

# Triennial Torah Study – 4<sup>th</sup> Year 01/03/2014

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We continue this weekend with our regular Triennial Torah reading which can be found at [https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon\\_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf](https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf)

<b>Gen 27</b>	<b>1 Sam 9-11</b>	<b>Ps 57-58</b>	<b>Mark 4:24 – 5:34</b>
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## Jacob's Deception (Genesis 27:1-28:5)

This chapter contains the well-known story of Jacob's deception of his father Isaac. It is important to note the elements of the story, and to recall Jacob's previously cunning acquisition of the birthright, for Jacob is here sowing very bad seed that would yield a bitter crop in due time. There is a real law of cause and effect operating not only in the physical universe but also in the moral universe. What you sow, that you shall reap (Galatians 6:7).

Recall that Jacob obtained the birthright through a cunning business transaction. Later, however, Jacob meets his match when he becomes entangled with the even more cunning Laban, who outwits or takes advantage of Jacob at every turn for the better part of 20 years. Here, Jacob deceives his blind father with a slain goat and a special coat. Later, Jacob is deceived by Laban when he is "blinded" by the darkness of his wedding tent, and by his own sons who counterfeit the death of Jacob's beloved Joseph by using the blood of a slain goat and Joseph's special coat. Indeed, for more than 20 years, Jacob will believe the terrible lie concocted by his own sons—that his dearly loved son is dead. Notice also Rebekah's fateful words: "Let your curse be on me." Indeed, she would be cursed—for just as Isaac could not see his son, so Rebekah would never again see her beloved Jacob after he left for Padan Aram. For before Jacob's return some 20 years later, Rebekah would die.

Beware: Reaping what you sow is a very real spiritual principle. And just as God did not completely remove the bitterness of the crop Jacob was to reap—even though Jacob finally repented and became converted—so God will not completely remove the bitterness of the crop you sow. The spiritual effects of your bad actions may be forgiven, but in the flesh there will still be consequences. "Behold the goodness and severity of God" (Romans 11:22, KJV). Just as God allowed Jacob to reap hardship and live a bitter life in order to help purge his character, so God will do with you in many respects. God is not mocked. Sow good seed—and reap the same. Sow bad seed—and reap the same as well!

After Jacob obtained the blessing by deception, Isaac and Rebekah sent him to Padan Aram, primarily to get him away from the wrathful Esau, but also to find him a wife from one of the daughters of Laban, Rebekah's brother.

## **Saul Chosen as King (1 Samuel 9:1-26)**

God had long before prophesied a line of kings from Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 17:15-16). This line was to come through their grandson Jacob (35:9-11). And God had Jacob prophesy that this kingly line would come through his son Judah (Genesis 49:10; see 1 Chronicles 5:1-2). But though God personally chooses the king for Israel, He does not yet select a descendant of Judah. Instead, Saul, Israel's first king, is from Benjamin.

God knew that Saul was the type of person the people were looking for, apparently the tallest man in the nation, and good looking (verse 2). Through circumstances, God arranges for Saul to visit Samuel in Ramah (verse 16).

Samuel was not an Aaronic priest, and yet, as we saw in our previous reading (see 7:9-10), he appears to have himself offered sacrifices—although in one case it is clear that he was simply officiating at the sacrifice, blessing it and the people (1 Samuel 9:12-14). These sacrifices were done in various locations. However, there is no record that Samuel offered sacrifices specifically at the tabernacle altar of burnt offering, wherever that was currently located. Normally, all sacrifices were to be brought to “the place where the Lord your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His habitation” (Deuteronomy 12:5). But with the apparent abandonment of Shiloh, and the loss of the ark, perhaps there was no obvious place where God was “dwelling” at this time. In any case, Samuel's offering of sacrifices at a variety of locations throughout the land—including the altar he had built near his home in Ramah (see 1 Samuel 7:17)—is presented in the Bible as acceptable and proper. Perhaps he had special instructions from God—we know for certain that he did in 1 Samuel 16:2. Saul Anointed King (1 Samuel 9:27-10:27)

Saul's initial anointing is done in secret, after his servant is asked to make himself scarce (9:27-10:1). Saul is then given several signs to encourage him and prove God is behind this.

