

The Blessing (Pt 1) - May the Lord Bless You and Keep You

December 5, 2020

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/vvsxrf9/the-blessing-pt-1>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

The Blessing: Power, Promise, and Life

This sermon transcript from Corner Fringe Ministries, presented by Daniel Joseph, explores "The Blessing," also known as the *Birkat Kohanim* or Priestly Blessing, from Numbers 6:24-26. He **analyzes the historical and theological significance of this ancient Hebrew blessing**, highlighting its specific divine origin and its power to transcend negative human experiences. Daniel references the **archaeological discovery of two silver scrolls** at *Ketef Hinnom*, dating to the First Temple period, which contain the oldest known biblical texts of the *Birkat Kohanim* and further **connects this blessing to key figures and events in the Old Testament**, such as Abraham and Jacob, and demonstrates its **pervasive influence throughout the New Testament**, emphasizing its link to sacrifice and obedience to God's commandments as a path to spiritual blessing and eternal life.

[Introductory Video—THE BLESSING]

THE LORD WILL BLESS YOU
THE LORD WILL KEEP YOU
AND THE LORD WILL MAKE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON YOU

[Daniel Joseph]

Shabbat Shalom, everyone. Wow, so it's good to see your faces. I've been on sabbatical for a while, for those of you who don't know. Maybe you've never even seen me preach; I don't know. I've been gone for so long, but I'm back. And I just want to thank everyone up front. Thank you for allowing me to do something like that, allowing me to go to the mountain. So I can spend time with the LORD, and I can spend time with my family. It was really good, and the good news is, as I've come down, I don't see a golden calf. [audience laughing] So you guys have done well, all right? I never doubted; I never doubted, not for a moment.

Today, we are going to be starting a new series on the *Birkat Kohanim* (ברכת כהנים). In other words, the Priestly Blessing, which I'm simply titling *The Blessing* for this series. We're going to be looking at this for a few weeks; there's a lot here. And what I'm looking to do is to extract the grandeur, the beauty, and, may I say, the power of this blessing. I'm going to tell you, open your hearts to this series because I

promise you this: it will move you. It will move you in awesome ways. And so if this is done right, if you hang with me, you open your hearts to the LORD and to His Word, you're going to unlock mysteries, you're going to unlock things in the Word that perhaps you've never seen before, and you're going to understand this blessing in a way you've never understood before. And so I'm very hopeful that this is actually going to be a blessing to you.

With that said, we have a lot to cover, so let's get to it. —Numbers 6:23— "**Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them,** I want to stop right here. Notice, He does not give Aaron or Moses the liberty to go out and speak whatever is on their heart. Hey, Aaron, go out there and pray for My people. My will is that they're blessed, but whatever comes on your heart, go ahead and just say that. That doesn't happen here. It doesn't mean we don't have the liberty to pray freely, and the things that the Holy Spirit puts in our hearts. That's a good thing. But what you need to pay attention to here is that there's no wiggle room.

The LORD is hyper-specific to the words that must be spoken. And you're going to see just how hyper-specific He is in a few minutes. But He's very hyper-specific, and this tells me, before we even look at the blessing, something about the blessing itself. It tells me it's rooted; it's grounded in power. This is not the mind of Moses. This is not Aaron's heart and mouth. This is the heart of the Living God, and it is His Word that is going forth. And one thing I know is it will not fail. There's power in it.

So that means as we continue to look at this blessing, we should be hanging on every word that comes forth. You can trust it. You can have assurance that exactly what is being spoken is the truth. And when you do recognize that, when you actually believe that, that's when the transformation comes. That's when the riches of the Kingdom of God are unlocked. And so, let's take a look at the blessing.

This is what we read: —Numbers 6:24-26—²⁴ "**The LORD bless you and keep you; Y'varekhekha Adonai v'yishmerekha** (יברכך ה' וישמרך). And then it goes on, "²⁵ **The LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; Ya'er Adonai panav elekha vichuneka** (יאר ה' פניו אליך ויחנך), and then it goes on, the last verse, "²⁶ **The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.**" *Yisa Adonai panav elekha v'yasem lekha shalom* (ישא ה' פניו אליך וישם לך שלום).

Whether you hear this in Hebrew or English, I'm going to tell you it is so powerful and beautiful. It's like this expert harpist plucking the strings and prophesying on the strings, penetrating into your heart. This passage transcends, as Dan was just praying, this passage transcends depression. It transcends anxiety. It transcends anger and bitterness. It transcends all those times you remember you have failed. It transcends fear. These words are where it's at. Just listen to them, and this is the soothing balm that heals the soul.

In this generation and in this time right now, with everything we see happening in the world, you need this. We need the soothing, healing balm of the LORD in His Word. And it's what He wants; this is His desire. Now, there is a lot going on here. I get a little crazed because I'm so excited. I just want to pop the cap off the fire hydrant and blow you up the door. Because it is so rich, there's so much depth here. I have to calm down, and I just have to take it slow. We're going to ease into this slowly.

