Y'israel, and so I will bless them.”](#) Yes, there is power in His Name!

May the LORD bless you.

The LORD, the Maker of the Universe, your Creator, the Almighty Sovereign LORD MOST HIGH. May that specific, wonderful God be the One who blesses you. May you know exactly who He is. He isn't just any god, He is God Most High, the God of Israel.

May He keep you.

The Hebrew term for “keep” contains the connotation of “guarding” as well. May the Almighty One guard you, protect you, keep you.

May the LORD make His face shine upon you.

This is beyond amazing. Even Moshe (Moses) was only allowed to see God from the back. But this blessing indicates that His fullness of His glory is available to us! This blessing prays that the light of His face would shine in our direction. Could anything be more glorious than that? Our Father loves us that much that His countenance would be lifted upon us, His graciousness would be made known, and He endows us with His peace, His *shalom*.

We all need peace. We all need that sense of wholeness. It allows us to relax and to de-stress when we know He holds us in perfect peace. Peace in the Hebrew language refers to that

completeness, a very holistic peace that permeates.

The Aaronic Blessing provides us the comfort in knowing the LORD God Almighty cares about us, is in relationship with us, and has granted us favor enough that He would want to shine His face upon us and be gracious to us.

The Aaronic Blessing in Song

There are many traditional renditions of the Aaronic Blessing that are frequently used in synagogue services and at Shabbat tables to bless our children and families.

Here is a beautiful symphonic rendition of “The Blessing” song sung by Passion City Church:

And a special treat:

Here is “The Blessing” sung in Hebrew (Ha Bracha) by Joshua Aaron.

So today, may you feel the weight of His glory, knowing that the LORD desires you to walk in blessing.

May He indeed make His face to shine upon you and give you peace today.

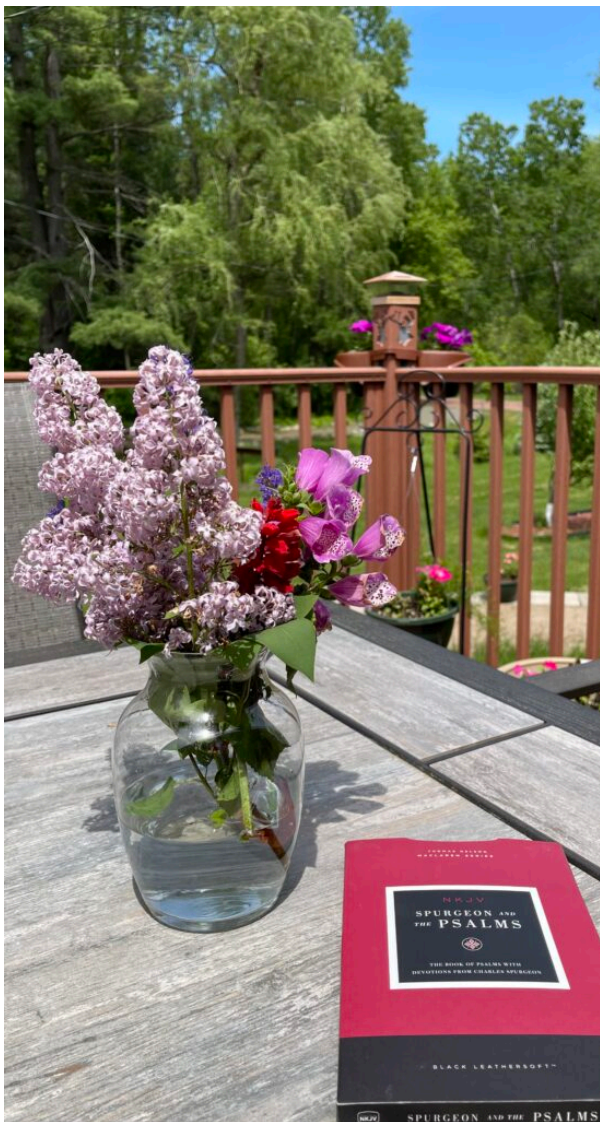
And ask yourself this:

Who will you bless? Who will you pass along this blessing to? Who around you needs to know that the LORD loves them and wants to be in this type of blessing relationship with them? How can we pray for you? Proclaim the Name of the LORD upon your life and your family today!