Among the instructions is one involving a visit to Gilgal, and the command to wait there a week for Samuel to arrive for a sacrifice. This is one of the tests Saul will not pass (see 13:8-14).

The “group of prophets” mentioned in 1 Samuel 10 (verses 5, 10) points to the emergence of an institution that accompanied the emergence of the Israelite monarchy. In 1 and 2 Kings, what is evidently a continuation of the same group is called the “sons of the prophets.” In its entry on them, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* says they are “members of a prophetic guild, or order, first appearing in the time of Saul and Samuel in the service of Yahweh.... The sons of the prophets appear again prominently in the ninth century B.C. in association with Elisha.... The guilds of professional prophets continue to appear variously indicated [in Scripture] (I Kings 18:4, 19; 22:6; II Kings 23:2; Jer. 26:7-8, 11) until the fall of Jerusalem in the early sixth century B.C.”

Saul chooses not to tell his family about being anointed as king. Then, when Samuel calls the nation together at Mizpah to announce to them the king God had appointed at the insistence of the elders, Saul, in a moment of either humility or outright fear of his new responsibility, hides himself. God lets them know where to find him, he is accepted by most of the people, and he returns to his home with a bodyguard, not quite sure what he is to do now.

## **Saul Defends Jabesh Gilead (1 Samuel 11)**

Jabesh Gilead, located east of the Jordan in Manasseh's territory, had nearly been destroyed by the Israelites following the war with Benjamin in order to obtain wives for the few remaining Benjamites (see Judges

21). Now Jabesh Gilead is threatened by the Ammonites, one of the two nations descended from Lot, and sends to the rest of Israel for help.

When the messengers come to the Benjamite city of Gibeah, the very city which had committed the grievous sin that precipitated the war against Benjamin years earlier, and which happens to be the home of Saul, the residents seem particularly distressed. As two thirds of the wives provided for the remnant of Benjamin had come from Jabesh Gilead, it is probable that many of Gibeah's inhabitants had ancestors who came from there. Saul himself may have traced his roots to that city.

In any case, the Ammonite threat against Jabesh Gilead unites the Israelites in a common cause under Saul, who conscripts 330,000 troops under penalty of the loss of livestock. Their victory under Saul and Samuel assures Saul's acceptance by the nation as king, and on the way back home, they stop at Gilgal (the location of Joshua's first encampment after crossing the Jordan) to reaffirm his kingship.

## **Psalm 57**

Psalm 57 is the second in the sequence of five miktams here. We earlier read it along with the account mentioned in the superscription-when David "fled from Saul into the cave." Actually, David hid in a cave on two occasions we know of-once in Adullam (1 Samuel 22:1-5), the setting of Psalm 142, and once in the oasis of En Gedi (1 Samuel 24:1-7), which is evidently the setting of this psalm. In En Gedi, David in a miraculous circumstance spared Saul when he could easily have killed him and was afterward blessed with a period of respite. This was in answer to David's prayer recorded here (see the earlier Bible Reading Program comments on Psalm 57; 1 Samuel 24).

David cries out for mercy, trusting God will save him (Psalm 57:1-3). The imagery in verse 1 of finding refuge under God's wings as a young bird finds protection under the wings of its mother is also found elsewhere in Psalms (17:8; 36:7; 61:4; 63:7; 91:4).

As David fervently prays for help, he is not yet out of peril from those who seek to harm him (verses 4, 6). But he sees a new day dawning (verse 8). Note the repeated refrain of praise (verses 5, 11). And indeed, God would soon rescue him, as 1 Samuel 24 shows.

The end of Psalm 57 (verses 7-11), with its exuberant expression of joy and praise, is used in Book V of the Psalter as the beginning of Psalm 108 (verses 1-5), while the end of Psalm 108 is taken from Psalm 60, the last of the sequence of miktams here.

