

Trinity Sunday (May, 31, 2026)	2187
O.T. Lesson: Genesis 1:1—2-3	Morning Praise: p. 45
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 13:11-14	195
Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20	Psalm 150
Athanasian Creed	177
Text: Numbers 6:22-27	Athanasian Creed (in place of "We Praise You, O God")
Theme: <u>The LORD's Name Is On You!</u>	270
I. To bless you and keep you.	326
II. To make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.	
III. To turn his face toward you and give you peace.	

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

Numbers 6:22-27

The LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron and his sons, 'This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them:

""The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.""

"So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them."

May the words of my mouth, and the meditation of our hearts be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, our Rock and our Redeemer!

Dear fellow redeemed,

A Roman emperor, after a successful military campaign, returned to the great city of Rome in triumph. As he entered the city, great throngs of cheering people filled the streets to welcome their mighty hero. While the emperor passed through one of the crowded thoroughfares, a little girl, wild with joy, dashed toward the chariot. The police stopped her and said, "That is the chariot of the emperor and you must not try to reach him." But the little one replied, "He may be your emperor, but he is my father." In a moment she was not only in the chariot, but also in her father's arms.

Today we approach one far greater than a Roman emperor, the God and Lord of heaven and earth. Does he seem far removed or distant from us? Is he too great for us to approach, too mighty, too holy? Will we be turned away and kept from him? No, for we are his dear children. So he takes us in his loving arms and blesses us.

The Bible assures us again and again that we are God's own dear ones, members of his family. We are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, our brother. The Holy Spirit, who lives within us, has sealed us as God's own. When we were baptized, we received the name of our LORD, and became members of his family. We were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The name of the triune God, and all of the priceless blessings that that name represents became our very own.

In our verses we hear how the LORD commanded Aaron and his sons, the priests, to bless the Israelites by saying to them: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace." Through this blessing, the LORD promised, "They will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them." The words of this Aaronic benediction or

blessing are familiar to us because we hear them at the close of our worship service most Sundays. Through those words, the merciful goodness and blessing of our triune God is placed on you. The LORD's Name Is On You! The LORD's name is on you to bless you and keep you. The LORD's name is on you to make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The LORD's name is on you to turn his face toward you and give you peace.

Today on Trinity Sunday especially we focus our attention on that most basic and important teaching of the Bible that God is triune; three distinct persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, yet one God. We can see the Trinity in this Aaronic blessing. Notice how the name LORD is mentioned three times: "The LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace. We are led to see God the Father, who blesses and keeps us; God the Son, who has brought God's grace to us by suffering and dying for us on the cross, and through the forgiveness he won, causes the LORD's face to shine upon us; and God the Holy Spirit, who gives us peace by working saving faith in our hearts and bringing Christ's forgiveness to us, causing the LORD's face to turn toward us.

That name LORD is so significant. This is again one of those many places in the Old Testament where we find that name LORD spelled with all capital letters. Here and wherever that name appears, it stresses the certainty that our LORD is the God of salvation, the God who promised to send the Savior to win salvation for sinful mankind. His promises are sure, because he is totally self-sufficient, and needs no help in carrying out his promises. When the LORD makes a promise, it is as well as done. His forgiveness and salvation are certain. In Exodus 34, the LORD himself tells us what his name means: "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with Moses and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished.'"

This is the name that is on you, to bless you and to keep you. We know that it is the LORD who created all things. The Bible generally attributes that work of creation to God the Father. God the Father did not simply create this world and give us life, and then leave us here all alone to take care of ourselves. He continues to actively care for us, to bless us, giving us all the things we need for our life, causing the sun to shine, the rain to fall, the crops to grow, giving us health and strength and all of our abilities to work and receive his blessings; and guarding and protecting us from all evil, sending his holy angels to watch over us and keep us from harm. Apart from God continually taking care of us, we and our world would not last for even a minute, but he continues to bless and keep us physically.

He blesses and keeps us physically so that he might also bless and keep us spiritually. God has given us our life as a time of grace, a time during which we might come to know him and understand that all we are and have is from him, a time during which we might come to know the salvation that he has won for us, so that he can bless us and keep us for all eternity, and so that we might be privileged to thank, praise, serve and obey him for all eternity.