Related: [How you can be blessed in your daily routine](#)

Also, have you subscribed? To get our newsletter directly to your inbox, please subscribe today!

Review: “Spurgeon and the Psalms: The Book of Psalms with Devotions from Charles Spurgeon” published by Thomas Nelson



“Spurgeon and the Psalms”
published by Thomas Nelson

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[“Spurgeon and the Psalms”](#) **Leathersoft Edition**

Few devotionals truly captivate my attention. I find that many of them are full of overly simplistic stories and cutesy platitudes. Certainly, for a new believer or a young person, these types of devotional books may be suitable, but for the serious and mature believer, I often recommend simply turning to the Scriptures themselves because everything else falls short.

That is why **this devotional resource is WONDERFUL!** [“Spurgeon and the Psalms”](#) will get you straight into the Scriptures and focusing on the LORD. That’s the point of having a devotional time, isn’t it!?

It is essentially a “Psalter”: the [Book of Psalms](#) published in a lightweight edition. Each [Psalm](#) is appropriately prefaced with words written by Charles Spurgeon, a well-known and

beloved Christian pastor who lived in England and preached during the 1800's. His timeless commentary and exhortation will bless you.

Book Review and description

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his "Spurgeon and the Psalms" published by Thomas Nelson

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Like any high quality Bible, ["Spurgeon and the Psalms"](#) has gold page-edge gilding.

Interestingly, near the back of the book, you will find a note on the selection of type/font. I found it to be such a nice touch that the explanation was included, as I had noticed the unique font used in this Psalter.

This definitely seems like a book that the publishers want you to treasure. I'm quite certain of that because there is a guarantee printed on the back of the book jacket: Thomas Nelson guarantees their Leathersoft ["Spurgeon and the Psalms"](#) for *life!*

The book contains all 150 [Psalms](#) with unobtrusive devotional commentary preceding each [Psalm](#). There are also blank "notes" pages at the back.

The selections from Spurgeon's own writings help connect the Psalms to the Gospel narrative. If you are unfamiliar with Spurgeon, you will find his writing to be eloquent, detailed, yet exceptionally applicable. There is no doubt he sought the LORD because his writing reflects that type of close relationship with the Father.

My recommendation:

★★★★★

Rating: 5 out of 5.

If you are looking for a Psalter, this is your book. As Spurgeon laments in the Preface, God's people don't know the [Psalms](#) the way they used to – and he was saying that well over 100 years ago! I encourage you to take the opportunity to truly meditate on and learn the [Psalms](#), and this book will truly help you to do that.

If you are looking for high-quality devotional material for yourself or as a gift, you will very likely enjoy the newly published

I wholeheartedly recommend the newly published [“Spurgeon and the Psalms”](#) book to everyone! It is appropriate for believers at all stages in life, and quite honestly, is the type of book every follower of our Messiah should own.

This would make a wonderful gift for anyone you love and care about.

Pastora Jennifer Mieliulis Fuentes, *M.Div.*, *Duke University*

Book details

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PURCHASE LINKS: [Amazon](#) | [FaithGateway Store](#)

I am always a fan of books that primarily use the Scriptures!

Check out my review of the [Word for Word Bible Comic's Gospel of Mark!](#) There are so many wonderful resources that directly refer us back to God's Word, and I love to recommend them so you can grow closer to the LORD each and every day!

[I have treasured Your word in my heart, so I might not sin against You. Psalm 119:11, TLV](#)

Do you read the [Psalms](#) as a daily devotional? Let us know! Leave a comment below!

Why everyone needs the Full Gospel

Too many institutions entice young students to look for "truths" rather than the TRUTH

When I was in middle and high school, I was definitely a "seeker."