Basically, what we're going to do is, and pun intended, I want to dig into this deeper, specifically meaning archaeologically. I want to take you back in history to 1979. It was a good year. I don't know how old I was. I was probably, let's see, five or so, six, something like that. There was a man by the name of Dr. Gabriel Barkay—right here.



Dr. Barkay was on a dig; he's an archaeologist. He was on a dig in Jerusalem, in the southwest quarter known as *Ketef Hinnom* (כתף הינום). There are burial chambers there, and what ended up happening is he stumbled across one of the greatest archaeological discoveries in history, and this is a recent discovery. It is known today as “the two silver scrolls.”

Here's what I want to do. I want to let Dr. Barkay talk to you personally; I'm not going to steal his thunder and let him explain in detail what exactly he found.

[Dr. Gabriel Barkay, archaeologist]

After the discoveries made in 1979, the two tiny silver scrolls discovered right behind me here were transferred to the Israel Museum, where they were opened in the lab. And they were shown to be covered densely with Hebrew, ancient Hebrew characters. The characters show to be the priestly benediction, or the *Birkat Kohanim*, which appears in the Bible in the Book of Numbers, Sefer Bamidbar, Chapter 6, Verses 24 and on.

Those verses are 2600 years old, according to the shape of characters—according to the context of the archaeological finds—and they are centuries earlier than the oldest biblical verses which were known until then, being the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Qumran. This was the first time that such objects were ever discovered. It was most probably customary in First Temple period to wear upon the body, on the fingers, on the neck, on the heart, on the wrist, all kinds of written objects with religious texts, very familiar to the *tefillin*, or the phylacteries, which are known until this very day in Judaism.

It would be, of course, interesting to know who was exactly the person who wore upon his body this written object of 2600 years ago. This discovery of the Priestly Benedictions discovered here closed also a personal circle for me. I was born in the terrible years of the Second World War in the ghetto of Budapest, Hungary. In my early days in Hungary, we were used to go to synagogue with my father, and when we came home, my father was used to bless me with the words of the Priestly Benediction.

The LORD bless thee and keep thee; the LORD make His face shine upon thee and be gracious to thee. The LORD lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

[Daniel Joseph]

Awesome personal touch at the end there of just being able to—this is the first thing I'll touch on—just to be able to break into the reality that what he remembers, keep in mind, being in the ghetto, the fond

memory of what he has, and his interaction with his family was his father praying the *Birkat Kohanim* over him. Now that is heritage. That is just an awesome thing to see. This is something that dates back thousands of years, and the people of God are still doing it today. What an awesome thing.

There was one thing that he said in this video, and I don't know if you caught it because he didn't emphasize it. You know, typical archaeologists kind of just monotone all the way through. It's massive; it is this: The oldest biblical texts we have extant in the world today, right now, are on these two silver scrolls. And I'll put a picture up here so that you can see them. These two silver scrolls and what is embedded on them bear the *Birkat Kohanim*, the oldest biblical texts in existence.



Think about that for a second and understand something, and this is important because I'm going somewhere with this. This is a recent discovery. Now, you know how significant the Hebrew Bible is and all the texts that could be on there. And yet, the oldest texts, not written on papyri but written on silver, that which is to last, which is really the only reason we have them today, is the Priestly Blessing.

Now, ponder that in light of what we see happening right now in the world. And what do I mean? Well, there's a recent phenomenon of a worship song known as *The Blessing*. And what is it? It's the *Birkat Kohanim*. Do you know this song has absolutely gone viral, not just in this country but globally? It has been covered more times than I can count. And do you know—I mean, it's been covered by Joshua Aaron in multiple ways. There are people from all around the world who got together to sing this song all over the world. It's unbelievable.

And yet it's happening right now; they're singing the Priestly Blessing. You want to think for a moment. Why is that? What is going on here? Maybe we should be paying attention to this. Perhaps we've entered into the tribulation, and the LORD is encouraging His people. Perhaps He is speaking to them at a level that He spoke to the patriarchs in a time of tribulation and trouble. This is something to ponder.



I want to take this a step further, and I actually want to show you what's on these scrolls. It is really amazing; check this out. This is the first scroll. "Yahweh, the great who keeps the covenant and graciousness towards those who love Him and those who keep His commandments, the Eternal?" You'll notice there's a bunch of brackets and brokenness because

they're letting you know that there are some things that are illegible or unreadable or just simply broken off. "Blessing more than any snare and more than Evil."

Now, there's more to it, but we need to stop because you need to understand that what we just read is literally, in essence, a direct quote from Daniel 9:4 in his prayer to God, as they are needing to, they're crying out because they're recognizing their sins. ("And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments") It's a horrific a situation.

But what's interesting is Daniel. What is Daniel drawing upon? Daniel is drawn upon Exodus Chapter 20, the Ten Commandments. You guys have to follow me; you're going to need this. This is a direct quote out of the Ten Commandments: the beauty of God is that He will keep His covenants with those (Exodus 20:6) who love Me and keep My commandments.

