

ספר תהילים קלד | Tehillim / Psalms 134

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Serving the Lord at Night, Prayer, and Replacement Theology

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 134:1-3*, the psalm opens saying, א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת הַלַּיְלָה | בָּרְכוּ 134:1 Behold, bless the Lord, all servants of the Lord, Who serve by night in the house of the Lord! (NASB) This is an interesting opening verse to the psalm. The psalmist speaks of a night time service in the house of the Lord. What do you think is the service that was going on during the night in the house of the Lord? Did the Lord prescribe services during the night? If there were no services prescribed for the night time, what do you think is going on here in regard to what the psalmist is speaking about? How important do you think the evening or night time service was for Israel in those days? *Tehillim / Psalms 134* continues to say the following, ב שְׂאוּ-יְדֵיכֶם קֹדֶשׁ וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת-יְהוָה: 134:2 Lift up your hands to the sanctuary And bless the Lord. (NASB) When thinking about the sanctuary mentioned here in the psalm, what part of the Tabernacle might this be referring to? The Hebrew text states "raising up the hands in the holy place." How has the etymology of the word sanctuary changed over the years? Do we understand the word sanctuary in the say way that David did during the writing of this Psalm? When we lift our hands, how are we blessing the Lord God in heaven? What does it mean to be a blessing to the Lord? Is this related to the way we live our lives according to His Word? The Psalm concludes saying, ג יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן עָשָׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ: 134:3 May the Lord bless you from Zion, He who made heaven and earth. (NASB) Why does the psalmist focus upon Zion as the place of blessing from the Lord? When we consider the significance of the place the Lord God has established His name, where does Israel fall into the picture as replacement theology has utterly changed our prospective understandings of meeting the Lord God in Jerusalem each year at the three yearly festivals (Shelosh Regalim)?

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק קלד	ספר תהלים פרק קלד	ספר טוביה פרק קלד	ספר טוביה פרק קלד	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 134	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 134
א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת הַלַּיְלָה בָּרְכוּ אֶת-יְהוָה כָּל-עַבְדֵי יְהוָה הַעֹמְדִים בְּבֵית-יְהוָה בַּלַּיְלֹת: ב שְׂאוּ-יְדֵיכֶם קֹדֶשׁ וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת-יְהוָה: ג יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן עָשָׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:	א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת הַלַּיְלָה בָּרְכוּ אֶת-יְהוָה כָּל-עַבְדֵי יְהוָה הַעֹמְדִים בְּבֵית-יְהוָה בַּלַּיְלֹת: ב שְׂאוּ-יְדֵיכֶם קֹדֶשׁ וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת-יְהוָה: ג יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן עָשָׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:	א שִׁיר דַּתְהוּמָא עַל מַסְקִיין מִסוּר-קִין דַּתְהוּמָא הָא בְרִיכוּ יֵת יְהוּה כָּל עַבְדֵי דִיהוּה דְקִימִין עַל בֵּית מִטְרַת בֵּית מִקְדָּשָׁא דִיהוּה וּמִשְׁבַּחִין בַּלִּילוּן: ב טוּלוּ יְדֵיכֶן קוּדְשָׁא כְהִנְיָא עַל דּוּכְן קוּדְשָׁא וּבְרִיכוּ יֵת יְהוּה: ג יְבַרְכִינְךָ יְהוּה מִצִּיּוֹן דַּעְבַּד שְׁמִיא וְאַרְעָא:	א שִׁיר דַּתְהוּמָא עַל מַסְקִיין מִסוּר-קִין דַּתְהוּמָא הָא בְרִיכוּ יֵת יְהוּה כָּל עַבְדֵי דִיהוּה דְקִימִין עַל בֵּית מִטְרַת בֵּית מִקְדָּשָׁא דִיהוּה וּמִשְׁבַּחִין בַּלִּילוּן: ב טוּלוּ יְדֵיכֶן קוּדְשָׁא כְהִנְיָא עַל דּוּכְן קוּדְשָׁא וּבְרִיכוּ יֵת יְהוּה: ג יְבַרְכִינְךָ יְהוּה מִצִּיּוֹן דַּעְבַּד שְׁמִיא וְאַרְעָא:	134:1 ὧδῆ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν ἰδοὺ δὴ εὐλογεῖτε τὸν κύριον πάντες οἱ δοῦλοι κυρίου οἱ ἐστῶτες ἐν οἴκῳ κυρίου ἐν αὐλαῖς οἴκου θεοῦ ἡμῶν 134:2 ἐν ταῖς νυξὶν ἐπάρατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν εἰς τὰ ἅγια καὶ εὐλογεῖτε τὸν κύριον 134:3 εὐλογῆσει σε κύριος ἐκ Σιων ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν	134:1 ὧδῆ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν ἰδοὺ δὴ εὐλογεῖτε τὸν κύριον πάντες οἱ δοῦλοι κυρίου οἱ ἐστῶτες ἐν οἴκῳ κυρίου ἐν αὐλαῖς οἴκου θεοῦ ἡμῶν 134:2 ἐν ταῖς νυξὶν ἐπάρατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν εἰς τὰ ἅγια καὶ εὐλογεῖτε τὸν κύριον 134:3 εὐλογῆσει σε κύριος ἐκ Σιων ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν

<p>Tehillim / Psalms 134 134:1 Behold, bless the Lord, all servants of the Lord, Who serve by night in the house of the Lord! 134:2 Lift up your hands to the sanctuary And bless the Lord. 134:3 May the Lord bless you from Zion, He who made heaven and earth. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 134 134:1 A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. Behold, bless the Lord, all servants of the Lord who stand on watch in the sanctuary of the Lord and sing praise at night. 134:2 Lift up your hands, O priests, on the holy dais, and bless the Lord. 134:3 The Lord will bless you from Zion, he who made heaven and earth. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 134 A Song of Degrees. 134:1 Behold now, bless ye the Lord, all the servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. 134:2 Lift up your hands by night in the sanctuaries, and bless the Lord. 134:3 May the Lord, who made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Sion. (LXX)</p>
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Revelation 7:9-17

7:9 *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; 7:10 and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’ 7:11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 7:12 saying, ‘Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.’ 7:13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?’ 7:14 I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 7:15 ‘For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. 7:16 ‘They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; 7:17 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.’ (NASB)*

Here we find in the book of the Revelation of God, a people who come out of the tribulation of events that the Lord sends upon the earth in the last days before Yeshua the Messiah’s return. In *Revelation 7:9-17* we read of this people who persevered in their faith through these terrible times were given white robes and proclaimed ‘*Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.*’ These people are those who washed their cloths in the blood of the lamb and stand before the Lord and serve Him “*Day and Night*” in His Temple. A commonly occurring thing that we see throughout the Scriptures is the word pair, “*Day*