I had grown up immersed in pluralism. I had never heard of the "Full Gospel."

By junior year of high school, encouraged by "pastors" of the United Church of Christ (UCC), (*a sect I now consider heretical*), I had read all sorts of books from so-called "Christian" mysticism. I was particularly interested in such works as *"The Cloud of Unknowing"* and Thomas Merton's writings

recommended to me by the pastors of the church our family attended. I dabbled in Buddhism and other false religions. I was considered “well-rounded.”

In college, I visited a local Hindu temple as well as a mosque outside of Chicago. My friends were also exploring world religions, but the frightening thing is, we were all studying to be “*Christian* pastors.” We weren’t just learning about world religions so that we could properly share the Gospel with the lost, we were learning because we wanted to participate in their practices.

The UCC “associate ministers,” as they were called, (like bishops) were aware that we were learning about Islam and even sat across the table from us during a Ramadan dinner at that mosque that we had all been invited to by an interfaith council. There was no effort on their part to correct our course: all of us who were theology majors were encouraged to explore the commonalities between different faiths. But believe me, we were **never** encouraged to visit an evangelical or Full Gospel church.

When I was in grad school, we were required to read many books that were also rooted in mysticism. I remember observing (sadly!) that my Divinity School peers were intrigued and absorbing these ideas, likewise encouraged by the seminary’s professors. It is no secret that many who enter seminary lose their faith: but the true **tragedy** has to do with the leadership of these institutions who **entice young students to look for “truths” rather than the Truth**. By this time, I had already met my Savior (to the dismay of many of my theologically liberal professors who wished I had retained my interest in ecumenism and interfaith activities).

If you want to read more about my experiences growing up in a universalist environment, check out my post on [Divine Empowerment in an “Inclusive” Age.](#)

Many professors have really gotten into using icons (a form of idolatry). Christian schools and churches now incorporate yoga into their programs despite yoga's inherent spiritual connection to Hinduism. I have a missionary friend who is a native of India. She is so dismayed by how many American Christians have accepted and incorporated yoga into their "Christian" practices. She shakes her head and says, "if they only knew . . ."

See, you don't need a whole host of odd rituals or candle lightings or chants. You just need the Full Gospel, brought to you by the power of the Holy Spirit.

I share all this because so many people truly don't know the Gospel, let alone the Full Gospel.