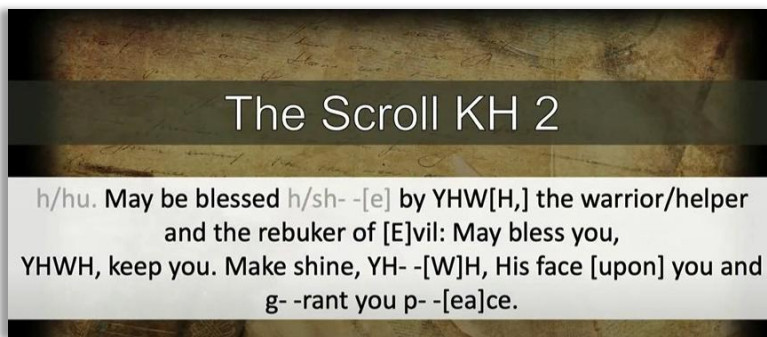
Now listen to what it goes on and says, "For redemption is in Him. For Yahweh is our restorer and rock. May Yahweh bless you and may He keep you. May Yahweh make His face to shine..." And the rest of it was broken, but obviously it went on to say, "And be gracious to you."



So get this. Here you have the top part talking about keeping His commandments, loving God, and keeping His commandments, and then it closes with the *Birkat Kohanim*, the blessing. Now, think about something. These scrolls, and again, if you caught what he said, these scrolls were being worn as amulets, either as bracelets or, probably most likely, as necklaces, and they were inscribed in silver.

Now, out of all the text that you could take in Scripture, another thing to think about if you want context is that these things existed in the days of the great prophets. Jeremiah is walking the earth. Ezekiel is walking the earth. And whoever inscribed these had a multitude of texts from Scripture that they could inscribe in silver. And what they chose was an excerpt literally going to the commandments of God, the promises of God, that if you love Him and keep His commandments, He will be gracious, and ending with the *Birkat Kohanim*.

Ponder something: these scrolls are the size of a cigarette butt. If you roll them out and put the dimensions, it's like one inch by three inches. If I told you, "Hey, you need to put a verse, a verse on something; I want you to inscribe it in silver." You know what you're going to do? You're going to go home, and the verse that speaks to you the most, that has spoken to your heart, that has transformed your life—that's what you're going to put down. You need to see this. This is what transformed the Jewish people's lives. This is what they clung to. This is what meant something to them. This is the Priestly Blessing. Awesome to consider.



Let's look at scroll two. "May be blessed," and it goes, "h/sh- -[e] by Yahweh, the warrior/helper," I love that, "and the rebuker of Evil: May bless you, Yahweh, keep you. Make shine, Yahweh, His face upon you and grant you peace." So, this is what was on these scrolls. When you look at this, this is amazing. Do you know what this tells me? This

tells me that this text, the *Birkat Kohanim*, was the elevated text. It was special above all else.

Let me further prove this point so you can understand how special this text was to the Messianic Jews in the first century; the entire New Testament is filled with it. Most people don't realize this, but all of the structure that we read here in the *Birkat Kohanim* is in the New Testament. I'll give you a couple of examples. Paul's writings to the Ephesians, his opening statement—Ephesians 1:2—**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**. Undeniably, the structure is right from the *Birkat Kohanim*. And yet, as he's writing to these churches that are growing, what is he delivering? What is on his heart? What is on his mind? It's the Priestly Blessing; he opens up with this.

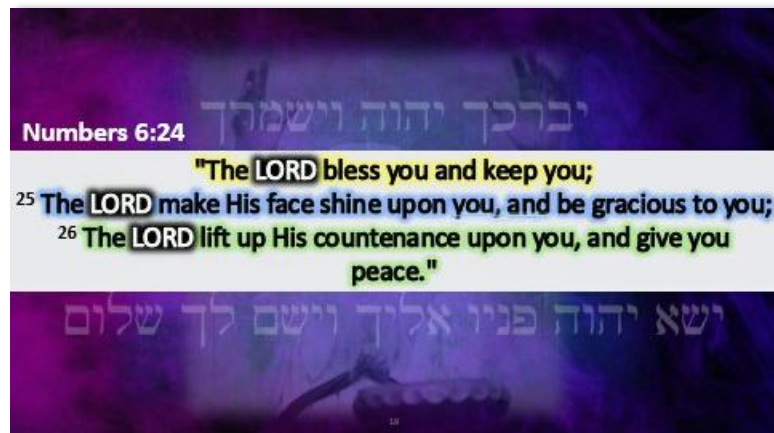
He does the same, says the exact same thing with the Philippians. —Philippians 1:2— **Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**. I mean, you can go through them. I'm not going to show you all his epistles; just go through them and you'll see how heavily he depended on the Priestly Blessing. It was common, not just common knowledge; it was woven into the tapestry of the faith.

Jude, Paul's not the only one. —Jude 1:2— **Mercy**, in other words, grace, **peace**, grace and peace, **and love be multiplied to you**. —I Peter 1:2— **... Grace to you and peace be multiplied**. And I love John the Revelator. —Revelation 1:4— **John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come...** (Emphasis added). The New Testament is loaded; we can see where this text was elevated to the highest of heights.

