

Psalm 134

This is the final Psalm of Ascent.

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

Targum: "who stand in the watch house of the sanctuary of the Lord, and praise in the nights"

The Rabbis had a saying that there were two sorts of angels: the angels that served, and the angels that praised. Similarly, two things at least went on at night in the Temple - singing and praise, and being "on watch" and ready to serve.

Once the Ark had been brought to Jerusalem, David reassigned the different Levite families to new duties (**1 Chronicles 6:31**) - many to sing and play music in praise of God day and night:

- **1 Chronicles 9:33** - "These are the singers, heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites, who lodged in the chambers, and were free from other duties; for they were employed in that work day and night."

The Levites on watch had to stand and not sit. The priests stood watch in three places, and the Levites in twenty one, according to the Misnah (Middot, c. 1. s. 1.). There were 241 priests and Levites on duty at night.

The captain of the guard visited these stations throughout the night with flaming torches before him, and saluted each with 'Peace be unto thee.' If he found the sentinel asleep he beat him with his staff, and had authority to burn his cloak (which the drowsy guard had rolled up for a pillow).

So, some low murmur of praise would always be echoing through the Temple, though empty of crowds, all the night long, and the voice of thanksgiving and of blessing would blend with the shuffle of the priests' feet on the marble pavements as they went their patrolling rounds. - *McLaren's Expositions*

The spiritual meaning of this service is revealed by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane:

- **Matthew 26:40-41** - "And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, 'So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'"

Serving and watching "at night" could also be a type of times of affliction, darkness, and desperation. For us, it means "pray without ceasing."

- **Revelation 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."

Psalm 134:2 - "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD."

- **Psalm 141:2** - "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

- **1 Timothy 2:8** - "I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting"

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

...or better, "the Lord *shall* bless thee"

"out of Zion" because that is the place where the Creator of heaven and earth has chosen to dwell - in Zion, i.e. His people.