Week 55, Lecture 175. Introduction to Judith.

Textual Contrast between Ruth, Esther, & Judith

**Ruth.** Everybody’s Bible (Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, Jews) has Ruth.

**Esther.** All Bibles contain the basic story of Esther. Catholic & Orthodox Bibles contain Greek “additions.”

**Judith.** This book is found only in Catholic and Orthodox Bibles. It is not in the Tanakh or Protestant Bible.

Preparatory Reading (I think this is all of the “hard copy” of Judith that I have)

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The *Latin Vulgate* is not a translation of the LXX. Jerome claims he translated it from Aramaic.
Translations of the Vulgate (Douay & Knox) differ significantly from the Greek at times. I will be commenting mostly on the Greek text, but will try to mention these as we go along.

There is a Syriac Version

My English translation of the Syriac Bible does not contain Judith.
I have “hard copy” and a computer version of the Syriac.
Unfortunately: No vowels. My Syriac is not good enough to read it with facility.
I will check the Syriac from time to time.
I have my “standing order” in for the Antioch Bible version -- Syriac (with vowels!) & English

Location. In most Catholic Bibles the order is: Nehemiah, Tobit, Judith, Esther, 1-2 Maccabees, Job.
A “Catholic edition,” e.g., of the RSV, NRSV, or other translation, will follow the same order.
Some Protestant Bibles “with Apocrypha” place Judith after the NT.
Some Protestant Bibles “with Apocrypha” place Judith between the OT &NT (between Malachi & Matthew).

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1 Lectures numbered consecutively. This is this week's 1st lecture, but its number reflects its place in the total sequence.
2 Jews call their Bible “TaNaK,” sometimes spelled “Tanakh,” T stands for *Torah,* the Law/Instruction of Moses; N stands for *Nevi’im,* the Hebrew word for “Prophets;” and the K stands for *Ketuvim,* “the Writings.” The three components of the Tanak are thus: Law, Prophets, Writings.
3 PDF online: [http://www.ecmarsh.com/lxx/](http://www.ecmarsh.com/lxx/)
6 The books in a blue font appear in Protestant Bibles.
Translations of the Bible. Most people do not have the luxury to spend years learning the biblical languages. But just as you can build up a color photo through images from red, green, and blue filters, so also comparing different translations of a passage can change your view from “black & white” to “color.”

Short Commentaries

Major Commentary
I have the electronic edition via Logos. I am not going to read this through, but I will consult it from time to time.

Basic Outline: The book can be divided into two parts: 1) Before Judith (chapters 1-7); 2) with Judith (chapters 8-16)

Outline in NABRE 7
I. Assyrian Threat (1:1–3:10) chapters 1-3
II. Siege of Bethulia (4:1–7:32) chapters 4-7
III. Judith, Instrument of the Lord (8:1–10:10) chapters 8-9
IV. Judith Goes Out to War (10:11–13:20) chapters 10-13
V. Victory and Thanksgiving (14:1–16:25) chapters 14-16

Jerome’s Prologue to Judith (Most scholars do not believe Jerome had the original. He was probably working with something that had been translated from Latin or Greek back into Aramaic.)

My Translation:
THE PROLOGUE TO JUDITH BEGINS.
Among the Hebrews the book of Judith is included among the Hagiographa, whose authority is judged inferior for supporting those things which come into contention.8 Nevertheless, it was written in the Chaldean [Aramaic] language, and is numbered among the histories. But because the Synod of Nicaea is said to have included this book in the number of the Holy Scriptures, I have acquiesced to your request – indeed a demand, and having put aside other projects on which I was diligently working to finish, I gave to this [project] one little night’s work, rendering more sense-for-sense than word-for-word. I totally omitted the extremely defective diversity of many codices; only those things which with complete discernment I was able to find in Chaldean words have I expressed in Latin.

Receive the widow Judith, an example of chastity, and in triumphal praise declare her with public proclamations. For this imitable person [Judith] -- not only to women, but also to men -- He who is the rewarder of

7 NABRE, Introduction to Judith. This introduction has been approved by the USCCB, and ultimately by Rome. It is thus part of the hierarchical magisterium of the Church.
8 Jerome is arguing that Judith and other books that Catholics regard as “deutero-canonical” have less “theological authority” among the Jews than the rest of the biblical books. Jerome appears to agree with this theory.
chastity has given, has granted such virtue, that she might conquer the one unconquered by all [the rest of] humanity, that she might defeat the undefeatable one.

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The Inclusion of Judith in the Biblical Canon
The Protestant tradition, excluding Judith & other deuteron-canonical books, goes back at least as far as Jerome. By contrast, Augustine was a big supporter of the inclusion of the deuteron-canonical books.