and Night.” Many word pairs are present in the Scriptures such as, heaven and earth, light and darkness, parent and child, father and son, etc. Day and night are part of man’s normal experience and as a word pair is very instructive. In *Tehillim / Psalm 74*, the psalmist Asaph points out that God is the One who set in order the features of the earth, including the day and the night saying, “*You established the cycle of day and night; you put the sun and moon in place. You set up all the boundaries of the earth; you created the cycle of summer and winter.*” (*Tehillim / Psalm 74:16-17*) One of the most familiar of the Psalms that testify to God as the creator of all things begins by saying, “*The heavens declare the glory of God; the sky displays his handiwork. Day after day it speaks out; night after night it reveals his greatness.*” (*Tehillim / Psalms 19:1-2*) In *Tehillim / Psalms 42* we read of the psalmist’s longing for the Lord and those times when he would walk with others in peace during God’s moedim. In *Tehillim / Psalms 42*, the psalmist finds himself cut off and others are questioning his faith saying, “*All day long they say to me, ‘Where is your God?’*” (*Tehillim / Psalms 42:3*). Despite the psalmist’s circumstances he is certain that he will again be restored to his former place of service and experience the Lord’s abiding presence (*Tehillim / Psalms 42:5-11*). In *Tehillim / Psalms 88:1-2* we also read, “*O LORD God who delivers me! By day I cry out and at night I pray before you. Listen to my prayer! Pay attention to my cry for help!*” Note how the psalmist says by day he cries out and by night he prays. The psalms speaks of the time when one encounters difficulties in life, during the day and the night. The mention of God’s protective presence throughout the day and the night is reported to us in the Torah by the descriptions of the pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. In *Jeremiah 33:20* we read the Lord saying, “*I have made a covenant with the day and with the night that they will always come at their proper times. Only if you people could break that covenant could my covenant with my servant David ever be broken.*” This provides for us a future hope with God, the controller of day and night, that He will remain faithful to His people, we do not have to doubt the faithfulness of God on our behalf. This leads us to seek the Lord and to be reminded to remain faithful ourselves. As the author of all life, the seasons, and the day and night, it is only logical that there would be a service unto the Lord at night time. But what is that service through the night that is spoken of here in *Tehillim / Psalms 134:1*? In *2 Chronicles 7:12* we read “*Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, ‘I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice.’*” Various places throughout the Scriptures speak of people going before the Lord in prayer at night time. It appears as if Solomon was praying through the night concerning the place the Lord God of Israel would establish His Name. This service that was taking place in the Temple during the night was not something that was prescribed according to the Torah. This is something that comes into the heart of God’s people to go before Him during the night time to pray. In *Matthew 6:9-10*, Yeshua taught us to pray saying, “*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*” The coming of God’s kingdom and the doing of his will on earth is by the means of the deeds that we do, the testimony that we bear, and prayer, it is through these things that we glorify His Name. Yeshua is telling us to pray for what we need. Note how this is not “*pray for what you want*” but “*pray for what you need.*” We hallow the name of God, we seek Him to bring his kingdom, and that His will be done. Yeshua also said in *Matthew 24:14*, “*This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*” Other places in the Apostolic Writings Yeshua says, in *Matthew 9:37*, “*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.*” These things come to pass by the means of prayer and then taking action. Is this the service that is what was taking place through the night? Prayer is God’s way of winning His victory through each one of us at the heart level. Remember that Yeshua told a parable once about an unrighteous judge. The point of the parable was that we “*ought always to pray and not lose heart*” (*Luke 18:1*). A widow kept coming to the judge and saying, “*Give me justice against my adversary.*” Finally the unrighteous judge does what the woman asks because of her persistence. Yeshua makes this point saying, “*Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily.*” (*Luke 18:6-8*) The Lord’s purpose is to give justice to His people and this is accomplished through our prayers to Him, crying out to Him for vindication both day and night.

Tehillim / Psalms 134 continues to say the following, **שָׂאוּ-יְדֵיכֶם קֹדֶשׁ וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת-יְהוָה: 134:2** *Lift up your hands to the sanctuary And bless the Lord. (NASB)* When thinking about the sanctuary mentioned here in the psalm, what part of the Tabernacle might this be referring to? The Hebrew text states “*raising up the hands in the holy place.*” Is this a general statement referencing the common man (non-priest) entering the sanctuary and lifting his hands before God? Is this a reference to only the priest going before the Lord and lifting his hands before God in the Tabernacle? How has the etymology of the word sanctuary changed over the years? Do we understand the word sanctuary in the say way that David did during the writing of this Psalm? Looking at the Hebrew text, the definition for sanctuary is as follows:

מִקְדָּשׁ

temple, sanctuary, shrine

הַיְכָל

temple, palace, sanctuary

בַּיִת מִקְדָּשׁ

temple, sanctuary

מִשְׁכָּן

house, habitation, repository, haunt, home, sanctuary

מָקוֹם קְדוֹשׁ

sanctum, sanctuary, shrine

קוֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים

sanctuary

The word Beyit Mikdash (בַּיִת מִקְדָּשׁ) is a reference to the Temple in Jerusalem but also has an alternate translation as sanctuary. The Mishkhan (מִשְׁכָּן) is a reference to the Tabernacle, having the alternate translation as sanctuary. The Makom Kadosh (מָקוֹם קְדוֹשׁ) the “*holy place*” may be translated as sanctuary, and the Kedosh Kedoshim (קוֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים) the “*holy of holies*” may also be translated as sanctuary. These words don’t just describe the sanctuary, but the entire temple, the sacred space which is holy and separate unto the Lord God. A meeting place that was meant to go and be in the presence of the Lord. In Parashat Terumah, the Lord God asked the people to offer gifts from the heart for the purpose of creating a place for Him to dwell, “*Let them make for me a sanctuary that I may dwell in their midst*” (*Shemot / Exodus 25:8*). The Hebrew word for sanctuary is Mikdash (מִקְדָּשׁ) which is derived from the word Kadash (קָדַשׁ) which means to be set apart as sacred. The Mikdash therefore is a “*set apart space*” or a “*holy place*” that represents something treasured and precious. This is a place of worship, a refuge, a place of rest before God. Note how this root word Kadash (קָדַשׁ) is shared in the words kedushah (holiness), kiddushin (betrothal), kaddish (sanctification), and kiddush (marking a sacred time), etc. When the Lord God said that He wanted the people to make for Him a Mikdash, a sanctuary, He was inviting the people to make a sacred place within their hearts for His presence to be manifested. This was illustrated in the giving from the heart for the construction of the Mikdash, which is expressed in the free will offerings that was given to God in the wilderness. The purpose of the Mikdash was for the Lord God of Israel to dwell in the midst of the people. Note the placement of the tribes of Israel around the Tabernacle. The Word dwell (שָׁכַן) means to sit down together in unity, or to lie down with someone. It is within this context the Mishkhan (מִשְׁכָּן) is understood

as a set apart place that was intended for rest and intimacy with God. This is paralleled to God's presence within our hearts allowing us to have communion and fellowship with Him. According to Shney Luchot HaBrit, Terumah, Torah Ohr 66 the sages say that the phrase "that I may dwell in their midst" could be translated as "that I may dwell within them."

Shney Luchot HaBrit, Terumah, Torah Ohr 66

When G'd said: "They shall make a Sanctuary for Me and I shall dwell within them," בתוכם, this referred also to the fact that much of the Tabernacle was due to the תוכם, the innermost feelings of the donors. The Tabernacle could not have been completed if the people donating all these materials had not been motivated by a spirit of generosity. The word מכותב is therefore essentially not much different from the word וכותב, which we would have expected the Torah to use.

The rabbis suggest the point of the Tabernacle was to bring God within the hearts of His people. We are to create within our hearts a dwelling place for God's Spirit. Yeshua mentioned this that we will experience peace, joy, happiness when we "abide in Him." Note also that the gematria of the word Mishkhan is 401 which is the same as for the word Shema, to hear or listen (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:4*). When we stop and listen, we are acting in obedience to His commands, and in this we will find His glorious and loving presence in our lives.

When we lift our hands, how are we blessing the Lord God in heaven? What does it mean to be a blessing to the Lord? (שְׂאוּ-יְדֵיכֶם קִדְשׁ וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת-יְהוָה:) *134:2 Lift up your hands to the sanctuary And bless the Lord. NASB*) Is this related to the way we live our lives according to His Word? The deepest message of the Tabernacle and the Torah is that of sacrificial love. Not only do we find the concept of sacrifice in the system established to draw us closer to God. We also learn of sacrifice in our submitting to the Word of God in our lives each day. We give our lives to the Lord according to His word because He first loved us. This is illustrated in the innocent animal for the sake of the sinner providing tangible hope for one that the righteous God loves and forgives. This is what we are told in the Apostolic Writings (NT), the idea of sacrifice for others, when the lamb of God is given on behalf of God's people (*Hebrews 8:5, 10:1*). Yeshua was given as the ultimate Korban (Sacrifice) that brings us eternal life and fellowship with God.

