

Bless the Lord

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[0 : 00] take your Bibles and join me in Psalm chapter 134. It's the last of our psalms in this series called the Pilgrim Songs or the Songs of Ascent or the Psalms of Degrees. And we have been, this section of psalms starts in chapter 120 and as I said it ends the night in Psalm chapter 134.

And I thoroughly enjoyed this section of the book of Psalms. It's the shortest of all the psalms that you'll see here, slightly shorter than the chapter, the psalm before it, very short.

I'm going to read to you the entire chapter. When I do that, I think about Pastor Josh Harrington, Brother John, how Pastor, when he was just starting to preach and he needed to fill his five minutes, so he said, for the sake of time, I'm going to read the entire chapter. All right. Well, I'm going to read the entire chapter, but it won't take very long. We'll get to that here in a moment. I want to review to you all the psalms leading up to it. This is an evening psalm. I'll explain more to what that means here in a moment, but I'll remind you that from the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised. Our Lord should be worshiped from the morning to the night and around the clock. It's one of our themes for the night. By the time we get to Psalm 134, we've reached the top of the mountain. We call it a pilgrim songs because we're taking a journey to a city for a feast, and we're singing songs along the way. We started out in small towns like Qadar and Messick, and now we've made our ways to Jerusalem, and we're at the highest peak here of the journey. And the goal of our journey as a Christian is blessings to God and to be blessed by Him. I have a slide that we'll walk through here that shows the different chapters of the different psalms that we have. It's a little bit small. There's quite a few of them, but I'll read them to you if you're not able to see them. And these are just the titles that we gave to the psalms as we taught through them. But the first one in Psalm 120, it was peace for His presence.

On our journey, that there be peace found from His presence, He would bring protection. In my distress, I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me. That's how that psalm started off.

And so as we go through our journey, we're not going to find our protection in our own might, our strength, our own resources. But the journey is the presence is all that we need. Next, we saw that our help would come from the Lord. My eyes would be lifted to the hills.

[2 : 28] That's where my help would come from. It comes from our Maker. It comes from God. Psalm 122, it spoke about us going into the house of the Lord. Remember that I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. So we had our direction. We wanted to be in the presence of the Lord. We wanted to be worshipping. Our journey had a destination. It had a purpose.

It's something that we would sing about and remind ourselves as we were moving through life. Then the next psalm that we got to was a biblical response to contempt. That on our journey in life, there are going to be people that would despise us. And it said it like this in verse number 4, Psalm 123. It said, Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease and with the contempt of the proud. As we're picturing a person on a journey, I just see them sitting down and taking a break, putting their head in their hands and just crying out to the Lord and saying, Lord, you know those that I'm around that nobody's pleased here, but I'm going to look to you. Psalm 124 speaks about the Lord is on our side. And I felt uncomfortable saying it like that.

I'm comfortable saying I'm on the Lord's side, but to say the Lord is on my side doesn't feel correct. But Psalm 124 1 said, If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say. And they rejoiced in the fact that that was the greatest thing that mattered. After a psalm of the contempt, this is what the world thinks about me. This is what other people think about me. The greatest thing is that I know that I'm living in the truth. The Lord is on my side. Then another psalm was about security on the journey.

Psalm 125 1, They that trust in the Lord shall be as a mountain sign, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. Because I trust the Lord, I'm going to put one foot in front of another. I'm going to move forward.

My security is found in Him. Then Psalm 126 1 speaks of longing for more. When the Lord turned against the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dreamed. As they're journeying, they imagine what it's like to be in Zion, what it's like to have all those things return to them, the promises of the Lord. Then Pastor Bo showed up and started helping around here. All right. And he preached to us Psalm 127, work, rest, and kids. You might want to go back and review that one. All right. Now that you have your fourth kid, find those notes and read them.

[4 : 55] And preach it to yourself. And except the Lord build the house, they that labor, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. We make plans, but our life is in His hands. And so the Bible speaks a lot to our work and to our rest and to raising of children. Also, next chapter, the question was, are you blessed?

Pastor Bo asked us, blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord that walk us in His ways. On their pilgrimage, they were blessed as they were walking on His way because they were people that fear the Lord. And a very reasonable question that the passage would call on all of us is, are you a blessed person? Do you fear the Lord? If you fear the Lord, then you are blessed.