This is the text they were depending on. We depend on this promise, on this truth, on what Aaron and his descendants were to pray over our families, which weren't Aaron's words, but they were the words of God. This is what they're hanging on to. I'm telling you right now, more than ever, you're going to need to hang on to this. And the more we get into this, the more you're going to understand why. I mean, this is deep stuff.

Going back to the blessing. —Numbers 6:24-26—²⁴ **"The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ The LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; ²⁶ The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."** One thing I can tell you, across the board, unanimously, whether we're dealing with Orthodox Jewish scholars or Christian scholars, unanimously across the board, they all recognize there's a structure to this blessing. It's overt; it's obnoxiously overt. It's a trumpet blaring in your face. It's so obvious, and there's a reason for it.

What is the structure? Let's take a look at this. I've highlighted this for you. But you notice the first line, "The LORD bless you and keep you." That's one stanza. The second stanza, "The LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you." And then the third part is, "The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."



What's interesting is when you study Jewish tradition, you look to the Talmud and things of that nature, you will recognize that history records that the Jews say, Okay, in the temple, this blessing was said as one blessing. It was said as one blessing, but go to the dispersion, and what was said? It was said as three blessings.

Now, Christian scholars are geeking out about that, and they should. And the reason is because they're looking at this going, Wait, the Jews, on one hand, are calling the blessing *echad* (אֶחָד); they're calling it one. And yet, at the same time, they said, "Well, we can also call it three, three blessings." And of course, the Christian scholars are geeking out because of the triune nature of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which is really a fascinating thing.

See, because we know there's a governing principle. This is why it's important to see the structure here. There's a governing principle throughout Scripture coming from God Himself on the testimony of two or three; all things are established. All things—that's why you see that here. Now, see that unveils another level of this to impress upon you what this means. What is the weight of this? If, in fact, all things are established on the testimony of two or three, that would tell you this blessing is established.

Let me give you an example. As you go to Genesis Chapter 41, what you read is Joseph's talking to Pharaoh, and he's telling him, "Well, you have two dreams; the two dreams are one, but you were given the dream twice," and then he goes on to say (Genesis 41:32), "... because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." He will surely bring it to pass; it will come to pass.

The fact that we are looking at the Birkat Kohanim here, and God is promising, "He will bless you; He will keep you." Know this: in this generation that is wicked and evil, He will bring it to pass. What an awesome promise! Talk about hope, talk about encouragement. You wonder why the Jewish people are clinging to this? Why are they wearing them as amulets? Why are they writing it in silver? This is why: the testimony of two or three—amazing structure.

And you'll notice that each one of these lines doesn't go nameless. The Holy Tetragrammaton is listed in every single one. And it's not just that; again, this just keeps blowing your mind. With each Tetragrammaton, the Holy Sacred Name of God is spoken, and two verbs are attached. Again, all things are established on the testimony of two or three. Two verbs are attached to His glorious name. So here we have the LORD, Yahweh, or Yehovah, by some. Bless you and keep you; it's two forms of action. The LORD will make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you, and He will lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. This is amazing; there's no doubt, there's no debate, that there is a structure here.

Let me take this a step further. Here we have it. It looks so beautiful in Hebrew, doesn't it? I mean, it is beautiful, and it's even more beautiful to receive it, to actually hear those words spoken and get them into your heart. But check this out. So, you know, and I'm not a numbers geek either, but these mathematicians, they'll tell you that, you know what, prime numbers are the sacred numbers of God. This is something people have talked about, okay? Prime numbers are the sacred numbers of God.



And this is what's crazy. You'll notice the first line, let me start here. Notice that when you lay this out in Hebrew, it actually forms a mountain. It forms a mountain, and you think of *Yerushalayim*. And you literally have the name of God coming down the mountain. It's kind of crazy. I mean, we can go as crazy as we want. We're not going to, but it can be as inventive as you want. I don't hang on to all these, but this is really amazing.

So you can kind of see God coming down the mountain. I mean, this is pretty amazing. But three, five, and seven—three Hebrew words, five Hebrew words, and seven Hebrew words—are all prime numbers, every single one of them. And everybody's left, scratching their heads, going, "Wow, the prime numbers have been considered to be sacred." They're indivisible. That's what makes a prime number prime. It's indivisible. Isn't that crazy?

What is the first prime number? Well, it's two. It's the only even number in the existence of numbers that is prime, and you go back to this whole concept: all things are established on the testimony of two or three. It begins with a prime number. God's establishing begins with a prime number. He's a God of math, and He's much... You know, you dig into this stuff, and I just go, God, I'm going to leave it to the point where You are so far beyond, Your wisdom is so far beyond searching out and actually obtaining, just whatever You give me; praise the LORD.

But this is just, you know, stuff like this, like I can't believe it. You listen to astrophysicists talk about this, who are coming to the knowledge of saying, Well, no, we know mathematically speaking, there is a creator. I mean, they're coming to this knowledge. It's so crazy how brilliant our God is. I don't think we really grasp it sometimes in our little minds.

