

Lesson 142
Psalm 134

I. Introduction

- A. Psalm 134 is the fifteenth and last of the "ascent Psalms." We could call this final "ascent" Psalm the "Psalm of Benediction." Spurgeon says, "the pilgrims are going home, and are singing the last song of this Psalter. They leave early in the morning, before dawn, because they have a long journey. As soon as they are outside the temple gates, they see the guards upon the temple wall, and the lamps shining from the windows of the chambers which surround the sanctuary; therefore, moved by the sight, they chant a final farewell to the perpetual attendants upon the holy shrine."
- B. Remember, all males were required to go to Jerusalem three times a year: Passover/Unleavened bread, Harvest/Weeks/Pentecost, and Tabernacles/Booths/Ingathering. These feasts lasted seven days. (Ex 23:14-19) MacArthur states, "the gathering would have a socially and religiously uniting effect on the nation. The men must trust the LORD to protect their landholdings while on pilgrimage to the tabernacle." (Ex 34:23,24) What does this teach us today about the priority of worship? Its benefits? Its cost? What about our excuses today? What does it say about male leadership in worship?
- C. The Psalm is simple and short! The Psalm teaches us to pray for those who minister before the LORD, and it invites all ministers to pronounce benedictions upon their loving and prayerful people. (Spurgeon)

II. Prayers for those who minister before the LORD (v1,2)

- A. Behold, bless the LORD. Like we said last week, behold implies something as unique, a wonder that is seldom seen, for it is characteristic of real saints, worthy of admiration, something that God Himself approves of, for it comes from Him! The pilgrims were "stirred up" to bless the LORD: they thought well of Jehovah and spoke well of Him. They adored Him with reverence, drew near Him with love, delighted in Him with exaltation. (Spurgeon)
- B. All you servants of the LORD. The pilgrims understood the unique, privileged calling of God's servants, those who have the task of ministering in the temple. This referred to the Levites primarily. (Lev 6:8-13; Num 3:40-45; I Chron 9:33) The burnt offering had to stay continually burning which indicated a continuous readiness on the part of God to receive confession and restitution through the sacrifice. The pilgrims were thankful to God for the work of the Levites in worship!
 - 1. They encouraged them. They said "lift up your hands" continue to worship the LORD yourselves. This was a common euphemism for worship in the O.T. (Ps 28:2, 63:4, 119:48, 141:2; Lam 2:19) It was a symbolic posture that represented the heart's attitude in dependent prayer and worship. It depicted both the ascent of prayer and the readiness to receive every good and perfect gift that comes from above. (James 1:17) A posture of trust in God alone. In the N.T., the Holy Spirit, through Paul, further defines lifting up of the hands as holy hands, set apart, for God's service, which are prerequisites to effectual prayer! (I Tim 2:8) If God's servants do not bless the LORD, how can the people?
 - 2. They remembered the servants God giving task.
- C. Application/Parallels to the church today
 - 1. God has given leaders/gifting for His body today! (I Cor 12:4-12; Eph 4:7, 11-16; I Tim 3:1,9,15, 4:6,12-13)
 - 2. Leaders, like the Levites of old, must be worthy of imitation! (Phil 4:9)
 - 3. Accountability of the leaders (James 3:1; Acts 20:26,27; Heb 13:17; Ezk 3:17-19, 34:1-10)
 - 4. The congregants are to pray for and be thankful for the leadership of the church.
 - 5. The congregants are to pay well, submit to authority of, not bring an accusation against without two or three witnesses. (I Tim 5:17-20)
 - 6. Leaders must entrust to other members! (2 Tim 2:2)

III. Prayers/Blessings from Levites to people (v3)

- A. Implications of reminding the people of worship and what it is and who it is towards!
 - 1. Literally the Levites place the name of the LORD on the people in blessing! (Num 6:22-27) The blessing "kept" Israel, showed "kindness" to Israel, and gave "peace" to Israel's well-being! The priests called for God to dwell among His people and meet all their needs! They interceded, advocated, and represented the people before God.
 - 2. Reminded them of the distress and the enemies' deceit when away from God. (Ps 120)
 - 3. Reminded them of the help and preserving work of God. (Ps 121:1-2,7-8)
 - 4. Talked of the peace of God in worship. (Ps 122:6-8)
 - 5. Emphasize looking to LORD for mercy. (Ps 123:2)
 - 6. Remembered God's defense of His people as a reason to worship. (Ps 124:2-5)
 - 7. Anticipation of reward. (Ps 125:1-3)
 - 8. Reward of sowing in tears. (Ps 126:5-6)
 - 9. The blessing of family. (Ps 127, 128)
 - 10. Preservation through affliction. (Ps 129:1-2)
 - 11. Forgiveness of God. (Ps 130:3-4)
 - 12. Simple trust in God. (Ps 131:1-3)
 - 13. Future glories of the millennial kingdom. (Ps 132:13-18)
 - 14. Unity of brethren dwelling together. (Ps 133:1)
- B. Worship prepares us for life. Hebrews 10:23-25 says, "let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."