God has indeed blessed us and kept us. Let us recognize and be grateful for his countless blessings upon us, and most of all, his spiritual blessings. He has guided the

events of this world, seeing to it that we did come to know him and his salvation, seeing to it that we were baptized and instructed in his saving word. Be assured that God will continue to bless you and keep you your whole life through, and for all eternity, because his name, the LORD, is on you.

At the center of God the Father's blessings is this one: that he so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." All the Father's blessings come to us through his Son Jesus, our Savior, who has brought God's grace, his undeserved love to us. The LORD's name is on you to make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; to smile at you, and be happy and pleased with you, to beam at you like a father beams at his child who has done something to make him proud.

But the LORD is not gracious toward sinfulness and wickedness. He does not smile at sin. He is not happy or pleased with people who are soiled with sin. In a different sense his face shines on the wicked -- like a blazing fire to consume and destroy them. There were two Israelite men, named Nadab and Abihu, who rebelled against the Lord. In Leviticus 10 we read that: fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD."

By ourselves, we too are sinners. We too are wicked and deserve to be destroyed by our just and righteous LORD. How can the LORD lovingly make his face shine on us with the warm sunlight of salvation, and be gracious to us sinners? It is because of Jesus, who has won our righteousness with his perfect life in our place, and paid the price for our sins, taking them away on the cross. When God looks at us, he doesn't see our sins. Instead he sees Jesus' perfect righteousness. That alone is what causes him to smile upon us, to beam at the sight of us, to be happy with us, and to be proud of us as his children, and to be gracious to us. So we can say with the Psalmist, "Let the light of your face shine upon us, O LORD." [4:6]

May we always realize that by ourselves we are sinful and deserve only God's punishment, and that we are pleasing to God only through Jesus our Savior. May we learn to hate sin more and more. But never let the devil lead you to despair. When problems or troubles come into your life, or when you find that you are guilty of committing a terrible sin that hurts many and haunts you, don't let the devil tell you that you can no longer be God's child, or that God doesn't love you anymore. Jesus has taken away all your sins, and given you his perfect righteousness. No matter what has happened in your life, no matter what will or can ever happen in your life, you have the assurance: the LORD does make his face shine upon you and is gracious to you, because his name, the LORD, is on you.

Just as God the Father's blessings come to us through God the Son, so God the Son's blessings come to us through God the Holy Spirit. Last Sunday, on Pentecost, we heard how Jesus promised and sent the Holy Spirit from the Father, poured him out on all people on that day of Pentecost. It is through the Holy Spirit, working faith in your heart, that the LORD turns his face toward you and gives you peace. Apart from the Holy Spirit, we would have no peace, for by ourselves we could not trust in Jesus for forgiveness. Instead we would only reject God's salvation and rebel against him in our lives.

If someone doesn't like us, they might turn their face against us. They refuse to look at us because they can't stand the sight of us. So God turns his face against the

wicked, not because he has rejected them, but because they have rejected him and his gracious salvation. As for those who refuse to worship the LORD alone as God, and refuse to obey his commands, a number of times God says, "I will set my face against those people." [Leviticus 17:10, 20:3,5,6] Psalm 34 tells us, "The face of the LORD is against those who do evil."

It is the Holy Spirit who, through God's word, leads us to know Jesus as our Savior and to trust in him. He makes salvation our very own and gives us total peace. And then, through that salvation the Holy Spirit empowers and leads us to serve God with our lives. Through Christ's forgiveness, the Holy Spirit sets us apart as God's holy people. God's word assures us, "The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry." [Psalm 34:15] "The eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love." [Psalm 33:18]

How deeply it hurts us if someone we love turns away from us. Be assured, the LORD will never do that to you, because his Holy Spirit is living right within your heart, ever making you God's holy child through faith, ever bringing Christ's forgiveness and righteousness to you through God's word, ever moving you to serve the LORD with your life. You can always be assured: the LORD's face is turned toward you and his peace is yours, because his name, the LORD, is on you.

The words of this Aaronic blessing are so precious. They are more than just a pious wish. The words of this blessing give us the full assurance of the merciful goodness of our triune God and the forgiveness and salvation he has given to us. We might be tempted to say, "May the LORD bless you and keep you." But we really shouldn't add that word "may," because it's not in the blessing. The LORD does bless you and keep you. The LORD does make his face shine upon you and is gracious to you. The LORD does turn his face toward you and does give you peace. He has in the past, and he will in the future, because his name, the LORD, is on you.

Amen.

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy -- to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power, and authority now and forever. Amen.