

# Triennial Torah Study – 1<sup>st</sup> Year 01/01/2011

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By Joseph F. Dumond

This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at:

<https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf>

<b>Gen 44</b>	<b>2 Sam 17-18</b>	<b>Ps 88</b>	<b>Luke 7</b>
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## Genesis 44

Here once again we see the brothers of Joseph bowing down to him just as Joseph had predicted in his dream. But in all of this we now see how Judah has stepped up and now takes responsibility for his brother Benjamin. It was in chapter 37 that we read of how Judah sold Joseph for 20 shekels.

## 2 Sam 17-18

Last week we covered how Ahithophel was countered by Hushai who had stayed behind at David's request to counter anything Ahithophel suggested to Absalom.

Absalom, because he had listened to Hushai gave David enough time to cross over the Jordan before the army of Israel descended upon him. This whole chapter is reading like an espionage novel with spies and counter spies. Read how the woman hid the two messengers of Zadok and how Absalom's men were looking for them. A great read.

In chapter 18 we read how it was Absalom who built the monument that still stands to this day in the Kings Valley; that is the Kidron Valley which many of you have seen. It is not his tomb as we are told how he was buried beneath a heap of stones in the woods. But you should also note that although the man who saw Absalom hanging by his hair did not dare raise a hand against him as King David had warned, Joab did not hesitate. This no doubt saved many more Israelite lives being lost, but it will also contribute to the order to have Joab killed after David dies.

Having read this there is not a better soap opera anywhere. The drama in these two chapters is riveting.

[http://www.ucg.org/bible-commentary/Psalms/88\)-Lamenting-plea-for-deliverance-from-life-threatening-affliction;-89\)-Prayer-for-God-to-uphold-the-Davidic-covenant-in-the-midst-of-defeat/default.aspx](http://www.ucg.org/bible-commentary/Psalms/88)-Lamenting-plea-for-deliverance-from-life-threatening-affliction;-89)-Prayer-for-God-to-uphold-the-Davidic-covenant-in-the-midst-of-defeat/default.aspx)

Despondent Prayer; The Davidic Covenant Renounced? (Psalms 88-89)

There is some question as to the authorship of Psalms 88 and 89. The superscription of Psalm 88 describes it as a song of the sons of Korah (the last of 11 Korahite psalms in the Psalter) as well as a maskil—an instructive psalm or “contemplation” (NKJV)—of Heman the Ezrahite. Psalm 89 is labeled as a maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite. Many take these names to refer to David’s Levitical choir leaders Heman and Ethan (the latter apparently also known as Jeduthun). Indeed, Heman the singer, grandson of Samuel and choir leader of the Levitical clan of Kohath, was a descendant of Korah (see 1 Chronicles 6:33-38). Yet note 1 Kings 4:31, which says that Solomon was wiser than “Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda.” These men were evidently descendants not of Levi but of Judah’s son Zerah: “The sons of Zerah were Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara” (1 Chronicles 2:6). The distinction Ethan the Ezrahite here appears to denote Ethan the Zarhite or Zerahite (recall that Hebrew was originally written with no vowels). How do we make sense of this?

Some think traditions have become confused and that the superscriptions of Psalms 88 and 89 are in error—that the designation “Ezrahite” was wrongly added to the Heman and Ethan in these psalm titles. But that is not necessarily so. First of all, it is entirely possible that the Heman and Ethan here are not David’s Levitical music leaders at all but instead the illustrious descendants of Zerah. If so, it could be, in the case of Psalm 88, that the sons of Korah took the Zerahite Heman’s written poem and set it to music—turning it into a song (making it “a psalm of the sons of Korah”). On the other hand, the Heman here could well be David’s Levitical choir leader, a descendant of Korah. Note that Korah himself was the son of Izhar, one of Kohath’s four sons (see 1 Chronicles 6:37-38, 18). Perhaps the descendants of Izhar were referred to as the Kohathite sub-clan of the Izrahites or Ezrahites. However, such an explanation would not apply to David’s music leader Ethan, who was a descendant of Levi’s son Merari. Considering all this, perhaps the Heman of Psalm 88 was David’s music leader, the Izrahite, while the Ethan of Psalm 89 was the famous Zerahite and not the Merarite choir leader (more on this in the comments on Psalm 89).

