

PSALM 134

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 134

A Song of degrees.

This is the last of the psalms called “songs of degrees”; of which (see Gill on “^{<3900>}Psalm 120:1”), title. It is thought to be written by David, either when he brought the ark to Zion, (^{<1067>}2 Samuel 6:17,18); or rather when he numbered the Levites, and appointed them their service, (^{<1336>}1 Chronicles 23:26,30). So the Syriac inscription,

““a psalm” of David, concerning the priests, whom he appointed to wait on the ministry of the Lord in the nights; but, spiritually, an instruction of life.”

Aben Ezra connects it with the preceding psalm,

“as the dew of Hermon ye shall be that bless; behold, therefore, ye are bound to bless the Lord?”

Ver. 1. *Behold, bless ye the Lord, all [ye] servants of the Lord*, etc.] All men are of right the servants of God being his creatures; and are under obligation, through his providential goodness, to bless and praise him; though they are not all in fact so: but all good men are, being made so by the power of divine grace; which frees them from the servitude of sin, Satan, and the world, and makes them willing to serve the Lord; as they do in righteousness and holiness, with reverence and godly fear, heartily and willingly, and with great pleasure; and yet have no dependence on any service they perform: and as these are under the highest obligations to bless the Lord; the is, to ascribe greatness to him, to give him the glory of his works, and thanks for his mercies, temporal and spiritual; so they do in this way, and for those things, bless and praise him, to which they are here excited;

which by night stand in the house of the Lord: according to Kimchi, these were the wise and holy men, that rose from their beds in the night, and went to pray in the temple, and to praise the Lord; and such a holy person

was Anna, (~~<402>~~ Luke 2:37); according to R. Obadiah and Arama, they were such who continued in the chambers of the temple in the night season to study in the law and in the expositions of it: but it is generally interpreted of the priests and Levites, who watched in the temple by night, that it might not be profaned nor plundered; and they were obliged to stand, for none might sit in the temple but a king of the house of David^{f1800}. The priests watched in three places, and the Levites in twenty one, according to the Jewish Misnah^{f1801}. The Targum is,

“who stand in the watch house of the sanctuary of the Lord, and praise in the nights;”

which was one part of their service, (~~<1303>~~ 1 Chronicles 9:33 23:30). Under the Gospel dispensation all the saints are priests, and they have a place in the house of the Lord; where they wait upon him in his ordinances, and serve him, and which they do continually. Some understand, by “nights”, times of affliction, darkness, and desertion.

Ver. 2. *Lift up your hands [in] the sanctuary*, etc.] Which Aben Ezra interprets of the priests lifting up their hands to bless the people; but Kimchi, better, of lifting up of the hands to God in prayer; see (~~<402>~~ Psalm 141:2); which should be done “with holiness”, as the Targum renders it, in a holy manner; and is the same with lifting up holy hands, (~~<402>~~ 1 Timothy 2:8); or towards the holy place; the oracle in the holy of holies, and the ark of the covenant, typical of Christ; (see ~~<102>~~ 1 Kings 8:29,30) (~~<402>~~ Psalm 28:2); so Kimchi; or rather, according to Arama, unto the holy name of God, to whom prayer is to be directed;

and bless the Lord; which is repeated, to show the importance of the work, that it might not be forgotten and neglected; this being a principal part of spiritual service, and greatly acceptable to God.

Ver. 3. *The Lord, that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion.*] These are not the words of the priests blessing the people in this form, as some; but rather, as others, the wish of the servants of the Lord, that he would bless him that exhorted them to this service; whether one of the priests, or the captain of the temple, or the psalmist: though, according to Kimchi, and which seems agreeable, they are the words of the psalmist, promising a blessing from the Lord to those that blessed him; as an encouragement to them, to everyone of them, to be constant and diligent in this service. For so it may be rendered, “the Lord shall bless thee”^{f1802}; all

blessings come from the Lord, whether spiritual or temporal; and are to be asked of him, and expected from him: and the blessings here promised or asked for are blessings out of Zion, the church, where God blesses his people with his word and ordinances, with his presence, and with communion with himself. Wherefore it is good to be there waiting on him and worshipping him, praying to him and praising of him; and he that made heaven and earth is able to bless both with heavenly and earthly things: and this description of the Lord is no doubt given to encourage faith in him; for, what is it he cannot do?