Moving on, there's more I want to cover. This is something I think is important to bring to the table. And that is how the priest would say the blessing. Again, you can go to the Talmud, and there's a lot of conversation on this, but I'm going to give you the crux of it.

The priest would say it in the following manner. They would say it while standing, okay? And actually, you would never see a priest bless the people while sitting. You've never seen me come up here behind the bimah, at the end of the service, and bless in the *Birkat Kohanim* sitting down. It's not going to happen because it's to be done standing. And it's not just done standing, but you're to go to the Duhan.

You're to come to an elevated position, a platform, and from that platform, being elevated, you're to go out and bless the children of Israel.

The second thing is, and this is important, okay, it is vitally important that you keep this because you need it at the end of the day. It is said face-to-face. A priest doesn't turn his back on the one he is blessing. It has to be said face-to-face.

Third, it was spoken loudly, not in a hushed tone, as you would see part of the Jewish liturgy is done. Some of it's done in a hushed tone. It's not done in a hushed tone; all people must hear it. And actually it wasn't just spoken loudly; it was actually chanted as they go back. They really believe in going back to temple times. was done similarly to how we do it now; we sing it. You chant it.

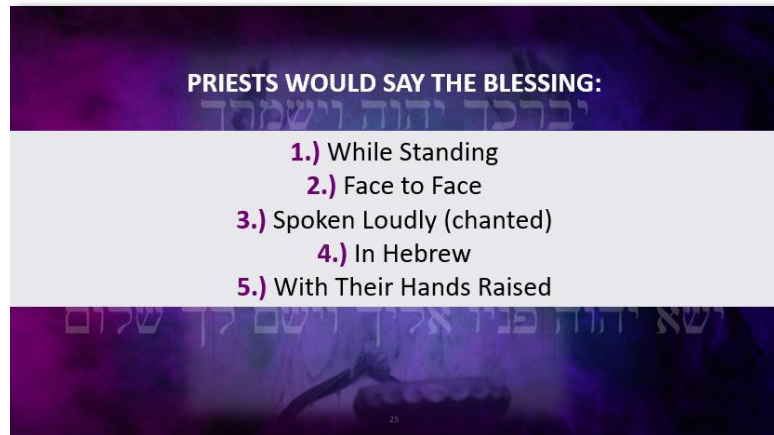
Number four, very adamant, as you go to the Talmud, it is to be said in Hebrew.

Then, five is this, and I want to spend a little bit of time on this, and they said it with their hands stretched out. Their hands were raised, and we have a great example of this in Leviticus 9:22—**Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people**, and what did he do? He **blesses them**.

Now, one of the cool things about this, traditionally speaking, is that the Jewish people recognized when the priest went to the Duhan, when he took the platform and he spoke the words of the Living God, and he stretched out his hands, they knew the power of God came down. Check this out: —Jewish Encyclopedia by Kaufmann Kohler, David Philipson, and Francis L. Cohen— "**...the belief prevailed that during the lifting up of the hands by the priests, the Shekinah, which is the glory of God, was hovering over their heads and its rays streamed through their open fingers.**"

Think about that for a second. Here's the deal: just for a moment, slide that aside. Everything I know about the *Birkat Kohanim*, I know it is anointed by the power of God, and when someone goes up according to His will and doesn't speak their own words, but they speak the words of God, they are operating in an anointing, and you had better believe the *Ruach* is going to move. He's going to go out, and this is powerful. You can go to the prayer of Habakkuk. Go to the prayer of Habakkuk, and he literally talks about (Habakkuk 3:4) **... He had rays flashing from His hand, and there His power was hidden**. The ultimate Kohen Gadol. Amen?

I don't want to just cover this; there's another aspect that I want to cover to the priest saying the blessing, and that is the timing. So now we're getting into some serious substance, some serious revelation. What do they say today? "Timing is everything," right? Yes, timing is everything when the priest said this. Let's go back to Leviticus 9:22, and I'm going to show you something. Here's what it says: **Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings.**



Understand what you just heard. What just happened is, literally, he offered the sin sacrifice and the following sacrifice. And the next thing he does is go out; he stretches out his hands and he blesses his people, blesses the people of God, in that order. And Jewish tradition understands that the blessing, the *Birkat Kohanim*, was said after the daily sacrifices. Go back to the temple times; after the daily sacrifices, that's what the priests would do. Sacrifice the lamb, and now you go and bless the people.

Do you really believe it is a coincidence that this specific order is structured in such a way? I don't. Let's look at what Paul says in Ephesians 2:13-14—¹³ **But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near.** Oh, how? **By the blood of Christ.** ¹⁴ **For He Himself is our** what? **Peace...** (Emphasis added). He's our shalom. He's our shalom, *V'yasem lekha shalom*. I mean, this is in the Priestly Blessing. Get this: We're talking about the sacrifice. Because of the sacrifice of Christ, what do we have now? We have the blessing. We have the *V'yasem lekha shalom*. That's what we have.