We're blessed because of His righteousness given to us. And then Brother Greg taught us out of Psalm 129, a fierce enemy met by a faithful God. Psalm 129, 1.

Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, and may Israel now say. What does it say in Psalm 129, 2? What a weird place for me to stop there. Let's see what it says. Do you remember, Greg, what it says in Psalm 129, 2?

Surely you memorized the chapter if you were going to preach it. That's right. It prevailed against me, yet they have not prevailed against me. And that was the reminder of that psalm.

[6 : 20] And then Psalm 130 and 131 went together. And those are psalms that talk about waiting well. O Lord, my heart is not haughty. Psalm 130, verse 1.

Nor are my eyes lofty. Neither do I exercise myself in great matters or in things too high for me. Speaking about the patience along the way. When the promise is ahead of us, but we just wait upon the Lord.

And then Psalm 132. One of my favorite ones of this is about singing by faith. Lord, remember David and all of his afflictions. And that was just a couple weeks ago.

As we saw David, we were told that we remember the life of David, his commitment to the Lord, but also his afflictions. And I said at the end of that psalm, there's all these promises about there being a king upon the throne from the line of David.

There's all these promises about the city. But when they were entering, those promises weren't fulfilled. They were singing by faith for a time that was going to be fulfilled in Jesus. And then last week, how good and pleasant.

[7 : 21] Psalm 133, verse 1. Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. And that is something as Christians that we are blessed with, we experience.

I thought of it like this. Having lived my life around Christians, I wouldn't know, William, how to make friends outside of church. That's the only place I've ever went. And because of Jesus, you guys are forced to be my friends.

And so it works out pretty good. So I've enjoyed most of my life the warmth of Christian fellowship. And if I was ever anywhere away from it, I would miss it.

But we've traveled before in places that don't have many churches. And you feel it. You can feel it. It's just wherever you go. You know what it's like to get in a taxi.

Brother John, remember on a Sunday morning, one of the first trips to India, and we just said, take us to a church. And we just had no church to be found and spent all morning looking. But when we finally found it in a little orphanage there with some kids who stood up and said Bible verses, we didn't know what they were saying, but we felt the warmth of Christian fellowship.

[8 : 26] And it was special. But knowing many places the world don't have that. And that's what we want for them. That's why church planning is so important to us. We want them to have the gospel, the world to have the gospel. We want them to have all that's needed for them to know all God's word and for them to enjoy all the wonderful blessings that we have through Christian fellowship.

And then lastly tonight, the Song of Ascent, the journey that we've been on, comes to this one, and it speaks about blessing the Lord. Behold, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

So there's a beautiful picture here. Starting off in a small city and making our way, the pilgrims would be singing together. They're not like the seven little dwarfs that would whistle while they work. They were going to sing together as they're walking to Jerusalem for a festival.

Getting to Jerusalem, it seems, at nighttime and evening, and it appears to be a back and forth between the pilgrims that have arrived and those that were serving in the temple. When I read it, I think you'll see this.

Verses 1 and 2, it's the shout of encouragement to the Levites, to those that are working in the temple, who were leading the worship of the temple at the evening service. And it appears that verse number 3 is a response to that.

[9 : 40] You know, and that's not our tradition. And the tradition I grew up, Baptist church, we don't often have many things that we say. But occasionally I go to a church that does, and I really enjoy it. I'm going to see if you've ever been to a church that does this.

You go to a church and they'll say, God is good, and then they will respond with, Okay. And all the time, You know what's going on here.

You've been around. You've seen some stuff before, haven't you? All right. And so that's a similar kind of encouragement and response. And that's what we're talking about here, is a word of encouragement and a word of response to them.

And so let me read to us these three verses. Psalm 134, verse 1. And focus on the blessing. Three in each verse, the word bless is seen there.

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

[10 : 39] The Lord that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion. Pray that we will get all that God has for us tonight from the Scripture.

We won't exhaust any part of Scripture. Pray that we'll understand God's intent, and make ready application to our lives. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I thank you for an opportunity to gather tonight with my brothers and sisters.

Thank you for those that are serving this church through teaching the Word of God. The children that are sitting in rooms and learning Bible verses, that are teaching songs, that are teaching Bible lessons, that are sharing missionary stories.

I thank you for them, Lord. Though they're out of sight right now, Lord, they're certainly out of mind, and they are on our hearts. And we thank you, Lord. I thank you for those that are serving, Lord, 100 feet away from me.