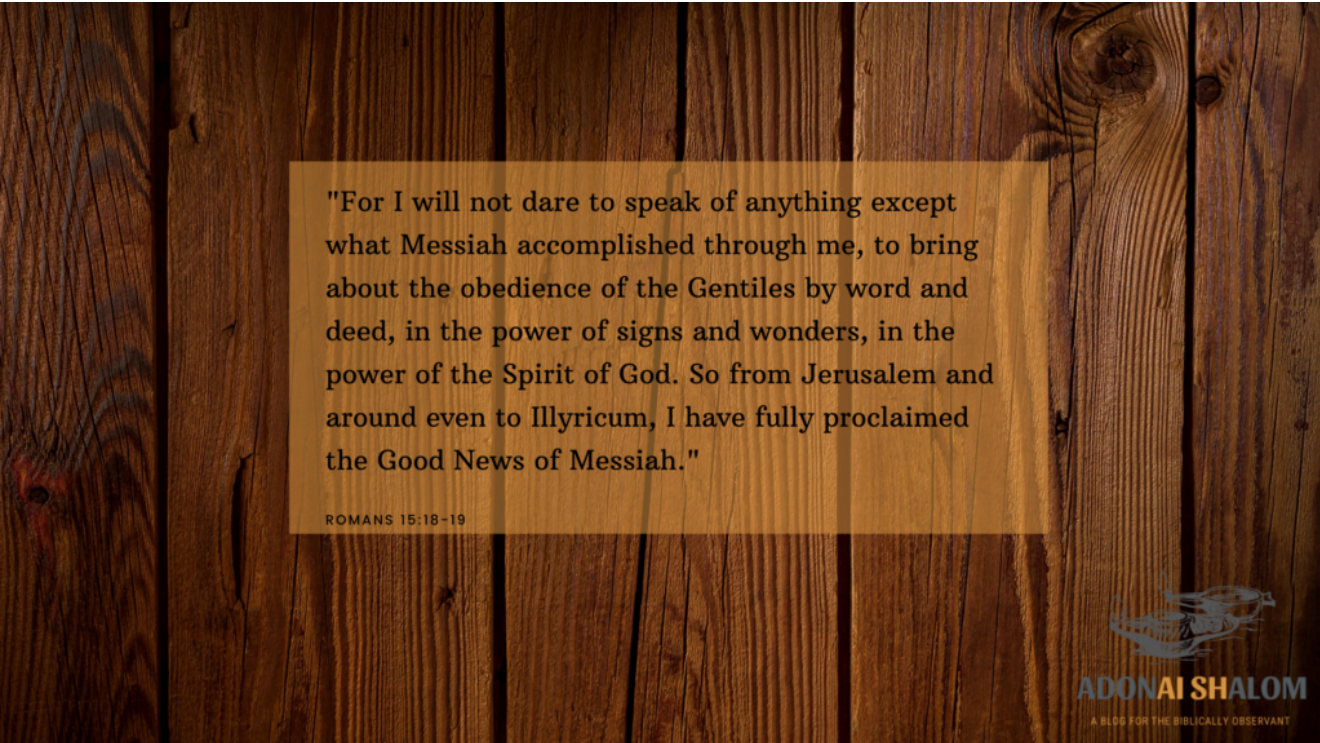
I feel like Peter writes more succinctly than Paul. He writes in a nutshell, the Gospel is:

["He \[Messiah Yeshua/Jesus Christ\] Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we, removed from sins, might live for righteousness. 'By His wounds you were healed.'" 1 Peter 2:24](#)

It is very simple.

You might say Paul was more long-winded:

["For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Messiah accomplished through me, to bring about the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem and around even to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the Good News of Messiah." Romans 15:18-19](#)



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ROMANS 15:18-19



In their own ways; however, both Peter and Paul describe what is termed, the “Full Gospel.”

Besides the death and resurrection of our Savior, He also brought healing, signs and wonders. We are saved, and we are healed. We are saved, and we receive the divine infilling of the Holy Spirit, if we will submit to the Holy Spirit’s authority.

“Fully” proclaiming the Good News, as Paul writes, is preaching what Messiah Jesus has accomplished (forgiveness of sin through His death on the cross and resurrection) with power. This is the Full Gospel!

In other words, preaching should be accompanied by signs and wonders – as something normal.

That doesn’t mean a worship service should become an entertainment spectacle.

And certainly none of this has to do with “manufactured

miracles.”

But it *should be* completely **commonplace** for Gospel preaching to be accompanied by miraculous healings, deliverance, speaking in tongues, etc. The purpose of the spiritual gifts manifesting in power is to essentially give credence to what is preached. That God would heal someone is proof He is living! That God would deliver someone is proof He has power over sin and darkness!

This is the fullness of the Gospel!

A Gospel preached without power isn't the full Gospel. And do you really want to settle for half?

Paul warned Timothy of those who have an [“outward form of godliness but denying its power.” 2 Timothy 3:5b.](#)

This verse speaks to both sides of an issue.

1. There are some followers of our Savior who care so much about their outward looks they forget they are quite rotten in their speech and other aspects of their lives. They deny the power of the Gospel through their pettiness and gossip.
2. Then there are other followers of our Savior who carefully appear to be very godly in their doctrine and behavior, but literally deny the power when they claim that the Holy Spirit isn't working and moving among the body of Messiah as He did in the past. This leads to anemic doctrine, lacking the vital nutrition of the full understanding of the Gospel.

The LORD is still working modern miracles today! Don't be afraid!

This weekend we celebrate [Shavu'ot](#), also known as Pentecost. A special time to celebrate this Full Gospel I am telling you

about!

