

Week 25, Lecture 70.¹ Loose Ends from Last Week. [Posted in Week 24]

The Greek Versions of Daniel²

This is what I said last week: **There are two Greek versions: Septuagint (ca. 200 - 150 B.C.); Theodotion (ca. 100 A.D.)**
Turns out that the Septuagint (Old Greek) version of Daniel is probably from closer to **100 B.C.**
Furthermore, what is called the "Theodotion" version of Daniel is **not** the same as the rest of what is called Theodotion's Greek translation of the Bible.

Theodotion-Daniel is actually a **pre-Christian** translation, not the same as the one done by Theodotion ca. 100 A.D.
This is what happens when you get a NT-guy lecturing on the OT at a fast pace.

Preference for Theodotion. The Church preferred Theodotion-Daniel to Septuagint-Daniel.
It replaced the original Septuagint version of Daniel whenever it copied the copied the book.
Hence manuscripts of the Old Greek (Septuagint) version are extremely rare.

Remarks from St. Jerome

The reason for the replacement escaped even such a worthy as St. Jerome (d. 420), who wrote in the preface to his translation of Daniel: **"The Churches of the Lord Savior do not read the prophet Daniel according to the Seventy Interpreters, but use the edition of Theodotion; why this happened I do not know.... But this much I can affirm: [the LXX] differs a great deal from the truth [veritas hebraica, the Aramaic and Hebrew MT] and for good reason was rejected."** (PL 28, col. 1357) In his commentary on the Book of Daniel, Jerome complains that the LXX omits the text of Dan 4:6, and then he writes: **"Therefore, in the judgment of the Church's leaders, the [LXX] edition of this book has been rejected; and in public is read the edition of Theodotion, which agrees both with the Hebrew and with other translators."** (PL 25, col. 514)³

Definition of Apocalyptic. Hartmann & DiLella discuss "Apocalyptic" on pages 62-71 of their AB commentary. They discuss the difficulty of coming up with a definition that covers all of apocalyptic literature. They prefer not to give an "overall definition," and then force Daniel into that "box." Rather they analyze the characteristics of Daniel.
This is their definition of apocalyptic, **as it appears in Daniel.** It is a literary genre characterized by three factors:

Literary Characteristics

(1) that employs the devices of anonymous and pseudonymous authorship, dreams and visions as vehicles of revelation, historical panoramas in the form of *vaticinia ex eventu* [**a "prophecy" after the event, PJM**], symbolic language understandable to the Jewish audience intended, and esoteric content;
[see page 67 for more: Most of the literature in the OT is anonymous or pseudonymous]
e.g., "Tetrateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus. Deuteronomistic History (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings), etc.

Stance & Purpose

(2) that was devised as **non-violent** resistance literature having as its purpose to console, strengthen, and exhort the Jews persecuted by Antiochus IV Epiphanes in the present wicked age to remain faithful to their religious heritage;
and

¹ Lectures are numbered consecutively. Although this is this week's first lecture, its number reflects its place in the **total** sequence. Because it relates to material from Week 24, it will be posted with the Week 24 material online, even though I gave it in Week 25.

² This is treated in exhaustive detail by Hartman and Di Lella, pages 76-84, "The Greek Forms of Daniel."

³ Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary on Chapters 1-12*, vol. 23, Anchor Bible (Doubleday, 1978), 79. *PL* is a reference to the multi-volume *Patrologia Latina*, edited by J. P. Migne.

Future Hopes

(3) that promises as a reward for such fidelity eternal life by means of resurrection in the new age which will be the Kingdom of God⁴

Apocalyptic Imagery is **Suggestive, not Representational**

The symbolism in Daniel and in much of the rest of the Old Testament (especially the Song of Songs) as well as in the Book of Revelation is **not representational**, and therefore it cannot be pictured realistically as if in a colored photograph. Rather the symbolism is **suggestive**; that is to say, images are projected in order to **suggest** (and **not to depict**) the realities the writer wishes to convey.

Example from the NT

An example will perhaps best illustrate this important point. In Rev 5:6, Jesus is described as a Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes. It would surely be freakish as well as repulsive to visualize realistically such an animal. What the author of the Book of Revelation intended by these symbols is that Jesus has **universal dominion** (**seven horns**) and **knowledge of all things** (**seven eyes**), the number seven signifying perfection or universality, the horn dominion or power, and the eye knowledge.⁵

Week 25, Lecture 71. Daniel's Second Apocalyptic Vision, 8:1-14 (Part 1)

Unique Character of Daniel (Hartman & Di Lella). 10 independent stories.