And I thank you, Lord, for those that are serving 1,000 miles away tonight, Lord, around the world as part of our church, sharing the gospel and doing the work.

[11 : 40] I thank you, Lord. There's such an encouragement. Their life is a blessing to me, Lord. And I thank you for that friendship. Father, I ask that you would help us tonight. This is a small psalm, but, Lord, it's bigger than us.

It's small, Lord, but the message, Lord, is one that we are most certainly in need because you have given it to us. And you knew all that we would need to be thoroughly furnished with the life you've called us.

Father, you see everyone here tonight in a way that I can't see them. And you see them on their journey. And, Lord, I know as a pilgrim, as somebody sojourning myself, there's a need for reminding and encouragement.

Lord, I pray that your word will minister to your children in that way tonight. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. So verses 1, 2, and 3 have the word bless.

And in the first one it says, bless ye the Lord. This concept of blessing is important in this psalm, but it's an important concept that we would have all throughout the Bible. So it's important that we would understand it and get it right, as we read it so often when it speaks about blessings.

[12 : 44] Think about how do we use the term. Sometimes we would say it sincerely. You would put your arm around somebody and say, God bless you. And maybe they've done some act of kindness towards you and you'd say it.

Or maybe you'd say it out of habit when somebody sneezes. You would say, God bless you, is what we are taught to do. Or maybe if you are a southern lady in here, you say it condescendingly, right?

Somebody does something really dumb or they cut you off in traffic or they take your shopping cart from you or your buggy. I don't know which one. Which one is it? Is it a buggy? Would you raise your hand? Kentucky, it was a buggy, wasn't it?

It wasn't a, all right, or a shopping cart. And you would say, well, bless your heart, all right? That's the condescending way in which you might wish a blessing upon somebody. I'm trying to educate these people from Ohio how it is.

If you're going somewhere and a lady tells you just bless your heart, she may not mean it. I'll just go ahead and let you know that, all right? But there's a lot of that we do here. Once Stephanie and I were with some friends that were from Michigan, and they said, they were talking about, do you like living down here in Georgia?

[13 : 49] And the lady said, you know, I don't because people pretend to be so nice, but then later on they don't really do what they say they're going to do, and they're just really nice, but they never tell you what they're really thinking.

And Stephanie's telling me, that made me so mad that she said that. And I said, well, did you tell her? She said, no, I agreed with her, but you know that's not true about us. I'm like, I think that's exactly what she's talking about.

But the Bible has plenty of blessings that come to us called benedictions, the prayers of blessings, people praying for them. Something we would do like a baby dedication where we have no power in ourselves to bless, but we're just saying we pray that the God of heaven would bless this family.

Thank you for blessing them with the child, and we pray the greatest blessing of that child coming to know you at a young age as we're praying. Psalm number 6, 24 through 26 is one of those.

Lord, bless thee and keep thee, and the Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee, and the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace. And I've asked many times in here how many of you grew up at a church where the pastor might have ended with that, and sometimes that's the case.

[14 : 57] But to say the Lord bless thee, that makes sense. The Lord bless thee and the Lord keep thee. But this verse says, bless ye the Lord, that we are to bless the Lord. And I'm less familiar with that or less comfortable with the thought of me blessing the Lord.

And these verses here show us a few things about that. One being who should do this. Behold, bless ye the Lord. And then it tells who should be doing that. And this is all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

All ye servants of the Lord. And I'd ask you, is that you the night? Is there any better descriptor than you than a servant of the Lord? And I believe the answer that we'd all give is that I am a servant of the Lord.

And so the servants of the Lord here in this passage, they are the priests. They're the Levites that ministered in the temple. But that ability and command to bless the Lord did not stop with those servants, but it extends to us.

And we could turn to many places in the New Testament to find that. But I'll look to a verse that we all should know. 1 Peter chapter number 2 and verse number 9, which says, But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of Him who have called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

[16 : 23] Those descriptions, which are so wonderful and so weighty, those are descriptions of all of us in here that have put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. And so what are we to do as people that have put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ?

We are to show forth the praises of Him who have called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. And so as believers in Christ, we're all priests in God's kingdom. We're all called to declare His praises and all God's people should praise Him.

And here it says, so we're answering the question, what does it mean to bless the Lord? And the answer here is that it's all God's people giving praise to Him. So that's one answer to that question.