Besides attribution, the superscription of Psalm 88 also contains the phrase *le-mahalath leannoth*. Recall that Psalm 53’s superscription contains the phrase *le-mahalath*. As noted before in the Bible Reading Program, this phrase has been variously interpreted as “On sickness,” “On suffering,” “To pipings” (on wind instruments) or “To dances” (or some sort of choreography). The second part here, *le-annoth*, is thought to mean “of humblings or “of afflictions.” It is not clear whether both parts are to be understood independently or taken together as a combined phrase (such as “On suffering of afflictions”). Also, one or both parts

together could indicate either the subject matter of the psalm or another tune to which the psalm is set.

Heman, whatever his specific identity, is in Psalm 88 enduring some grave, life-threatening trial. Verse 15 in fact says that he has experienced life-threatening affliction for years—since his youth. It is not clear whether he means that he has been enduring the same, continuing trial ever since then or that he has experienced numerous similar dire circumstances over the years. The latter seems more likely, though his recurring problems may stem from the same root causes having never abated.

In his despair, Heman voices a desperate complaint against God: “Why, O Lord, do you reject me and hide your face from me?” (verse 14). He cries out to God day and night (verses 1, 9, 13), pleading for Him to hear (verse 2). He feels death is inevitable and close. He is as good as dead already, “adrift among the dead” (verse 5), cut off from God, no longer remembered by Him (same verse).

Indeed, he perceives his circumstances as coming from God: “You have laid me in the lowest pit” (verse 6). “You have afflicted me with all Your waves” (verse 7)—that is, of wrath and terrors (compare verses 16-17). “You have caused my friends to abandon me; you have made me repulsive to them.... I am worn out from the burden of your punishments” (verses 8, 15, Today’s English Version). Heman can’t escape his misery: “I am shut up, and I cannot get out” (verse 8).

He has called on God every day and worshipped Him with outspread hands (verse 9). Is it to no avail? Is he to die like the wicked? Will God wait to intervene until after he is already dead? (compare verse 10a). Of course, God certainly can intervene for those who have already died through resurrecting them—and He will ultimately resurrect all His people in the future. But this thought was far from the psalmist. For how would letting him die at this time bring God glory in the present? If dead, without consciousness, Heman could not declare God’s lovingkindness, faithfulness and righteousness to others (see verse 10b-12). In other words, he was no use to God dead. This recalls David’s reasoning in Psalms 6:4-5 and 30:8-9.

The psalm ends gloomily with the situation unresolved: “You have made even my closest friends abandon me, and darkness is my only companion” (88:18, TEV). Nevertheless, there is a glimmer of hope in this darkest of laments based on the way it opens, for Heman begins the psalm by addressing the Lord as “the God who saves me” (verse 1, NIV) or “God of my salvation” (NKJV). The Expositor’s Bible Commentary says: “Though the psalm ends on a lament, faith triumphs, because in everything the psalmist has learned to look to ‘the God who saves’ (v. 1). The ‘darkness’ (v. 18; cf. v. 12) of grief is reminiscent of death; but as long as there is life, hope remains focused on the Lord. [One particular commentator] is right when he writes, ‘Psalm 88 stands as a mark of realism of biblical faith. It has a pastoral use, because there are situations in which easy, cheap talk of resolution must be avoided’” (note on verses 15-18).

The Zondervan NIV Study Bible points out in its note on the closing cluster of Book III (Psalms 84-89): "The final two prayers (Ps 88; 89) both end unrelieved by the usual expression of confidence that God will hear and act.... However, the editors of Book III have placed them under the near shadow of Ps 87, the more distant shadow of Ps 84 and the still more distant shadow of Ps 82. From these psalms they should not be dissociated."

## Luke 7

This week I want to focus on a verse that had me stumped for a while until I began to midrash with a sister about it.

Luk 7:28 "For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than Yohanan the Immerser, but he who is least in the reign of Elohim is greater than he."

What Yehshua is telling us is that John was greater than all the Prophets that had come up until then.; Greater than Abraham, Moses, Noah Daniel, Isaiah and Ezekiel and all the smaller prophets. That is quite an honour He has given John, but then Yehshua says that even the least in the Kingdom is greater than John.

