

# Parasha Meditation Naso

**Bamidbar 4:21-7:89**

By Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

## The Spiritual Healing Power of the Kohanim Blessing

### Introduction:

#### The Spiritual Healing Power of *Birkat Kohanim* (the Kohanim Blessing)

This week's parasha is filled with spiritual healing. It includes the powerful Kohanim (Jewish priests) blessing with which Jewish fathers and some mothers and grandmothers traditionally bless their children Friday night. Giving and receiving blessings has great spiritual healing power. The Kohanim were chosen to be the channel for Hashem healing blessings. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to come to the Beit Kneset and be blessed with the following blessing from Above:

ספר במדבר פרק ו  
 (ד) יְבָרַךְ הַשֵּׁם וַיְשַׁמְרֵהוּ:  
 (ה) יָאֵר הַשֵּׁם פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנְּנֵךְ:  
 (ו) יִשְׂאֵה הַשֵּׁם פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשְׂמֵם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:  
 (ז) וַיִּשְׂמוּ אֶת שְׁמִי עַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲנִי אֶבְרַכֶּם:

May Hashem bless you and keep you!

May Hashem shine his face upon you and be gracious to you!

May Hashem lift up His face upon you and give you peace!

They shall place my name upon the children of Israel and I will bless them.<sup>1</sup>

### Drawing Hashem's Presence Upon Us

Notice that the Kohamin blessing is written in a perfect pyramid style. The first verse has three words, the second has five words and the third line has seven words. The middle word of the first line is הַשֵּׁם/"Hashem," the middle word of the second line is פָּנָיו/*panav* - "His face," while the middle word of the last line of the actual blessing is אֵלֶיךָ/*elecha* - "Upon you." Together this spells out "הַשֵּׁם פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ" - "Hashem's face upon you." Pronouncing the Kohanim blessing therefore draws Hashem's presence upon us. Keep this in mind, when reciting this blessing as part of our morning prayer.

### Love - The Glue Connecting the "Blessor" with the Blessed

*Netivat Shalom* asks why the Kohanim blessing is introduced with "...Who has sanctified us with the holiness of Aharon and commanded us to bless Israel with love"?<sup>2</sup> He explains that the entire

<sup>1</sup> Bamidbar 6:24-27.

building of the world is by means of love connecting the giver with the receiver. Only by means of love can the “blesser” bring down supernatural influences to the blessed. Hashem appointed Aharon the Kohen to be a “blesser” and spiritual giver in Israel because he possessed the attribute love and pursuit of peace.<sup>3</sup> The holiness of Aharon derives from his love necessary to connect the giver with the receivers. Hashem created humanity in order that he would receive pleasure from the light of the *Shechina*. It is only possible to receive this upper *shefa* (spiritual influence) by means of the relationship of receiving from a spiritual guide. This ability to receive from someone higher is the source of all blessings.<sup>4</sup>

### Revealed and Hidden Blessings

*Kli Yakar* notices that each of the three verses of blessing begins with the letter *yud* which has the numerical value of ten. When you spell out the letter *yud* – יוד The numerical value of the inner (hidden) letters *vav* and *dalet* likewise add up to ten. This alludes to the fact that the Kohanim Blessing includes both ten revealed and ten hidden blessings. This twofold blessing affects both the physical and spiritual realm. A person, too, consists of ten physical and ten spiritual faculties. While the parents bestow his physical capacities, he receives his spiritual faculties directly from Hashem.

### Physical and Spiritual Blessings

The father bestows the following physical faculties (the white parts): 1. Sinews, 2. Bones, 3. Brain, 4. Nails, 5. White of eyes. The mother bestows the following physical faculties (the red parts): 1. Skin, 2. Flesh, 3. Blood, 4. Hair, 5. Pupil of the eye. G-d bestows the ten spiritual faculties: 1. Spirit, 2. Soul, 3. Facial features, 4. Vision of the eye, 5. Hearing of the ear, 6. Speech of the mouth, 7. Walking of the legs, 8. *Da'at* (knowledge), 9. *Bina* (understanding), 10. *Sechel* (intellect). These ten physical and spiritual faculties are blessed by the Kohen when he lifts his ten fingers, in order that from each finger emanates the blessing on both the revealed and the hidden.

### Evolving from Daughter to Sister and finally becoming Mother

*Kli Yakar* continues and explains that the three sentences of *Birkat Kohanim* correspond to the three stages of the feminine development, 1. Daughter, 2. Sister, 3. Mother. “In the beginning Hashem called the children of Israel “daughter”, afterwards he called her “sister” and in the end “mother.”<sup>5</sup> At first the children of Israel are compared to the “Daughter,” who is below and the father is above her, having dominion over her. This corresponds to “May Hashem bless you and guard you.” – For the spiritual sustenance of these blessings flow from Above. Becoming “Sister” is the notion of equality and being face to face. This corresponds to “May Hashem shine His face upon you...” Evolving to become “Mother,” is being elevated to a “superior position” – A *Tzadik* has dominion through his superior awe of G-d. This corresponds to “May Hashem lift up His face upon you” so to speak.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The Siddur (prayer-book), the repetition of the Amida and Mussaf.

<sup>3</sup> Pirkei Avot (Ethics of our Fathers) 1:12.

<sup>4</sup> *Netivot Shalom, Bamidbar, Parashat Naso*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>5</sup> *Midrash Shir Hashirim Rabah* 3:21.