Ephesians 1:3—**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.** (Emphasis added). Do you get it? No sacrifice—no blessing. What do you think the Torah is testifying to? What do you think the temple services were testifying to? Day after day after day.

Yeshua tells us in John 5:46, —**For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.** You should go read what Moses wrote, and we should look for Yeshua; He's all over the place. Amen? You want to talk about unearthing. Do you want to hit the crescendo moment? Do you want to have the deep riches of the Most High God as you go to His Word? Find Yeshua. That's the crescendo.

When He says (John 14:6), "**I am the way, the truth, and the life,**" He is not kidding. He is all in all; He is everything. And that's when you come to that moment of purity, of pure understanding, of clarity, where the veil has literally been removed because you're in the Messiah Yeshua.

One more passage we're sharing—Galatians 3:13— **Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree").** What are we talking about? Sacrifice. Paul knows what I'm talking about right now. The sacrifice, and what's he saying next? He says this, **that the blessing** because of the sacrifice, that the blessing **of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.** (Emphasis added).

Do you want to talk about unpacking an incredible revelation of the Priestly Blessing and about its timing and order? Paul knows how to do it. Understand that blessings are directly tied to sacrifice. Directly tied, no sacrifice, no blessing; it's that simple.

In Luke Chapter 23, we read about Yeshua being crucified; we read about the sacrifice. Luke Chapter 24 is about His resurrection, and He goes out and shows Himself to His disciples. Have you ever read what happened? This is what we'll read: — Luke 24:36— **Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and said to them,** Oh, shalom, peace, **"Peace to you."** First, He sacrificed, then He came to them and said, "Shalom." And then we read in Luke 24:50—**And He led them out as far as Bethany, oh, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.** (Emphasis added).

Mind-blowing, the sacrifice took place, and the first thing you read about is as He goes and meets with His disciples as the *Kohen Gadol*, which is what you would expect Him to do as the priest, according to the Order of Melchizedek, to go forth and bless His disciples.

I want to take you to Genesis Chapter 12 because I don't want to just talk about the timing of when the priest did this. I want to talk about the timing of when this blessing began. Because you can go to Numbers 6:23 and subsequent verses, and you can say, okay, here's where we're instructed, the priests are instructed to bless, and this is where it all begins. That's not where it begins. It begins back in Genesis Chapter 12, and is this important? You had better believe it's important. For understanding the blessing and what is entailed with this blessing, this is important, so we're going to go back.

Genesis 12:1-2—¹ Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. ² I will make you a great nation; oh, **I will bless you.** (Emphasis added). We learn so much about the *Birkat Kohanim*, right here, about the blessing. God asked Abraham to do something. You want the blessing? Do you know what you have to do? You've got to abandon your family. Okay? That you're accustomed to, all your friends. You have to leave your home, your inheritance. It surely would have become Abraham's, and being inherited by his fathers and his father's father, he would have had that. You have to abandon your gods, your idols that you have in Ur of Chaldaea. All these gods that your families were worshiping—Abraham was being ripped out of everything he was accustomed to, everything he knew, everything that was comfortable to him. His life was flipped upside down.

You know, I've heard these words before, kind of by Yeshua when he says (Matthew 16:24), Unless you deny yourself and pick up your cross and follow Me, you'll never see eternal life. That's what we're being called to do. That calling began with Abraham.

What was the motivation? Okay, so the LORD comes to him and says, "Hey, you've got to leave everything." How many of you are just going to get up and go? Yeah, you know what? It says, It's **a land I will show you.** I will show you—not what you have seen. It would have been much easier if Abraham had seen what he was going to and confirmed, Oh yeah, God, He's not leading me astray. No, Abraham has no idea where he's going. He has no idea what's there. He has to just trust the LORD, right? What's the motivation? The blessing. The blessing is the motivation.

What did Abraham do? He left. What does that tell you about Abraham and the blessing? He wanted it. He wanted it more than anything. He was willing to give everything for the blessing of God. Man, you want to talk about a mind-blowing heart? This is the heart. No wonder God picked Abraham to bring about such blessings to the nations.

Now, continuing, it goes on and says this: —Genesis 12:2— **... and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.** (Emphasis added). So God's blessing upon Abraham is so awesome, it would impact the world. I think God knows how to bless. Amen?

Genesis 12:3—"I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; oh, **and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**" (Emphasis added). Let me ask you a question because, again, we have to understand the blessing. How does this happen? Okay, I'm going to bless you. Your blessing is going to be so great; you're going to bless everyone and all nations. How does that happen? Well, we have already read it; Paul has already told us that it happens through the Messiah Yeshua, and there is no other way. There is no other way this happens.

And so it keeps coming back as we're looking at the blessing. Yeshua is the center of attention. I love what Paul says in Galatians 3:29—**And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs**

according to the promise. Then you are. You see, you want the blessing that we're talking about? You're going to have to believe what Abraham believed, and you're going to have to do what Abraham did. And I love what Yeshua says to the Jews in John 8:39—... “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham.” So, you know, so often what we want is the blessing. You don't want to pick up your cross to follow Yeshua to get it. The blessing is available, but it comes at a price. Everything that your heart, your fleshly heart, loves in this world, every idol you've set up, has to be brought down.

