

Daniel Notes - Greek Sections

The additions of Daniel are three chapters not found in the Hebrew/Aramaic text of Daniel. The text of these chapters is found in the Koine Greek Septuagint, the earliest Old Greek translation.

Additions to Daniel:

- - Song of the Three Holy Children
- - Susanna and the Elders
- - Bel and the Dragon

The Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Holy Children

Abbreviated Pr Azar, is a passage which appears after Daniel 3:23 in some translations of the Bible, including the ancient Greek Septuagint translation.

The passage includes three main components. The first is the penitential prayer of Daniel's friend Azariah (called Abednego in Babylonian, according to Daniel 1:6–7) while the three youths were in the fiery furnace. The second component is a brief account of a radiant figure who met them in the furnace yet who was unburned. The third component is the hymn of praise they sang when they realized their deliverance. The hymn includes the refrain, "Praise and exalt Him above all forever...", repeated many times, each naming a feature of the world.

The origins of these writings are obscure. Whether the accounts were originally composed in Hebrew (or Aramaic) or in Greek is uncertain, although many modern scholars conclude on the basis of textual evidence that there was probably an original Semitic edition. The date of composition of these documents is also uncertain, although many scholars favor a date either in the second or first century BC

Susanna and the Elders

A fair Hebrew wife named Susanna was falsely accused by lecherous voyeurs. As she bathes privately (having sent her attendants away) in her locked and walled garden, two elders, having previously said goodbye to each other, bump into each other again when they spy on her bathing. The two men realize they both lust for Susanna. When she makes her way back to her house, they accost her, demanding she have sexual intercourse with them. When she refuses, they have her arrested, claiming that the reason she sent her maids away was to be alone as she was having intercourse with a young man under a tree.

She refuses to be blackmailed and is arrested and about to be put to death for adultery when the young Daniel interrupts the proceedings, shouting that the elders should be interrogated to prevent the death of an innocent.

After being separated, the two men are cross-examined about details of what they saw but contradicted about the tree under which Susanna supposedly met her lover. In the Greek text, the names of the trees cited by the elders form puns with the sentences given by Daniel. The first says they were under a mastic tree (*ὕπο σχίνον*, *hypo schinon*), and Daniel says that an angel stands ready to cut (*σχίσει*, *schisei*) him in two. The second says they were under an evergreen oak tree (*ὕπο πρίνον*, *hypo prinon*), and Daniel says that an angel stands ready to saw (*πρίσαι*, *prisai*) him in two.

The great difference in size between a mastic and an oak makes the elders' lie plain to all the observers. The false accusers are put to death, and virtue triumphs.

Bel and the Dragon

The narrative of Bel (Daniel 14:1–22) ridicules the worship of idols. The king asks Daniel, "You do not think Bel is a living god? Do you not see how much he eats and drinks every day?"[8] to which Daniel answers that the idol is made of clay covered by bronze and thus cannot eat or drink. Enraged, the king then demands that the seventy priests of Bel show him who consumes the offerings made to the idol. The priests then challenge the king to set the offerings as usual (which were "twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep, and six vessels of wine") and then seal the entrance to the temple with his ring: if Bel does not consume the offerings, the priests are to be sentenced to death; otherwise, Daniel is to be killed.

Daniel then uncovers the ruse (by scattering ashes over the floor of the temple in the presence of the king after the priests have left) and shows that the "sacred" meal of Bel is actually consumed at night by the priests and their wives and children, who enter through a secret door when the temple's doors are sealed.

The next morning, the king comes to inspect the test by observing from above. He sees that the food has been consumed and points out that the wax seals he put on the temple doors are unbroken, and offers a hosanna to Bel. Daniel calls attention to the footprints on the temple floor; which the king then realizes by seeing footprints, along with more slender ones and smaller ones, shows that women and children also participated in the gluttony. The priests of Bel are then arrested and, confessing their deed, reveal the secret passage that they used to sneak inside the temple. They, their wives and children are put to death, and Daniel is permitted to destroy the idol of Bel and the temple. This version has been cited as an ancestor of the "locked-room mystery".

The dragon

In the brief but autonomous companion narrative of the dragon (Daniel 14:23–30).... , "There was a great dragon which the Babylonians revered." Some time after the temple's condemnation the Babylonians worshiped the dragon. The king says that unlike Bel, the dragon is a clear example of a live animal. Daniel promises to slay the dragon without the aid of a sword, and does so by baking pitch, fat, and hair (trichas) to make cakes (mazas, barley-cakes) that cause the dragon to burst open upon consumption. In other variants, other ingredients serve the purpose: in a form known to the Midrash, straw was fed in which nails were hidden, or skins of camels were filled with hot coals