Any of the stories can be read without the other 9, and make perfect sense.

Any of the stories can be left out, and the other 9 will still make perfect sense.

There is no other biblical narrative that has this characteristic.

A Theory of Composition. Hartmann & Di Lella argue the entire book was first written in Aramaic.

Later chapters 1 and 8-12 were translated into Hebrew. They are following the theory of Ginsberg, a Jewish scholar.

Their translation presupposes the **ancient translator made some errors**.

In their translation they attempt to render the original Aramaic.

Sometimes they use the Greek, the Latin, and the Syriac to attempt to reconstruct that original Aramaic.

I will be reading from their translation, but I give you the RSV -- fairly close to the Hebrew

You will probably be able to see some significant differences.

8:1-2, The Setting⁶

In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first. ² And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the capital, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision, and I was at the river Ulai.

Verse 1 is a **Literary Seam** that joins this passage to chapter 7, by mentioning the previous vision.

Dreams & Visions

The first part of Daniel is characterized by **dreams**. The second part is characterized by **visions**.

chapter 7 was a sort of "transition."

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had **a dream and visions of his head** as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, and told the sum of the matter. (7:1)

⁴ Hartman and Di Lella, *Book of Daniel*, 70–71.

⁵ Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 69.

⁶ I am following the divisions of Daniel L. Smith-Christopher in his commentary in the *New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 7, pages 97-108. The printed translation is the RSV. However, the **translation** I am reading aloud is for chapter 8 is from Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary on Chapters 1-9*, vol. 23, Anchor Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 202–205.

The vision in chapter 8, by contrast, appears to take place in broad daylight. His location in Susa does not appear to be important to the content of the vision.

8:3-8 Vision of the Ram & the He-Goat

I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the river. It had two horns; and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. ⁴ I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward; no beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power; he did as he pleased and magnified himself.

⁵ As I was considering, behold, a he-goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. ⁶ He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the river, and he ran at him in his mighty wrath. ⁷ I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns; and the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled upon him; and there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. ⁸ Then the he-goat magnified himself exceedingly; but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

The Animals

Like chapter 7, this vision contains animals. However, these animals are not strange beasts from the sea.

They are "super" versions of ordinary farm animals.

The two-horned ram represents the Kingdom of the Medes & Persians.

The one-horned goat is the Greek Kingdom of Alexander

The ram charges Westward, Northward, & Southward

Eastward is not mentioned! Is this because Media an Persia were the east, as far as the writer was concerned?

Collins has found the East mentioned in one Greek manuscript, as well as in a Qumran manuscript.

He argues it has dropped out of the text accidentally, and should be restored.

The Great Horn is Broken

Alexander died suddenly at the height of his power.

The four horns that emerge are his four generals who divide up his kingdom.

Remember, this symbolism is **suggestive** not **representational**.

8:9-14 Earthly & Spiritual Battle w. Antiochus IV

Out of one of them came forth a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. ¹⁰ It grew great, even to the **host of heaven**; and some of the host of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them. ¹¹ It magnified itself, even up to the **Prince of the host**; and the continual burnt offering was taken away **from him**, and the place of **his sanctuary** was overthrown. ¹² And the host was given over to it together with the continual burnt offering through transgression; and truth was cast down to the ground, and the horn acted and prospered. ¹³ Then I heard **a holy one** speaking; and **another holy one** said to the one that spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the continual burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled under foot?" ¹⁴ And he said to him, "For **two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings**; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."

Haven't We Done This Before?

If this sounds a lot like chapter 7, that's because it is!

One of the characteristics of apocalyptic is that it **repeatedly** describes the **same** situation with **different** symbols.

One of the main pitfalls of interpreting Revelation is to regard the sevens (plagues, thunders, bowls, etc.) as **successive**.

The Little Horn is Antiochus IV. The "glorious land" is Israel.

The Hosts of Heaven. Probably Stars, often regarded as living beings, gods by pagans, angelic powers by some Jews.

Antiochus was notorious for his impiety, even toward some pagan gods that did not fit into his program of Hellenization.

Prince of the Host. Some interpreters regard this a Michael, the Archangel.

Most regard it as God himself. Notice that the burnt offering is taken away "**from him**," in "**his sanctuary**."