The next thing is it tells us when we should go about doing that. When shall we praise the Lord? We know from Scripture that the Levites in particular praise the Lord both day and night.

Any of you in here ever work the night shift? Do you ever have a job at night shift? Matt, I know you work the night shift sometimes back in the day. All right, on your side job there. We won't talk about that right now. All right, you can ask them afterwards.

[17 : 26] Coop, you've worked the nighttime job. William, you have as well. Well, the Levites, I wouldn't do very good at a nighttime job. You ask me anything at 3. If my kids come to me at 3 in the morning and they ask for the car keys, I would give it to them as long as I can go back to bed.

All right, I'm just not functioning in the middle of the night. In 1 Chronicles 9.33, And these are the seniors, chief of the fathers of the Levites, who remaining in the chambers were free, for they were employed in their work day and night.

So there's a night shift that took place here at the temple. There was the morning and the evening, and that's what's happening on a night shift. And so what is the purpose of the work day and night?

That's answered for us in 1 Chronicles 23.30. And it says, So day and night there were people here at the temple whose job there was not just to serve the temple, but it was the praise of the Lord.

It wasn't enough just to do their jobs, the outward things that they were doing, that in the middle of working their job, they were called to praise Him. Because that's their identity as priest. Same with you.

[18 : 36] As you go about doing your job, you should be looking to praise Him. If it's the morning shift or the evening shift, it's something that we do in tandem at all times. Pastor Bo's wife, Lauren, she's working the night shift with a child, right?

And do you take turns? Do you stay up any? Sometimes. I don't know about that. All right. And so working that time. So early in the Psalms, we saw in Psalm 126, verse 5, it told us, they that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

But now we're seeing that those that said a weeping, we're talking about a night full of praises to Him, that He is worthy of praise. And so all the time, God is good and God is good all the time, as you guys all know the night.

And so in the morning and in the evening, and not just in the temple, but we're giving very extreme examples when people were not in the temple, that they would praise the Lord. A couple of guys found themselves in jail, Paul and Silas, Acts 16, 25.

And they sing praises unto God and prisoners. It was blessing the Lord that His servants were praising them, and not just in the temple, but outside of the temple, not just in the morning, but in the evening.

[19 : 52] And those situations, the same, you know, Sunday morning, I don't know where I was at the other day, there was, after the end of the song service, I was about to go up and preach.

I guess this was where, oh, Sunday morning, I was at that church in South Carolina, and they just had a great song service. And I went up to preach, and this elderly gentleman said, well, if you can't preach now, you just can't preach.

And I'm like, well, that puts a lot of pressure on me. And I'm like, but you're right. I think I could, I think that would help, that certainly helped me. And that was just the moment, you know, where God's people are singing, they're all sitting there, it's Sunday morning, the Bible's open, you're like, this is going to be a very easy moment in which to praise the Lord.

But those moments that seem the most difficult are the great opportunities in life for us, for him to be praised. In the prison cell, or at night, he can be praised. All right?

Lauren, if you're listening tonight, our Lord can be praised when you're on the night shift tonight, which Bo said he will take for you. And I appreciate that. All right? And so Alexander McLaren says this, they are exhorted to fill the night with prayer, as well as watchfulness, and to let their hearts go up in blessings to Jehovah.

[21 : 03] The voice of praise shall echo throughout the silent night and float over the sleeping city. So there we are. The city is starting to quiet down.

Pilgrims are arriving to the temple, and there is going to be a calling out of, bless the Lord, and a response. It's beautiful here. How do we praise the Lord? This application, it brought some conviction to me.

It's something that I hadn't considered much. And I know that others in the church, maybe you have, you have been taught about this or thought about it more. Verse 2, it says, lift up your hands in the sanctuary and bless the Lord.

This is not the first time of hearing a reference to hands. In Psalm 24, verse 3 and 4, it said, who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in His holy place?

A very heavy question. Who could stand before God? Who could ascend up to this holy hill? Which is what this pilgrim song has been about. Who should stand in this holy place? And this is the answer, verse 4.

[22 : 03] He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. And it's a reference here to having clean hands lifted up to the Lord.

Today, when a kid would make a reference about hands, it's usually fighting, right? If you come out here, you're going to get the hands. That's what Greg's always telling me. I don't know what it's about, but I just stay in my office until he comes down, all right? He says, I'm going to show you the hands.