We rejoice knowing that the same God who gave us His Torah is the same God who gave us His Spirit!

If you would like to know more in depth about the Messianic and Pentecostal significance of [Shavu'ot/Pentecost](#), check out [my post on the Biblical Spring Feasts!](#)

Now, let's be realistic.

A lot of people have been trained by our society to be afraid of "Pentecostals."

I know I used to be!

The only reason anyone should be afraid of a Pentecostal is if they don't want any deliverance in their lives.

Because when a true Pentecostal believer prays, you better watch out, the demons flee!

Some Pentecostals or Full Gospel folks might dress a certain way or wear their hair a certain way, and I'm not saying any of that is necessarily bad. But your outward appearance isn't what makes you Pentecostal – its the Holy Spirit within you.

If you have been baptized by the fire from above with the evidence of speaking in tongues, you are Pentecostal. You might attend an Assembly of God church or Church of God (TN), or Pentecostal Holiness, or United Pentecostal. While there are disagreements among Pentecostal people (just as there are disagreements among any group of people!) about things like Trinitarianism or dress codes, we serve the same Mighty God who has this awesome plan to heal you and deliver you.

When you know that you are saved from your sin, you need to know that you weren't saved just so you'd go to heaven one day.

You were saved so you could start living with the joyous benefits of heaven, starting even now, here on earth.

Life won't be perfect, but you have access to so much divine opportunity to pray and to witness great miracles occur, even now. Heaven will be wonderful, but we don't have to sulk while we bear with the sufferings of this life. We can pray in confidence for the LORD to enable us to live in victory, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

You have the opportunity to be saved – and sanctified! Set free to live in abundant joy and peace. Receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit is described in the Scriptures as a deposit, a seal, so you know without a doubt that you are indeed saved!

The Full Gospel is for you!

If your pastor always stops preaching after Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you may need to start asking some good questions about the rest of the New Testament.

Starting in the book of Acts, you will discover how the early believers operated, constantly ministering to others in power. Healings and miracles were part and parcel of the Gospel Truth.

Your faith walk will be greatly enhanced by knowing this powerful Truth, that the Fullness of the Gospel is for everyone, and you are invited to live endued with power from on high! Whether you are a student or a seasoned believer, don't ever pass up the opportunity to live your life yielded to the Presence of God in your life and the Full Gospel Truth!

Why does everyone need the Full

Gospel?

Everyone needs the Full Gospel because everyone needs the Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit (*Ruach haKodesh*) will help you when you need to make important decisions. He will lead you closer to the Father. He will help you discern your next steps in life. The Spirit of God (*Ruach Elohim*) will anoint you and bless you. Your prayer life will improve, your worship will be deeper, and your longings will be much more satisfied.

If you have been a Christian for a really long time, but still feel like you're missing out on something, don't turn to mystical and false religions, turn to the Holy Spirit, who will take you to a new level in Him. If you do not yet speak in tongues, don't think of it as something too strange for you. If Paul spoke in tongues, why can't you? Our faith is not of this world, so dive in and allow the Holy Spirit to have His way!

A lot of people won't talk about "speaking in tongues" because our culture has derided people who do as "wackos" and "crazies."

Don't let culture define you nor limit your experiences with God.

Follow the Word of God, and He will provide you the Full Gospel experience that you need.

Some great songs for Pentecost/Shavu'ot

I will leave you with some great praise and worship songs that I love! They are perfect for Pentecost/Shavu'ot, and all year round, too. May they benefit you spiritually as you seek the

blessings of the Holy Spirit, our Eternal Comforter! I pray He baptizes you with His Holy Fire, even today! It is an experience that will transform your life!

Holy Spirit, How I love You

Send the Fire

Refiner's Fire

Welcome, Holy Spirit

The Comforter has Come

Bo Ruach Elohim (Come, Spirit of God)

Please leave a comment or send a message to adonaishalomusa@gmail.com. I'd love to hear from you! May you be endued with power from on high!