Straight away I go to the scripture in Mathew 5:19 "Whoever, then, breaks one of the least of these commands, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the reign of the heavens; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the reign of the heavens.

Those that are called least in the Kingdom will be greater than John? How can someone who teaches others not to keep the Torah or the commandments be greater than Moses and Noah? Something ain't right here.

So I go back to Luke and look up the Strong's number for least and it is G3398 ????????, ????????? mikros mikroteros mik-ros', mik-rot'-er-os

Apparently a primary word, including the comparative (second form); small (in size, quantity, number or (figuratively) dignity): – least, less, little, small.

But when I think of those who would be great in the Kingdom I end up at Mat 18:2 And Yehshua called a little child to Him and set him in their midst, and said, Truly I say to you, Unless you are converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Therefore whoever shall humble himself like this little child, this one is the greater in the kingdom of Heaven. And whoever shall receive one such little child in My name receives Me. But whoever shall offend one of these little ones who believes in Me, it would be better for him that an ass's millstone were hung around his neck, and he be sunk in the depth of the sea.

The meaning of the word little child is G3813 ???????? paidion pahee-dee'-on Neuter diminutive of G3816; a childling (of either sex), that is, (properly) an infant, or (by extension) a half grown boy or girl; figuratively an immature Christian: – (little, young) child, damsel.

Or in other words a small one. The least in the kingdom that Yehshua was referring to, would be as a small one; a little child.

We are now getting to a place where we can understand what Yehshua was saying. You must become as a little child or as a small one in the Kingdom. Those who teach against the Torah will be small in dignity but to be great is to teach the Torah and to be great is to be as a small child.

And in order to do this, that is be greater than John or all the Prophets that have come is to humble ourselves as a small child who sits there at your feet and believes everything that you tell them and has no evil thoughts.

This then leads us to Mat 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit! For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn! For they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek! For they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness! For they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful! For they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart! For they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers! For they shall be called the sons of God.

Blessed are they who have been persecuted for righteousness sake! For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all kinds of evil against you falsely, for My sake.

The poor in spirit is G4434 ??????? pto'chos pto-khos'

From ??????? pto?sso? (to crouch; akin to G4422 and the alternate of G4098); a beggar (as cringing), that is, pauper (strictly denoting absolute or public mendicancy, although also used in a qualified or relative sense; whereas G3993 properly means only straitened circumstances in private), literally (often as noun) or figuratively (distressed): – beggar (-ly), poor.

It is when you are destitute of all pride that you have a humble and willing attitude. Many of you who are searching the scriptures hunger for the truth. As Amos says to us; Amo 8:11 “See, days are coming,” declares the Master ????, “that I shall send a hunger in the land, not a hunger for bread, nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the Words of ????”.

When the Rabbi met a group of us at Sukkot this year this the verse he saw being fulfilled in front of him.

The word for hearing is important to understand in this; H8085 ???? sha?ma? shaw-mah' A primitive root; to hear intelligently (often with implication of attention, obedience, etc.; causatively to tell, etc.): – X attentively, call (gather) together, X carefully, X certainly, consent, consider, be content, declare, X diligently, discern, give ear, (cause to, let, make to) hear (ken, tell), X indeed, listen, make (a) noise, (be) obedient, obey, perceive, (make a) proclaim (ation),

publish, regard, report, shew (forth), (make a) sound, X surely, tell, understand, whosoever [heareth], witness.

You are wanting to hear intelligently and you are paying attention to what is said, and this is how you hunger and thirst for the truth, as a little child with eagerness.

But many of you come to the point where no matter how much you learn and no matter how great the next teaching is, you realize that with each day as you draw closer to Him you know so absolutely little. And yet it was not long ago that you thought there was nothing more to learn as you had it all figured out. When you hunger for more and know how little you understand, then you are beginning to be humble, just as child is. And by this you will be greater than most in the Kingdom.

Strange isn't it? That in this week's teaching of how Satan and Nimrod and Pharaoh and Herod all tried to kill the little children so that the future heirs to the kingdom could not inherit it. And here we learn that we must become as little children. Soon he will try once more to prevent us from becoming as children and entering that Kingdom. I do not know about you, but this study just turned around and hit me square on. Awesome!!!

As you become more child like Satan is going to try and murder you as he does at this time of the Saturnalia. Think about it.