You ever heard this before? Anybody heard this loose? Am I using this appropriately? No? Cameron says no. I'm going to get a cultural reference. Throw the hands? Throw hands. Not show the hands.

All right? I'm up here doing jazz hands, something completely different. All right? Less intimidating. All right? I'm going to throw the hands. All right? And so that one might be the reference.

I've got a middle school teacher laughing at me now, so I know I must be getting this right. All right? And so the throwing of hands might be something we say, but in the Bible, the word hands is used often, never with showing of hands or throwing of hands, but it speaks about lifting our hands.

[23 : 05] It's associated with prayer. The quote by Spurgeon says, the lifting up of our hands was a gesture in prayer. It was an intimation of their expectation of receiving, intimation of their expectation of receiving blessings from the Lord, and it's also an acknowledgement of their having received the same.

So sometimes your heart lifts your hands, but other times your hands can help lift your heart. And it isn't for show, but it's for the Lord. And we see that.

We experience it. People who sang and they lift their hands unto the Lord. I expect that all of you at certain points in your life have been brought to that place where your heart just brings your hands to be lifted before the Lord, or you lift your eyes to Him.

But I was challenged to this idea, is that sometimes your heart lifts your hands, but other times your hands can help your heart. And I appreciate people that during a song service, or during the reading of the scripture, would want to give their entire heart and mind to what is happening in the moment.

We've never been a church that would criticize or make fun of somebody who would worship in that manner, but I'd like to go maybe a step farther. And I'd like to consider in my own life, is there times that I should be involved as well?

[24 : 26] Should I lift my hands? If the song calls forward, if my heart is lifted, should I be willing to do that? And that gesture, the show that my hands are outstretched here, that I am just, God, I'm standing here before you, and I'm completely in front of you.

I have nothing that I want hidden from you, and I'm ready to receive. So much is said here in that posture. And then we get to verse number three.

That speaks about the blessing received from the Lord. And this is the verse that appears that they would be responding back. We have been blessed from Zion. The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Any blessing we have comes in the person of Jesus Christ. If you were looking for a place to say amen tonight, this is a good one, all right? Any blessing we have comes in the person of Jesus Christ.

Jesus ascends into heaven, and as he does, he's blessing his church. Zion here, the place where he gave his life, the place he's resurrected. Wonderful things happen in the book of Acts in this city.

[25 : 36] And not just in Jerusalem, but from Jerusalem, we are blessed. It would be a blessing to be in Israel. It would be a blessing to be in and to see it. But the blessing isn't contained in that city.

It says that the blessing is out of Zion. It's from there. Zion can't bless us. I can't bless you. But God, he can bless each and every one of you.

And his blessings have come upon us out of Zion. It's a wonderful image that we would have here of the blessings that come from Zion, the salvation that came from Jesus dying at our place and be ascended.

And we should be grateful. And when you're on your journey, and you're thinking about all the problems that are coming to you, and they're seeming to come from every direction, you should take a moment and think about what has come to you out of Zion, what has come to you because of Jesus Christ.

And this picture of having our hands outstretched and praying, we find that in Jesus in Luke chapter number 24. Luke chapter number 24, verses 50 and 51. It says, And he led them out as far as Bethany.

[26 : 42] This is Jesus' last words as he's speaking to his disciples. And he says, And he lifted his hands, and he blessed them. And it came to pass that while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and he was carried into heaven.

And so Jesus, as he ascends into heaven, it's a beautiful picture. His hands are outstretched, and he is blessing his church. And so Jesus makes us able to lift our hands as well.

I read to you already that only clean hands, who can come, who can ascend to the mount, who can stand before God, and it's only because we have been forgiven. Psalm 130, verse 3 and 4.

If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Because of Jesus Christ, I can lift my hands in prayer to him, and he can see me as a person with clean hands.

He can be as Peter, when Jesus is washing his feet, and Peter says, Well, if you're going to wash my feet, wash all of me. And he says, That's what I'm doing. I'm going to the cross.

[27 : 50] I'm dying for you. I'm going to give you clean hands, so you can lift them up, and pray to me. We're told in 1 Timothy chapter number 2, verse number 8, Paul says, He says, I will therefore that men pray everywhere.