## **"Deliver Me From My Enemies, O My God" (Psalms 58-60)**

Psalm 58, the third miktam of David out of five in a row, addresses human misrule and injustice. He may have written this before he was king-while on the run from Saul, as in the preceding psalm and the one that follows. However, even while king, David could not completely control every judge under his authority and certainly not the rulers of enemy lands outside his empire.

In verse 1, the NKJV calls the offenders "silent ones," a valid translation, because they remain silent when it comes to saying what needs to be said and rendering appropriate judgment. Verse 2 appears to say that those being addressed commit evil and violence themselves. Yet it may mean that by failing in justice, they promote these things in society.

The beginning of verse 3 says, “The wicked are estranged from the womb...” This is an odd turn of phrase in English but is clearly explained by the next line, an example of Hebrew poetry’s repetition: “...they go astray as soon as they are born”-that is, they are drawn away from God early in life.

In positions of judgment and leadership, the wicked are dangerous-compared to a cobra that can’t be mesmerized by a snake charmer (verses 4-5). David further compares them to ravenous lions and urgently calls on God to break their fangs-that is, their power to hurt people (verse 6). He also asks that they be swept away as running water and that their “arrows,” or means of dealing out destruction, be rendered useless (verse 7). In verse 8, when David asks that they melt away like a snail and that they are not brought to term like a stillborn child, it is not clear if he means the wicked themselves or their arrows of verse 8. Either way, the point is to neutralize the grave threat they pose.

In verse 9, the added italicized words “the burning” before “thorns” gives the correct sense here, as is made clear by other verses: “Twigs from wild thornbushes were used as fuel for quick heat (see 118:12; Ecc 7:6)” (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, note on Psalm 58:9). The meaning of the verse is that God’s judgment will come suddenly on the wicked.

In its note on verse 10, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary states: “The joy of the righteous comes to full expression when they see evidences of God’s justice. It is not so much the case that they are bloodthirsty [as might appear here at first glance] but rather that they delight in justice. The reign of terror must come to an end! Isaiah portrays the Lord as the Divine Warrior coming with red garments, stained by the blood of his enemies (Isa 63:1-6). Here the godly join in the victory march, as they too have been granted victory. The imagery of feet in blood portrays the victory (cf. Isa 63:1-6; Rev 14:19-20; 19:13-14), rather than the gruesome picture of people relishing the death of the wicked. The godly share together with the Lord in his triumph over evil.”

The injustice of human misrule will at last be overturned and righted when God brings His true and righteous judgment (Psalm 58:11). The message will be clear: righteousness pays; wickedness doesn’t.

## **Mark 4:24-5:34**

Yeshua warns us to take careful charge of what we allow ourselves to hear and be able to discern. In hearing things not of Elohim we are to disregard and not listen, and in hearing things of Elohim we are to listen more. If we do this, more will be given to us to hear and understand of His Kingdom.

Yeshua speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven as in parables: first comparing it to how seeds grow and develop until they bear fruit and then it is harvest time. This is just as history from the beginning until now as we near the end of the age. He gives another parable for the Kingdom of Heaven: how it began so very small, with one man (Abraham – the mustard seed) and then developed so much so that it become very great... so great that it even has room for the tares to secretly lodge and live there.

Yeshua commands the wind, the storm, and the sea and His disciples are amazed.

## **Chapter 5**

Yeshua and His disciples cross over into the land of Gad and meet a man with an unclean spirit. This man possessed of the demon acknowledged Yeshua as the Son of Elohim. Yeshua by great authority ordered the demon out of the man and cast them into a herd of pigs. It is interesting that a land that was settled and belonged to a tribe of Israel was now herding and raising pigs... an animal know to be an abomination to Elohim.

The man who was restored from the unclean spirit desired to follow and go with Yeshua but Yeshua told him to go out to family and friends and give testimony of the mighty work Yeshua had done for him.

They cross back over the sea to the other side and people are still thronging to be near Yeshua. He heals the woman with the issue of blood.