

כב וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כג דַּבֵּר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל־בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה תְבַרְכוּ  
אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמֹר לָהֶם: ס כד יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ: ס כה יָאֵר יְהוָה |  
פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחַנֶּךָ: ס כו יֵשָׁא יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּשֶּׁם לָךְ שָׁלוֹם: ס כז וְשָׁמוּ  
אֶת־שְׁמִי עַל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲנִי אֲבָרְכֶם

**23** Speak unto Aaron and unto his children, saying, This way shall you bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,

**24** The Lord bless you, and keep you:

**25** The Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you:

**26** The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

**27** And they shall put My name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.

(Numbers, Chapter 6: 23-27)

Prior to Duchening:

-Do not drink wine or other alcoholic beverages

1. Remove shoes and place them in a discrete location - Removing shoes was a legislation of Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai (1st Century, Student of Hillel) -- At TBEMC, shoes are placed outside the main sanctuary.

2. Then on to handwashing - Wash hands with the blessing (*al netilat yadayim*). Wash the area up to the wrist. A Levi pours the water for this handwashing.

3. Timing for the Blessing - Kohanim go up to the bimah at רִצְהָ R'tzeh: p. 278 in the Machzor (Musaf Rosh Hashanah), p. 584 (Musaf Yom Kippur)

4. When going up to the Bimah - \*\*TBEMC custom prior to offering the blessing is to touch the Ark with your tzitzit. You may also offer this blessing (Or your own personal meditation): May it be Your will Ado-nai, My God, that this blessing You have instructed us to offer to Your people Israel will be complete, and without any impediment (obstruction? gap?) and without any misstep from now and forever. (Rashi: Begin this blessing when going up to the bimah.)

5. Up on the bimah Face the Ark until leader calls *Kohanim* and the congregation responds *Am Kedosha Ka'amur*

6. Turn - to the right - now facing the congregation -- and recite the blessing:

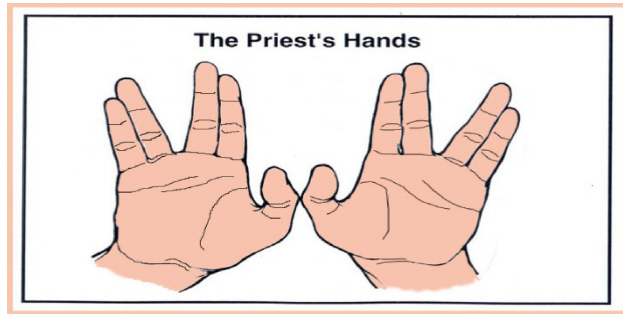
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּקִדְּשָׁתוֹ שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן  
וַצִּוָּנוּ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה.

Baruch Atah Ado-nai Elo-henu Melech Ha'olam, asher kidshanu beek'doo'sha'toh shel Aharon ve'tzi'vanu le'varech et amo Yisra'el b'ahava.

*Praised are You Ado-nai Our God Sovereign of the Universe, who made us holy with the holiness of Aaron, and instructed us to bless the people of Israel with love.*

7. The congregation responds - Amen

8. Facing the congregation, spread out hands Spock-style creating 5 openings



Body position for blessing--Raise up arms to shoulder height with hands in position.

**Do not** let the tips of the thumbs touch one another.

**Raise** the right hand a little higher than the left - making sure the right thumb is above the left.

**Palms** are facing down.

**Do not** look at your own hands.

Position of the Tallit during the blessing - It's customary for the tallit to cover the face with hands outside the tallit.

9. Repeat each word after the leader recites the word.

10. The leader begins *Sim Shalom* -- kohanim turn right -- back toward the Ark.

11. Kohanim touch the Ark again with tzitzit -- And may offer a silent prayer - The following text is a traditional post-blessing prayer:

Master of the Universe, we did what you instructed us to do, now we pray You will do what you promised us: Look down from Your holy place, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel, and bless the land You gave us -- as You promised our ancestors -- a land flowing with milk and honey.

12. When leaving the bimah - turn to face the Ark and leave backwards (carefully!).

13. Put shoes back on.

*Yasher ko'ach! Thank you for offering the blessing!*

Sources: Tur (R. Yakov ben Asher) and Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (R. Shlomo Gantzfried)