I want to take it back to Genesis, and we're going to go to the life of Jacob. Here we are; I didn't even plan this. I assure you, I had totally—I didn't even know what the Torah portion was today; forgive me. But we're going to go to the Torah portion. You want to talk about more of the veil being ripped off here.

Genesis 25:29-30—²⁹ Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. ³⁰ And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom.

Now, I want to dissect this a little bit so that you understand what's going on. Mike did a great job today. We're going to come at this a little differently. The first thing I want to say is this: what you are reading right now is a prophetic template of the end times, and you can even find this stuff in the apocrypha as well. This is not just a story of history; this is a prophetic typology between good and evil, between the faithful and the unfaithful. Do you understand? Specifically, listen to me clearly, Esau is a typology of the believers that will fall away in a tribulation; he is a typology of that. Paul even talks about this in his letter to Timothy—1 Timothy 4:1— Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. Okay, Esau is the typology of that.

With that said, let's go to this in Genesis 25:29— Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field. Isn't it interesting that when you look at how Yeshua uses the term field in His parable, it's a reference to the world? But then it goes on and says, And he was weary. In other words, he came in from the field, the world, and he was weary. He was exposed to the world, and he's got nothing left. This guy, what are we reading, Daniel 7? And we read that the antichrist, the spirit of the antichrist, the devil, comes forth, and he seeks to wear out the saints of the Most High; this is his focus. He's going forth to wear out the saints of the Most High, and we are seeing this right here. That's absolutely amazing.

And I'll address one thing, and we'll continue. Genesis 25:30 — And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew. What does Esau want? He's weary, he's got nothing left, his life's hanging by a thread, and he wants the stew. That's what he wants; he's yearning for that. Now, in Hebrew, it's *ha'adom ha'adom* (הָאָדֹם הָאָדֹם). *Ha'adom ha'adom*. It's interesting because as it goes on, it's a play on words, and then they call him *Edom* (עֲדָם), red stew in Hebrew. *Ha'adom ha'adom*, and then they call his name *Edom*. That's the play on words. And what you need to take away from that is, get this: his choice to select the red stew was, yes, the very name that he would be called by, and his descendants would be called by—the Edomites. That was by his decision; it is his identity now. Think about that. You hold the line, and you become faithful as we're going to see Jacob. Guess what your identity is: it is the Messiah Yeshua. This is an awesome text. For I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom.

Continuing to Genesis 25:31-32—³¹ But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." ³² And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?" Listen, this is an anti-Christ moment.

This is the moment that Esau is confronted with: you have the ability to hold the line or compromise and give in.

Esau is feeling the heat. You look at this; he's in despair, he's hanging by a thread. And all of a sudden, guess what? This is what's really important. Esau, all of a sudden, has a perspective on the birthright that he may not have had before or even realized. See, before he never sold his birthright for another, but when trial and tribulation, affliction and anguish, and persecution came, now all of a sudden, I don't value that as much as I thought. Who cares? I'm going to die in the flesh. Unbelievable.

I mean, this is where we're at. And so, he no longer values his soul. He no longer values salvation. He's willing to sell it for a brief moment of comfort, of temporary satisfaction. And I'm going to tell you right now, we are living in days where we're going to have anti-Christ moments. They are coming, and they're coming hard.

Now, let's go to the flip side. Let's go to the side that we want to be on. When you look at Jacob's life and heart, what did he value? What was in his heart? What did he want more than anything? The birthright, he wanted the birthright. Why? Did he need recognition? Did he need the recognition of this birthright, which was given to the firstborn, so that he could walk around and say, Look at me? What did he want? What is it about the birthright that's important? Well, the writer of Hebrews covers it in Chapter 12. It's the blessing.

So here we go. I mean, this is where it circles back to the *Birkat Kohanim*. Jacob wanted the blessing, and make no mistake, because we can see this here; you can read into the text. He was looking for any advantage at any moment that he could go in and get it. It's all he wanted, and he was able to get it.

Let's jump ahead; this gets even more incredible. —Genesis 32:24-25—²⁴ **Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man**, which, as you know, Mike talked about that today—there's no question, it's Yeshua. And I'm not going to get into the depths of that; I just want to stay focused here. A man **wrestled with him until the breaking of day.** ²⁵ **Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.** (Emphasis added).

What do you think that would feel like—to have your socket knocked out of joint like that? I don't care who you are; there's no way you can paint this in another light; you're going to feel that. At the end of the day, this is serious, and he did it so that he would let him go. It was enough; this wasn't a little, you know, I'll just push you so you get off of me type of situation. This was a blow.