And he says, In doing that, they should be lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. How is it possible to set down wrath and doubting? It's because Jesus Christ has died in our place, and so now we can lift our hands up and pray unto him.

Our forgiveness and our cleansing in Christ is so complete, you can not only lift up your hands in the sanctuary, which is wonderful, you can now enter into the very presence of God through Jesus, our Savior.

Hebrews 10, 19, Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from our evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

So wonderful. I don't deserve to get to pray to the God of heaven and lift my hands. I should be hiding. I should be underneath a rock. I should be digging. I should be wanting to run from his presence, because I know how wicked and evil, but I understand that he gave me forgiveness, and Jesus has died, and so I can lift my eyes up to him, and I can say, here is your servant.

[29 : 23] I want to bless you, and I want to praise you. So there's times on our journey, there's times on my journey, where I just feel like I'm putting one foot in front of another, and I'm not really getting much done.

I don't feel like I'm having any purpose other than surviving. I forgot where I'm going, and I forgot where I'm doing, and I forgot where my car keys are. I just added that for good measure. And I feel like I'm living like that, and what I need to hear out of Psalm 134 is I need to hear some Christians who start singing a song on the journey, and they say this, Behold, bless you the Lord.

Trent, wake up. You can do more with your life than put your foot in front of another. You can do something that is worship, that is received from the God of heaven.

And when you get to the place you need to be reminded, we were created to worship God, and we can do it in all circumstances. It doesn't matter how tired we are. It doesn't matter the obstacles in front of us.

Whether it's morning or night, it's the beginning of the journey, or it's the end of the journey, we can praise the Lord, and that blesses Him. Our praise blesses the Lord.

[30 : 28] And we can and we should often lift up our hands and surrender to signify that we have need from Him. I would encourage you to wrestle with that and ask God to help you make ready application of that.

Maybe that's in your private time with the Lord. Maybe that is in a song service. But it seems like there ought to be a time that we would just lift our hands unto the Lord. It's said in Scripture so many times.

I don't feel that it's outdated for us, right? I don't feel like we've expired the use of that. Maybe ask the Lord how that could be made applicable in your lives.

And do you recognize all the blessings that have come in your life from Zion? Our God has not withheld any good thing from us. Problems come on every corner. They come to you. But don't forget what has come to you out of Zion.

So let us lift our voices tonight and praise the hymn. You're also invited, not by me, but the God of heaven, to lift your eyes and to lift your hands to Him. I'm going to read this psalm and pray it, and then we'll end our night singing together.

[31 : 35] Psalm 134 closes our pilgrim songs by teaching us that the life that blesses God is a life that is blessed. The life that blesses God is a life that is blessed by Him.

And this very act of praising God is a blessing in itself. Plus, God promises to add His own blessings to it. It's such a wonderful blessing that we could praise Him, that He would receive that from us.

And so let's pray together, and then we'll stand and sing. Heavenly Father, we hear the night, not sung by Christians, or not sung by people that are on a pilgrimage to Zion, but Lord, I hear it tonight from Your Word, these words, Behold, bless ye the Lord.

Father, that's what we desire to do with our lives. And all of our busyness, and all of our work that we're given to do, that we would not just be people that do work in the temple, but we'd be people that would respond in singing and saying praise unto You, that would be lifting up Your name, that would be making much of You with our lives.

Father, we identify the night, recognizing that to be called Your servants is the most wonderful thing in all of the world, and that because of Jesus, we get to be called Your sons and daughters.

[32 : 53] And so this night, Lord, in the evening, at the end of the day, we say that You are worthy to be praised, and Lord, the things that would wake us up in the middle of the night, we'd say You're still worthy to be praised, and when the sun rises in the morning, we know that You're still worthy of our praise from us as Your servants.

Lord, we lift our hands in the sanctuary to bless Your name. We come into Your presence. We come into places where You're worshiped, and we just count it, Lord, so we are so blessed and so thankful that You would allow us into Your presence.

Lord, not just to lift our hands, but to be able to boldly go before You in prayer, Lord, as we're doing right now because of the blood of Jesus. Thank You, Father, for that.

Lord, we know You have made heaven, and You have made earth, and Lord, here on earth, we know the blessings that have come out of Jerusalem. We know the blessings that have come from Zion, and we say thank You.

Father, the night as we end singing, Lord, may You see more than just people standing, but may You see us as people that desire with everything in us to bless You.

[34 : 01] In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.