



AT THE TABLE

A BIBLE STUDY TEACHING SERIES ON PRAYER

SESSION 4

The Priestly Blessing

Numbers 6:24–26 • AMPC

IN HIS PRESENCE

CROWN CODE • REAL MAN CODE • MOM CODE

AT THE TABLE

Session 4: The Priestly Blessing

OUR TEXT

Numbers 6:24–26 (AMPC)

"The Lord bless you and watch, guard, and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon and enlighten you and be gracious (kind, merciful, and giving favor) to you; the Lord lift up His [approving] countenance upon you and give you peace (tranquility of heart and life continually)."

1 WHAT THIS BLESSING MEANS

This is not a prayer someone prayed for themselves — it is a blessing God commanded to be spoken over His people. God gave Moses these exact words and instructed Aaron and his sons, the priests, to pronounce them over Israel. Six times across three lines, the personal pronoun "you" appears — singular, not plural. In a blessing meant for a whole nation, God insisted it be spoken as though to one person at a time. He does not bless in a blur. He blesses by name.

2 WHAT IT MEANS IN THE BIBLE / CONTEXT

Israel had just left Egypt and were preparing to move toward the promised land. Before instructions on marching or battle, God gave them words of blessing to carry with them — and He commanded that these specific words, not improvised ones, be spoken over the people regularly. The blessing has three parts, each building on the last: God's protective favor ("bless you and keep you"), God's shining, gracious attention ("make His face shine upon you"), and God's approving presence bringing peace ("lift up His countenance... give you peace").

The Hebrew name of God, Yahweh, appears three times in this short blessing — once in each line. Ancient Jewish tradition saw this repetition as significant: the fullness of God, given completely, three times over, leaving nothing withheld. This is not a wish or a hope. It is a declaration, spoken with the weight of God's own command behind it, meant to be received as settled and true.

3 ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES (ESV)

Psalms 67:1

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us.

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

2 Corinthians 13:14

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

4 TEACHING

There is something significant in the fact that this blessing was never meant to be private. God commanded it to be spoken — out loud, by the priests, over the people. Blessing, in Scripture, is often not something we generate for ourselves through positive thinking; it is something spoken over us, received from another, and passed on. This is why it matters that we speak blessing over our children, our spouses, our friends — not just think it, but say it, the way Aaron was commanded to say it.

Each line of the blessing moves toward greater intimacy. "Bless you and keep you" is protection from a distance. "Make His face shine upon you" is attention — God's face turned toward you, not away. "Lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace" is the language of a father lifting his child up to look at them directly, delighted. This blessing moves from safety, to attention, to face-to-face delight.

And notice the blessing ends in peace — not the absence of conflict, but shalom: wholeness, completeness, nothing missing and nothing broken. This is what God intends to be the resting place of a life that has received His blessing, His attention, and His favor. Not striving, but settled peace.

5 PONDER

- Do I experience God's blessing as something distant and general, or personal — spoken over me by name?
- Which of the three movements in this blessing — protection, attention, or face-to-face peace — do I most need to receive from God right now?
- Do I regularly speak blessing out loud over the people I love, or do I only think it?
- What would change in my week if I truly believed God's face was shining toward me, not turned away?

6 PUT IT IN ACTION

- Speak the Numbers 6:24–26 blessing out loud over yourself by name this week, slowly, letting each line land.
- Choose one person in your life and speak this blessing over them out loud — in person, by phone, or in writing.
- Each morning this week, pray one line of the blessing over your household before the day begins.
- Notice one moment this week where you can consciously receive God's peace rather than striving for your own.

7 CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray

Lord, bless us and watch, guard, and keep us. Make Your face to shine upon us and enlighten us, and be gracious to us. Lift up Your approving countenance upon us and give us peace — tranquility of heart and life, continually. Let us receive this blessing the way it was meant to be received: personally, by name, spoken over our lives. And let us become people who speak this same blessing over others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

IN HIS PRESENCE

At the Table Bible Study