The Psalm concludes saying, יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ: *134:3 May the Lord bless you from Zion, He who made heaven and earth. (NASB)* Why does the psalmist focus upon Zion as the place of blessing from the Lord? When we consider the significance of the place the Lord God has established His name, where does Israel fall into the picture as replacement theology has utterly changed our prospective understandings of meeting the Lord God in Jerusalem each year at the three yearly festivals (Shelosh Regalim)? Antisemitism is on the rise. There is no other nation on earth who was chosen by God, delivered from bondage, entered into a covenant, and seen His glory and His redemption, than the nation of Israel. It is within this context that Yeshua said "Salvation is of the Jews." (*John 4:22*) From since the beginning of Israel's conception, the enemy has tried to destroy her. The birth of Israel was performed in a powerful and deliberate way whose purpose was to bring the knowledge of God and His redemption to the world. Israel was created to be a blessing, and the Lord God promised to give a blessing to all those who would bless her. When studying history, Israel however has received much more cursing than blessing. One of those curses is found in Replacement Theology, which is the root of a long standing antisemitism. Replacement Theology or Supersessionism is a long standing doctrine that is embraced by the Church. The purpose of this doctrine is deeply satanic and evil whose ultimate purpose was established by the Church in an effort to punish and ultimately remove (destroy) Israel. Replacement Theology has been the source for intense hatred for the Jewish people among the nations (including Christians), and is also the seed for many who believe in the destruction and removal of Israel from her native land and covenant promises. Replacement theology denies Israel the grace that is found in Yeshua the Messiah and condemns her with the world. The foundation of Replacement Theology was established by the Catholic Church as a formal doctrine of the Vatican. This

teaching has followed through into Protestantism and the Reformation to varying degrees. The doctrine is a response to the crucifixion of the Messiah teaching that Israel has consequently been cursed by God and removed from His redemptive plan. It is within this context that the Tanach has been rejected as a book full of fables and mythological teachings that teach merely a spiritual truth. Note that this is taught in the Catholic Church. This theology teaches that Israel and the Church are not just incompatible and separate people groups but that the church has become Israel and that each individual has become Jerusalem. This is easily observed in the Catholic Mass and service (the priesthood, the Eucharist, etc). I have heard Protestant preachers make these claims right from the pulpit that “*we are Jerusalem.*” What a fallacious and horrible doctrine. When we consider why the Jewish people today separate themselves from Christians, this belief is validated from a deist perspective of Replacement Theology lacking an understanding behind the purpose of the giving of the Torah to God’s people who ultimately are to bring His Torah to all of the world. The diabolical nature of this theology not only teaches that the Church has replaced Israel, but it also abolishes the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants. This theology teaches these covenants are obsolete. As a result of this, the theology separates the Scriptures into the Old and the New covenants as if they are mutually exclusive. In reality the two covenants are entirely interdependent. The Torah and the rest of the Tanach lay the foundation for the covenant in God’s Son Yeshua. Those who held this doctrine of replacement go back very early in history, such as Justin Martyr, Hippolytus, and Tertullian (to name a few) all which lived between 100 and 240 A.D. The Apostle Paul taught extensively on this topic because it was already entering into the early gentile church. He wrote prolifically to the churches in an effort to bring proper theological beliefs among otherwise ignorant Gentile Christians who had no formal training in the Torah, the Law, Old Covenant history, or prophetic teachings. Paul taught that salvation is by faith for all who would believe. Paul, was called to minister to the gentiles, but this did not negate his intense passion for Israel’s salvation. In *Romans 9:1* he makes his heart known, preferring his own damnation to theirs. Both the Jewish and non-Jewish persons today struggle with the purpose of the Torah for our lives today because of this doctrine of Replacement theology. The gospel message is about being faithful and God’s empowering us to remain in our faith as we walk and live before Him each day. This is the simplicity of the Torah for our lives today. As Paul said, to the Jewish people the Gospel is a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks it is foolishness (*1 Corinthians 1:23*). Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

Thank You Lord for Your mercy and the great work that you are doing in our lives. We believe You are able to overcome all things, from saving us from our enemies, to the deliverance from sin, and even to work in our hearts to deeply, truly, and honestly seek you all the days of our lives. We recognize the weaknesses in our strength and resolve to serve You and to do what is expected, to be humble and to pray and to remain in Your word. Lord help us to have the strength to stand for truth and life, to have the desire to seek You in prayer and in Your Word, to have faith in Yeshua Your Messiah, and to love our neighbor each day. We thank You Lord for Your continued faithfulness to Your promises and to us. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

In Yeshua’s (Jesus’) Name we pray! Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,

“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

Notes