Look at what is said next—absolutely incredible. —Genesis 32:26— **And He said, "Let Me go; this is Yeshua, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"** (Emphasis added). I will not. What does Jacob want? There's nothing else he wants but the blessing. Here's a guy who has his hip knocked out of the socket. And you would think he'd say, "I'm not going to let you go until you fix this, fix what's going on here." He never asks. He only has one thing on his mind: that's the *Birkat Kohanim*. I want the blessing. He valued it; he valued the blessing.

Let me ask you something. Are you clinging to the LORD with the same might and the same heart, asking for the blessing and saying, "I'm not letting you go to give me the blessing," or do you throw a five-minute prayer at Yeshua and hope for the best? I'm telling you right now, this is how you get it done. This is how the *Birkat Kohanim* comes alive in your life. This is where blessing comes. It's clinging to the garment of Yeshua. There's no other way.

It is so incredibly revelatory for me just to see how Jacob acts and what he cares about. I think of Yeshua's words in Matthew 13:44-46—⁴⁴ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it **he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.**" ⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶ "who, when he had found one pearl of great price, what did he do? He **went and sold all that he had and bought it.** (Emphasis added). It's the only thing that matters. See, when you find the LORD, when you find the LORD in the blessing, you will sell everything for the blessing. There's no question about it; you'll give everything you can for God's blessing.

Going back to Genesis 32:26-28—²⁶ ... **"I will not let You go unless You bless me!"** Let's see how this goes. ²⁷ So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." ²⁸ And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." (Emphasis added). That only happened because he didn't let go. It only happened because all he wanted was the blessing.

Genesis 32:29-30—²⁹ Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" We could go on and talk about that. That's a Yeshuaism, if you will. I won't get into that. But then I will say this. **And He blessed him there.** Jacob got the blessing. ³⁰ So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God, oh, **face to face.** — How does the priest say the blessing over the people? It is face-to-face, and here we see that's exactly how it's done. **And my life is preserved.**" (Emphasis added).

Let's take this one step further. —Deuteronomy 30:19— **"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death—oh, **blessing** and cursing; **therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live.**** (Emphasis added). Notice "blessing" and "life" are used mutually, used in the same context. They refer to one another, okay? If I'm saying I want the blessing, I'm saying, "I want life." What does that tell you about the *Birkat Kohanim*?

This is important because when Jacob wanted the blessing, was it just simply, well, make sure You have food on my table? And certainly, that's a blessing, and certainly we ask for that. Do you think that's the extent of what the *Birkat Kohanim* is talking about? It is talking about eternal life. Do you want the blessing or not? That's the question.

We're told to choose, so now you can have a priest go up and stretch out his hands. You can have the rays of the living God come out from his fingers, the *Ruach HaKodesh* (רוח הקודש) go all over the place, but I'm going to tell you right now, it will not fall on you if you do not choose this day whom you will serve; it won't happen. You want the blessing? Don't let go. You want the blessing? Choose life.

Deuteronomy 30:20—**that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey his voice.** In other words, you have to keep His commandments. Yeshua said (John 14:15), **"If you love Me, keep My commandments.** You know what's crazy about the Word? It's just like, can I just go to the Word for five minutes and not talk about the commandments? Is that just possible? I just want to talk about the blessing. I just want to talk about it; I can't. I tried; you can't do it. It's like everywhere I go, I'm confronted with the commandments. Maybe that's why He said (Deuteronomy 6:7), You **shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.**

This is, like, ridiculous; it doesn't stop. Why? Because it is life and death. And because I'm hardheaded. And we're stubborn by nature. Are we not stubborn and rebellious by nature? Are we not stiff-necked by nature? God doesn't stop. And it's all on me, people, but when I do stuff in the house that I know I'm not supposed to do, and my wife's on me, she doesn't stop. And that's the only way it gets done. It's quite humorous. It works; the LORD knows what He's doing.

Now get this: this is awesome. Deuteronomy 30:20—"that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice. You must keep His voice. Now what does it say? **and that you may cling to Him.** Isn't that interesting? What did Jacob do? He clung to Yeshua; he would not let Him go. Now, get this: here it's specifically talking about for us to cling to Him; I can't ever let go of the commandments of God. I have to hold them. I have to walk them out. I have to keep them. You want the blessing? You can't let go; you can't do it. **For He [is] your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.**" (Emphasis added).

Deuteronomy 28:1-2—¹ "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, **to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today**, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. ² **And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God.** (Emphasis added).

Now, taking you back to *Ketef Hinnom*, scroll one, the silver scroll. And perhaps you will appreciate this scroll and how carefully they thought about what was to go on that silver scroll. What was on there? If you remember, there were two things on there. It talked about how God is gracious to those who keep His commandments and love Him, oh, and the *Birkat Kohanim*. Isn't that amazing? Because, as this passage that we just went through, we recognize Jacob wouldn't let go of Yeshua. And as we continue in the Torah, to cling to Him, to continue to cling to Him, we have to keep His commandments.

And that's exactly what was on that silver scroll. That's why my mind is blown. That was the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, taking the most critical text you could possibly take, ones that give you a future, ones that encourage you, and ones that give you hope, and donning that, adorning that.

We're going to close...