

Psa. 134:0 A Song of degrees.

Three times each year the men of Israel were to come to the temple and present themselves before the Lord.

Deut. 16:16 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

The fifteen Psalms that are called the songs of *degrees* (elevation, journey to a higher place, go up) were to be sung as they ascended the temple mount.

Psa. 134:1 Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

The Hebrew for the word “bless” includes “to praise, to kneel down, and an act of adoration.” In other words, all those who proclaim themselves to be servants of YHWH should be known for proclaiming the wonderful attributes of God with a heart of the greatest reverence and adoration. In fact, the Hebrew for the word “servant” includes the word “worshipper.” Evidently this psalm was directed to those who ministered in the temple during the night. JFB equates this to the time of the evening sacrifice. I tend to think it has a broader application.

Everything established as part of the tabernacle/temple services were established by God and based upon the pattern of the original in heaven.

Scripture records that the angels offer worship before the Lord day and night.

Heb. 10:1 ¶ For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

Rev. 4:8 ¶ And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

Psa. 134:2 Lift up your hands *in* the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

I think the CJB is probably provides the better translation.

Lift your hands toward the sanctuary, and bless *ADONAI*.

The true sanctuary or temple of God is in heaven. The act of lifting one’s hands in praise makes much more sense as a public acknowledgement of praising the God of heaven. Any public display of our praise of God should be done as an act of worship before God—not to fit in with the crowd or to “appear” to be something on the outside that does not reflect what is happening inside.

I am from an old fashioned Baptist background. Once I started attending Calvary Chapel, I was very self-conscious about lifting up my hands in worship before the Lord. I was so self-conscious that I couldn’t help but have thoughts the interfered with the urge to lift my hands. After many years of continued spiritual growth, I can finally worship without thinking about those around me most of the time. (If I am in a church other than my own, then I find the old inhibitions intruding.) I truly want any public expression of my worship to be directed toward God with purity of heart.

Psa. 134:3 The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

This verse further defines “the LORD” from the previous verse. This LORD is YHWH, the self-existent eternal God, the Creator of heaven and earth. The psalmist is pronouncing a blessing from God on these faithful servants. He emphasizes that God’s blessing would originate from Zion, Jerusalem, the city of David. The temple in Jerusalem was established as God’s dwelling place on earth. Scripture records that God affirmed His presence by filling the temple with His glory when the ark of the covenant was placed in the completed building.

1Kings 8:1 &10-11 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion....And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.

This psalm was obviously written at a time when God was still worshipped as God in Jerusalem and the temple was functioning in obedience to and in honor of Him.

As I read through this psalm again, I realized that the lifting of the hands “in” the sanctuary would also be acknowledging the presence of God and directing praise and worship toward Him.