

Mizmor 134

Exaltation

Key Concepts

As in the previous mizmor David visualizes a future time when the people have come up to Yerushalayim to serve Hashem in the *Bais Hamikdash*. At this time of supreme exaltation, David calls upon *Klal Yisrael* to show their gratitude for Hashem's blessings by recognizing Him in *tefillah* and by doing His will.

David closes the mizmor with a *tefillah* that in the *zechus* (merit) of *Klal Yisrael's* devotion to *Hashem*, His blessings will continue to flow to the nation and the world.

Navigating Tehillim (1). This is the fifteenth in the series of 15 mizmorim to be sung by the Leviim in the *Beis HaMikdash* while standing on the 15 steps leading up from the women's courtyard to the men's courtyard.

Navigating Tehillim (2). Mizmorim 133 and 134 complete the cycle of the 15 *Shirei Hamaalos* on a note of exaltation. Both of these *mizmorim* visualize a time when the *Geulah* (Redemption) is here and the people have come to Yerushalayim to serve Hashem. The two *mizmorim* are linked by the theme of an unending flow of blessings from Hashem. In Mizmor 133 the people demonstrate their worthiness for the *Geulah* by the spirit of love and goodwill in which they receive Hashem's blessings. In Mizmor 134 the people show their gratitude to Hashem by closing the virtuous circle and giving Him their blessing in turn. They do so through their *tefillas* and *mitzvos*.

Exploring the Mizmor

THE SOURCE OF BLESSINGS.

(א) שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת הִנֵּה בָּרְכוּ אֶת ה' כָּל עַבְדֵי ה' הָעֹמְדִים בְּבַיִת ה' בַּלַּיְלוֹת: (ב) שְׂאוּ יְדַכֶּם קִדְשׁ וּבָרְכוּ אֶת ה': (ג) יִבְרַכְךָ ה' מִצִּיּוֹן עֲשֵׂה שְׂמִים וְאַרְצִי:

(1) A song of the steps. And now bless Hashem all servants of Hashem, who stand in the House of Hashem in the nights. (2) Raise your hands in holiness and bless Hashem. (3) May Hashem bless you from Tzion, [for He

is] Maker of heaven and earth.

The three verses of this mizmor provide a guideline for understanding the source of blessing that has been described in the previous mizmor. The first verse teaches that those who are devoted servants of Hashem are the vehicle for blessings to flow to mankind, especially those who have been faithful "in the nights" of the Exile.

The second verse offers a special place to those who raise their hands in prayer. Raising one's hands "in holiness" symbolizes that these are people whose hands are clean of cruelty and avarice towards their fellow man.

The third verse concludes with a reference to Tzion, symbolizing the Torah, since those who study Torah create the spiritual content of heaven and earth. Through their discovery of ever new insights into the Torah, they are as if creating heaven and earth anew.

Learning the Mizmor

THE SOURCE OF BLESSINGS.

(א) שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד

This is the 15th **song of the steps** — שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת. It was composed **by David** — לְדָוִד.

הִנֵּה בִּרְכוּ אֶת ה'

And now — הִנֵּה that Hashem has granted His blessings to you and you are uplifted with the feeling of *kedushah* (holiness), you should show your gratitude and **bless Hashem** — בִּרְכוּ אֶת ה' by doing His will. Your actions and your *tefillos* will have the effect of creating the blessings that flow back up to Him.

כָּל עַבְדֵי ה'

הַעֲמָדִים בְּבַיִת ה' בְּלִילוֹת:

I call upon **all** you **servants of Hashem** — כָּל עַבְדֵי ה'. No one should excuse himself as being unworthy or unimportant. Each of you has his own role to play and should be among those **who stand** together **in the House of Hashem** to gratefully praise Him. You have been doing so **in the nights** — הַעֲמָדִים בְּבַיִת ה' — בְּלִילוֹת of the many years of Exile that are now past and it is in the *zechus* of your devotion to Him that the *Geulah* has come.

(ב) שְׂאוּ יְדָכֶם קֹדֶשׁ
וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת ה':

As the spirit of exaltation moves you, **raise your hands** — שְׂאוּ יְדָכֶם in *tefillah* to Hashem in His **holy** place — קֹדֶשׁ **and bless Hashem** — וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת ה'.

(ג) יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' מְצִיּוֹן
עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:

In return for your devotion to Him, **may Hashem** continue to **bless you from Tzion** — יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' מְצִיּוֹן, symbolizing the Torah, which is the source of all blessing to the nation and the entire world. Hashem can be relied on to keep His promise for He is the **Maker of heaven** — עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם, which will release its life-giving water, **and** He is also the Maker of the **earth** — וָאָרֶץ which will release its bounty to mankind.

Living the Mizmor

Listed below are some of the thoughts you might have in mind when you say the words of the mizmor as a *tefillah* to Hashem.

Tehillos for Life - Public Acclaim.

[134:1] BLESSING. – הִנֵּה בְרַכּוּ אֶת ה' כָּל עֲבָדֵי ה' הָעֹמְדִים בְּבַיִת ה' בַּלַּיְלוֹת – “*And now bless Hashem all servants of Hashem, who stand in the House of Hashem in the nights.*” Join your fellow Jews in publicly thanking and praising Hashem in His house. You will absorb the *kedushah* of all those present and this will result in a flow of blessing to Hashem, a flow that will never end.

[134:2] – שְׂאוּ יְדָכֶם קֹדֶשׁ וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת ה' – “*Raise your hands in holiness and bless Hashem.*” Raising your hands symbolizes your recognition of Hashem in *tefillah*.

[134:3] – יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' מְצִיּוֹן עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ – “*May Hashem bless you from Tzion, [for He is] Maker of heaven and earth.*” The blessings from Hashem originate in Tzion, representing the Torah. Through *tefillah* and the learning of Torah, the flow of blessing is created and enhanced.

Sources

The primary sources used in the interpretation of the verses of this mizmor are listed below.

ב - רד"ק, המאירי, מצודות, אלשיך
ג - רד"ק, מצודות, אלשיך

א - רד"ק, מצודות, מלבי"ם, נר לרגלי, מזמור
לתודה, אלשיך

© COPYRIGHT NOTICE
All rights to this document are reserved by the author. For further information contact Isaac Kirzner at isaac@kirzner.com