

(Topics, Lead-in, and Lead-in Devotional Reading below)

God Blesses His People

TUNE: WARRENTON (Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing)

Numbers 6:22-27; Psalm 100:3; 121:3-8

♩ = 80

C C^{sus} C F F C C C^{sus} C F G G C C^{sus}

1. Yah - weh, high and ho - ly Sov - 'reign, Claims the need - y as His own,
2. Yah - weh is our Great Pro - tec - tor, He our Shep - herd, we His sheep.
3. Yah - weh takes us as His chil - dren, Shares with us His ho - ly name.

C G B Fadd⁹ C F F C C C^{sus} C F G G⁷ C

Calls us to His ho - ly pres - ence, Wraps us in His sweet sha - lom.
Guard - ing, guid - ing, seek - ing, find - ing, He is watch - ing while we sleep.
His the pow - er, His the glo - ry, His the King - dom we pro - claim!

Refrain

G¹³ G⁷ C G Am⁷ G^b C G^{7sus} C G^{sus} G

See His face ev - er lift - ed, Ev - er shin - ing, ev - er smil - ing,

C C^{sus} C F C G⁷ C

Ev - er bless - ing, ev - er breath - ing peace.

WORDS: Ken Bible
MUSIC: *The Sacred Harp*, 1844; arr. by Ken Bible

WARRENTON
8.7.8.7.w.Ref.

TOPICS: Assurance & Comfort; God's Love; God's Presence; Guidance; Praise & Worship

LEAD-IN: *The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.*
(Numbers 6:24-26, NIV)

LEAD-IN DEVOTIONAL READING:

God Blesses His People

When God was preparing Israel to enter the Promised Land, as He was forming them into a people who were uniquely His own, He commanded the priests to regularly bless His people with these words:

*Yahweh bless you and keep you.
Yahweh shine His face on you and be gracious to you.
Yahweh lift His face on you and give you peace.*
(Numbers 6:24-26, author's translation)

To bless someone is to speak their well-being. Human speech, of itself, is relatively powerless. It is simply vibrating air. Though our blessings express kind intent, they are wishes, not commands.

But God's words are sovereign, and so are His blessings. When He speaks, reality responds. When He blesses us, He decrees our well-being. And here in Numbers 6, as throughout scripture, God decrees the well-being of His people. He decrees the well-being of all who trust Him.

This special blessing in Numbers 6 doesn't stop there. God wants His people to know that He is always keeping them. The word for "keep" means to watch, guard, and protect; to exercise great care over someone or something. For example, it describes the way one cares for a garden, or tends a flock, or watches over one's own house.

Psalms 121:3-8 is a beautiful description of the way God keeps His people:

God keeps us constantly. He never sleeps.
God keeps us completely. Not even the sun and moon can touch us without His permission.
God keeps us in every place, in every daily activity, in every circumstance, in every season of life, now and forever.

But my favorite part of this blessing in Numbers 6 is God's promises about His face. Remember the story of Esther? She was afraid to enter the presence of the king without permission, and if she entered without him extending his favor, she would die. But here, God promises that the light of His face is always shining on us. He is always a gracious, loving, welcoming King. He invites us into His presence, and when we enter, He lifts up His face toward us and blesses us with His peace. This peace is not just the absence of all conflict. It is wholeness, harmony, and well-being, all the best that our sovereign God can give.

What does the light of God's face mean in practical terms? Turn to Psalm 44. The psalmist is recounting all the ways God provided for His people by bringing them out of Egypt, taking them through the wilderness, then into the Promised Land. They overcame major challenges every step of the way.

*It was not by their sword that they won the land,
nor did their arm bring them victory;
it was your right hand, your arm,
and the light of your face, for you loved them. (v.3, NIV)*

God's blessing, His keeping, His compassion, and the smile of His loving favor are constant toward His people, toward all those who love and trust Him.

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