Burnt offerings were not made to the Archangel Michael
King Antiochus prohibited offering sacrifices to the LORD in the Jerusalem Temple

8:13, **Two Holy Ones**

In chapter 7 "the holy ones of the most high" were almost certainly faithful Jews suffering persecution. Here the expression refers to angelic beings (as often in the OT).

The Transgression that Makes Desolate

This is the "abomination of desolation," the erection of the statute of Olympian Zeus in the Temple
It is also mentioned in Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 and 1 Macc 1:54; 2 Macc 6:2.

How long will the sanctuary be defiled? **2,300 Evenings & Mornings.**

Years ⁷	Days	Verses
3.5 years	1,240 days (lunar years)	7:25; 9:27; 12:7
3.5 years	1,278 days (solar years)	7:25; 9:27; 12:7
	1,150 days	8:14 (2,300 Evenings & Mornings)
	1,290 days	12:11
	1,335 days	12:12

The end refused to materialize on schedule, so the prophecy was updated.
Eventually the end came -- the end of the **persecution**, not the end of the world!

Week 25, Lecture 72. Daniel's Second Apocalyptic Vision, 8:15-27 (Part 2)

8:15-17, Gabriel Appears to Daniel

When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶ And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." ¹⁷ So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was frightened and fell upon my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O **son of man**, that the vision is for the time of the end."

Gabriel

"appearance of a man" is *mar'eh-geber*. "Gabriel" can mean ("man of God," BDB Hebrew Dictionary)

This is the first **named** angel in the Bible.

Older literature had only anonymous angels or "the angel of God" or "the angel of the LORD."

It comes **very late** in the OT.

Gabriel is spoken to by "a man," i.e., another heavenly being. Daniel **hears**, but does not **see** him.

Son of Man

Here the phrase has its ordinary meaning, "human being." It is not a heavenly figure, as in chapter 7.

8:18-22, Gabriel Begins His Interpretation

As he was speaking to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and set me on my feet. ¹⁹ He said, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation; for it pertains to the appointed time of the end. ²⁰ As for the ram which you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹ And the he-goat is the king of Greece; and the great horn between his eyes is the first king. ²² As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.

⁷ Lunar year, 354.3 days (354.367056 days, i.e.: 354 days, 8 hours, 48 minutes, 34 seconds)

Lunar Years: 3.5 x 354.37 = 1240.295 days, ca. 1,240 days. Solar Years: 3.5 x 365.25 = 1278.375 days, ca. 1,278 days

Hartman & Di Lella comment that this vision hardly needs interpretation -- unlike chapter 7. Note the greater detail as the vision gets further into Daniel's "future."

8:23-25, The Rise & Fall of Antiochus

And at the latter end of their rule, when the transgressors have reached their full measure, a king of bold countenance, one who understands riddles, shall arise. ²⁴ His power shall be great, and he shall cause fearful destruction, and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people of the saints. ²⁵ **By his cunning** he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall magnify himself. Without warning he shall destroy many; and he shall even rise up against the **Prince of princes**; but, **by no human hand**, he shall be broken.

8:26-27, Conclusion and Sealing

The vision of the evenings and the mornings which has been told is true; but **seal up the vision**, for it pertains to many days hence."

²⁷ And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days; then I rose and went about the king's business; but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.

In keeping with the nature of apocalyptic writing, the account of the vision and its interpretation is presented as having been recorded at the time of Belshazzar; but at the command of the interpreting angel, it is kept a secret until centuries later (vs. 26b). It is presumably **discovered** and published—of course, by the man who **actually wrote the account** after Epiphanes desecrated the Temple.⁸

Post lecture Note: So, in effect, the author **writes the book** -- pretending that it was written several centuries previously -- then he says, "Look what I **discovered**! This ancient scroll with a seal on it! Let's unseal it and see what it says. . . . My goodness! It is predicting things about the end of the world. And look! These things are happening right now, in our own day! We must be close to the end of the world!"

The author is not intending to mislead. The apocalyptic author believes with his whole heart that the world has gone to hell in a hand basket. It is so messed up, God cannot fix it. The only thing he can do is smash it, and make a new world, and that is what he is going to do **very soon**.

Both the author and the original readers believe they are living in "the last days."
Fortunately for us, they were wrong!

If the author of Daniel had been right, the world would have ended about 160 years before Jesus came. The ongoing value of apocalyptic is not in the accuracy of its "predictions."
Rather it is in the example of maintaining **trust in God while under extreme adversity**.

⁸ Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 233.