

Psalm 88 (KGF)

(NOTE: In Hebrew: superscription = v. 1, thus v. 1 English = v. 2 Hebrew, etc.)

A Song. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. For the Chief Musician. Upon Mahalat Leannot. A Maschil of Heman, the Ezrahite.

CONFIDENCE	CONFIDENCE	CONFIDENCE
<p>1 Yahweh, God of my salvation, (by) day I have cried-out: in the night, before you: PETITION</p> <p>2 Let my prayer come into your presence. Incline your ear to my resounding-cry.</p>	<p>9b I have called-out to you, Yahweh, every day. I have spread-out to you my palms.</p> <p>RHETORICAL QUESTIONS – “YOU”</p> <p>10 Will you, for the dead, work wonders— such that the ghosts will arise, thankfully-praising you? 11 Will your steadfast-love be recounted in the grave --your faithfulness in the Place-of-Doom (Abaddon)? 12 Will your wonders be made known in the dark — and your righteous-deeds in the Land of Forgetting?</p>	<p>13 But as for me, to you, Yahweh, I have cried, and in the morning my prayer comes to meet you.</p>
<p>COMPLAINT – “I” (Declarations)</p> <p>[Motivation]</p> <p>3 For my soul is sated with troubles, and my life draws near to the Abode-of the Dead (Sheol). 4 I am counted with those going down to the Pit. I have become like a strong-man for whom there is no help -- released among the dead, like the slain, who lie in the grave, who you do not remember anymore; and as for them, from your hand they are cut-off. COMPLAINT – “YOU” (Declarations)</p> <p>6 You have set me in the lowest pit, in the dark-places in the depths. 7 Upon me, your anger lies heavily, and (with) all your waves you have afflicted. Selah. 8 You have put my friends far from me. You have made me abominations to them -- confined and I cannot go out. COMPLAINT – “I”</p> <p>9a My eyes are dim on account of affliction.</p>	<p>COMPLAINT – “YOU” (Questions)</p> <p>14 Why, Yahweh, have you rejected my soul --hidden your face from me?</p> <p>COMPLAINT – “I” (Declaration)</p> <p>15 Afflicted am I, and perishing from (my) youthful-vigour. I bear your dreadful-terrors; I am exhausted.</p> <p>COMPLAINT – “YOU” (Declaration)</p> <p>16 Over me your fierce-wrath has gone over; your terrors have annihilated me. 17 They surround me like water all the day; they engulf me all-together. 18 You have put far from me loved-one and neighbor; (to) my friends, (you have made me) a dark-place.*</p>	

Lament Psalms

Asking God the Hard Questions

Psalm 88: "Yahweh, Why do you Reject Me?"
 (Praying when God is "Silent"
 & Lament as "Protest")
 Session 4 – 3 October 2021

1st Baptist Church – Regina, SK L4L – Fall 2021
 Instructor: Kelvin Friebel

"By the Rivers of Babylon We Sat and Wept" (1938) by Moshe Rynecki

Psalm 88:18b

מִיָּדַעַי מְחֹשֶׁךְ

Hebrew 2 words: (1) "my-friends"* & (2) "dark-place"***
 (* is plural) (**is "place" vs. quality of "darkness")

? How are the two words grammatically/syntactically related?

1) Verbless Clause ("is" / "are" is implied)

(a) "darkness is my (closest / only) friend"

New International Version (NIV) New Living Translation (NLT)
 Contemporary English Version (CEV) Good News Translation (GNT)
 The Message (MSG)

(b) "my friends are darkness"

English Standard Version (ESV)
 International Standard Version (ISV)

darkness = are of no help
 OR [a quality of] my friends is darkness
 VOICE: "even the light of my friends is darkness"

2) Re-division of Poetic lines:
 "my friends" goes with preceding (apposition)
 + "dark place" stands alone (vocative)

"You have put far from me loved-one and neighbor, (that is) my friends.
 O Darkness!"

3) Parallel to preceding line (with subject & verb being carried over)

You have put	far from me	loved-one and neighbor
[You have put]	(in) a dark-place	my friends

"My friends are *in* darkness"

Amplified Bible (AMP) King James Version (KJV)
 New American Standard Bible (NASB) New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)
 World English Bible (WEB)

"darkness" = "separated from the psalmist"
 OR, "my darkness" (You have removed . . .
 my acquaintances *far from my darkness*"
 Lexham English Bible (LEB)

4) Parallel to v. 8

v. 8	You have put far from me my friends.	To them, you have made me abominations— confined and I cannot go out.
v. 18	You have put far from me loved-one and neighbor;	(to) my friends, (you have made me) a dark-place.

"to my friends you have made me a dark-place."

► **Incongruity of Lament**
 in Praying when God is "Silent" & "Absent"

YET, in the midst of God's "Silence" & "Absence"

(a) the Psalmists Continue to Speak to God
 as if He still Hears

(b) the Psalmists Voice Confidence
 that God does indeed Hear their Prayers

► **Lament as Prayers of "Protest" Against God**

"You – Complaint" → God

• Is it:
 "Defiant Protest" ? or "Compliant Protest"?

Declarations of
 Trust & Confidence