<sup>6</sup> *Kli Yakar, Bamidbar* 6:24.



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## **Meditation:**

Make yourself comfortable wherever you are sitting, standing or walking.

1. Breathe deeply and bow your head forward slightly to open yourself to become a vessel for receiving blessings.
2. You have just opened yourself to receive the Torah on Sinai. So much light flowed downwards from Above on Shavuot. Now we need proper vessels to keep this light, and channel it into our daily day life. The Kohanim blessing, which always is read the Shabbat following Shavuot, bestows us with the spiritual vessels to hold all of these lights.
3. Visualize/recite the words: “וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ הָשֵׁם וְיִבְרַכְךָ הָשֵׁם”/yevarechecha Hashem v’yismerecha – “May Hashem bless you and guard you.” Hashem will not only bless you but, moreover, guard you so that the blessings will keep.
4. While focusing on these words imagine Hashem’s light flow downwards from heaven landing upon your head.
5. Think about something specific in your life for which you need a lasting blessing, and with humbly bowed head, make your request to Hashem for His blessing.
6. Now raise your head to upright position and visualize/recite the words: “יָאֵר הָשֵׁם פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ:”/ya’er Hashem panav elecha v’chunecha – “May Hashem shine his face upon you and be gracious to you!” – Hashem will show His beaming smiling countenance to you! His presence will be at your side.
7. Imagine Hashem’s light facing you, in front of you, feel it entering your eyes, nose and mouth with delicious warmth.
8. Now visualize/recite: “יִשָּׂא הָשֵׁם פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:”/yisa Hashem panav elecha v’yasem lecha shalom – “May Hashem lift up His face upon you and give you peace!” Feel at peace with yourself and your body.
9. Feel at peace with your surroundings, and imagine Hashem’s light emanating from below, softly caressing your feet, your ankles, calves and knees. Imagine the gentle light rising to your thighs, pelvis, stomach and torso, also from the back. Feel the light finally reaching your shoulders, neck and head, enveloping your entire being with soft serene peacefulness.
10. Remain with this feeling as long as you want before opening your eyes and getting back to the chores of your day with renewed light and vigor.



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## Notes:

The Kohanim Blessing is a powerful Spiritual healer. It is used to ameliorate difficult dreams. King Shlomo engraved the letters of *Birkat Kohanim* surrounding his bed.

The midrash learns this from Song of Songs: "Behold her is the bed of Shlomo, sixty valiant ones of the valiant of Israel surrounding it."<sup>7</sup> "...These are the sixty letters in the Kohanim blessing who are the mighty ones of Israel...Even if a person sees in his dream a wounding sword in his hand, what shall he do? Get up to the synagogue and stand before the Kohanim and listen to the blessing of the Kohanim, and nothing evil can hurt him. Therefore, He tells the Kohanim "Thus shall you bless etc."<sup>8</sup>

If one has seen a dream and does not remember what he saw, let him stand before the Kohanim at the time when they spread out their hands, and say as follows: "Master of the Universe, I am Yours and my dreams are Yours. I have dreamt a dream and I do not know what it is. Whether I have dreamt about myself or my companions have dreamt about me, or I have dreamt about others, if they are good dreams, confirm them and reinforce them like the dreams of Yosef, but if they require a remedy, heal them, as the waters of Marah were healed by Moshe, our teacher, and as Miriam was healed of her leprosy and Chezkiyahu of his sickness, and the waters of Yericho by Elisha. As you did turn the curse of the wicked Bilam into a blessing, so turn all my dreams into something good for me." He should conclude his prayer along with the Kohanim, so that the congregation may answer, Amen!...<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Shir Hashirim 3:7.

<sup>8</sup> Bamidbar Rabah, Parsha 11, Piska 3.

<sup>9</sup> Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 55b

# About Us



## **Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum**

*Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum, a native of Denmark, is Founder and Director of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin. She holds a Bachelor of Education in Bible and Jewish Philosophy from Michlala Jerusalem College for Women, and a Masters of Art in Jewish History from Touro College. Chana Bracha also began her practice as a spiritual healer through Emuna, tefila and energy work. For more than two decades Chana Bracha has taught Bible studies with special emphasis on women's issues in Israel and the United States. She creates curricula emphasizing women's spiritual empowerment through traditional Torah values. Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin located in the Judean Hills of Israel offers a unique program to women of all ages and backgrounds to learn in a holistic Torah study environment that nurtures the mind, body and soul. Intensive textual study of Tanach, Halacha and Chassidut are woven together with creative spiritual expression, and connection with the land of Israel through organic gardening, herbology, Jewish sources of healing and sustainable living. Classes in Jewish mysticism, Chassidism and Jewish meditation are directed at the spiritual thirst so prominent in our times.*

*In 2010 Rebbetzin Chana Bracha published her first book, *Women at the Crossroads: A Woman's Perspective on the Weekly Torah Portion*. Chana Bracha has a married son and several granddaughters. She lives with her husband and younger son on the land of the Judean hills, Israel.*

*If you are interested in:*

*Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin contact [info@berotbatayin.org](mailto:info@berotbatayin.org) or in Spiritual Healing with Rebbetzin Chana Bracha, please contact her at [director@berotbatayin.org](mailto:director@berotbatayin.org)*

*or visit her blog: <http://rebbetzinchanabracha.blogspot.com/2010/11/emunah-healing-for-women.html>*

## **Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin – Holistic Torah Study for Women on the Land of Israel**

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