Note on the Style of Judith . The Greek word for “and” is kai. Here it is in Greek letters: ΚΑΙ.

Let's take a look at the appendix. Even students who do not read Greek can see how frequently kai occurs. The style is “paratactic:” and, and, and. This is characteristic of Hebrew & Aramaic. Most translations will not reproduce all of these “ands.” E.g., they will replace many with commas. The “and” at the beginning of many sentences will simply be omitted. The “and” at the beginning of many clauses will be changed to a subordinating conjunction -- for variety.

Bottom line: I am convinced that this book was written in Hebrew or Aramaic.
Perhaps the original will turn up one day. Who knows?

Post-Lecture Note. For those who missed my lecture on “Greek style” last semester, I will repost it along with this lecture.

Appendix: Greek Text of Esther 1 10

My translation. For another translation, see http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_preface_judith_e.htm

Accessed via BibleWorks 10, BGT database.
παραλίας ὁ τοὺς ἐν τοῖς ἔδνεσι τοῦ Καρυῆλου καὶ Γαλααδ καὶ τὴν ἀνω Γαλιλαίαν καὶ τὸ μέγα πεδίον Ξανδηρων καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν Σαμαρείᾳ καὶ ταῖς πόλεσιν αὐτῆς καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ιορδάνου ἔως Ιφναυαλημ καὶ Βατανη καὶ Χελους καὶ Καδης καὶ τοῦ ποταμοῦ Λιγύπτου καὶ Ταφνα καὶ Ραμεσσα καὶ πάσαν γῆν Γεσεμ ἐως τοῦ ἐλθείν ἐπάνω Τάνεως καὶ Μέμφεως καὶ πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Λιγύπτου ἐως τοῦ ἐλθείν ἐπὶ τὰ ὁρία τῆς Αιδιοπίας καὶ ἐφαύλισαν πάντας οἱ κατοικοῦντες πάσας τὴν γῆν τὸ βῆμα Ἡβουχοδονοσορ βασιλέως Ἁσσυρίων καὶ οὐ συνήλθον αὐτῷ εἰς τὸν πόλεμον ὅτι σύ ἐφοβήθησαν αὐτὸν ἀλλ᾽ ἢν ἐναντίον αὐτῶν ὡς ἀνήρ εἰς καὶ ἀνέστρεψαν τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ κενοῖς ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ προσώπου αὐτῶν

καὶ ἔθυμώθη Ναβουχοδονοσορ ἐπὶ πάσαν τὴν γῆν ταύτην σφόδρα καὶ ὠμοσε κατὰ τοῦ βρόνου καὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ εἰ μὴν ἐκδικήσειν πάντα τὰ ὁρία τῆς Κιλικίας καὶ Δαμαςκηνῆς καὶ Συρίας ἀνελεῖν τῇ ῥομφαίᾳ αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐν γῇ Μωαβ καὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς Λμων καὶ πάσαν τὴν ιουδαίαν καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν Λιγύπτω ἐως τοῦ ἐλθείν ἐπὶ τὰ ὁρία τῶν δύο βαλασῶν

καὶ παρετάξατο ἐν τῇ δύναμὶ αὐτοῦ πρὸς Αρφαξαδ βασιλέα ἐν τῷ ἔτει τῷ ἐπτακαίθεκάτω καὶ ἐκραταιώθη ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν πάσαν τὴν δύναμιν Αρφαξαδ καὶ πάσαν τὴν ἱππον αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντα τὰ ἀρματα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκυρίσει τῶν πόλεων αὐτοῦ καὶ ἄρχησεν ἐν τῷ ἐκβατάνῳ καὶ ἐκράτησε τῷ πύργῳ τοῦ Σαμαρείᾳ καὶ ἐκράτησεν τὸν πᾶν τῷ ἐν ὁρία τὰς πολέσιν τῷ ἐν ὁρία τῶν ἐκείνης σφόδρα καὶ ἐξωλέθρευσεν ἐν τῷ ἐν ὁρία τοῦ ποταμοῦ καὶ ἐπάνω ἀνω τῆς ἐκείνης ἡμέρας καὶ ἔλαβε τὸν Αρφαξαδ ἐν τοῖς ὦρεις Ραγαυ καὶ κατηκόντισεν αὐτὸν ἐν ταῖς σιβύναις αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξωλέθρευσεν αὐτὸν ἔως τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν μετ᾽ αὐτῶν αὐτὸς καὶ πᾶς ἡ σύμμικτος αὐτοῦ πλῆθος ἄνδρων πολεμιστῶν πολὺ σφόδρα καὶ ἐξεῖδὼνρ ιβυμῶν καὶ εὐχούμενος αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ δύναμις αὐτοῦ ἐφ᾽ ἡμέρας ἐκατόν εἴκοσι