

From Daniel 5
PARALLELISM BRINGS HOME THE MEANING
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From Daniel 5
PARALLELISM BRINGS HOME THE MEANING, PART 1

#1. A party was given. It was a time for distraction. "Belshazzar the king held a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand" v.1.

#2. The wine was mixed with desecration and idolatry. The guests drank from "vessels...taken out of the temple" v.3, 4.

#3. In that situation and fully unexpected, suddenly the Almighty makes an announcement: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN" v.5, 25.

#4. Daniel was brought in to explain "the handwriting on the wall". And he said to the king: "God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it". "You have been weighed on the scales and found deficient". "Your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians" v.26-28.

#5. *There is no analogy between that event and our contemporary times.* We will never be in such circumstances as that.

Questions: If there is no analogy between that past and our present then does this text or any text hold meaning in the present? Or is it just history? If it does hold meaning, how shall we apprehend it?

#6. The answers transcend *analogical reasoning*. Generalization recognizes that the language manifold about the event (the text itself) acts as grammar for *a parallelism of language*.

The parallel language development transmits meaning from that text to our moment in time. Example: *A parallel statement: All temporal authority and might is eclipsed by the will and the power of the invisible God of the Bible; then or now.*

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PARALLELISM BRINGS HOME THE MEANING, PART 2

#1. Those devoted to the interpretation of the Bible tend to insistence. In reading of the scripture, they insist, we infer our own times and experience back into the text. The inevitability of this is unavoidable, we are told.

#2. Hence they would say that the meaning of a text is constructed and not discovered. The point they wish to make is that no reader of Scripture can escape his or her own culture and language. The result of this is *the belief that there is no authentic truth, no absolute truth to be gained from the Bible.*

#3. This we must refute. If the language manifold of the Bible serves as a grammar for our language use, then the Holy Spirit has already put in place *a transport mechanism for truth through the ages.* This contradicts prevailing assumptions about how Scripture connects to the mind.

#4. A TRANSPORTED TRUTH: Revealed, biblical truth must be transported through all succeeding generations without fail. Its grammatical effect upon language is to be a social constant: "But the God in whose hand are your life-breath and all your ways, you have not glorified" v.23.

The Almighty is the axis of our existence. Experience is not redemptive nor is it explanatory. The Holy Spirit puts *the mind of God and natural language in parallel*; the result is revelation.

The word of God enables the human mind to be in parallel with that revealed truth. *This parallelism* is the source of eternal truth. And it is the mechanism of our understanding of it.

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PARALLELISM BRINGS HOME THE MEANING, PART 3

#1. There is something called "the rules of genre" under which some say Bible interpretation should be conducted. Once the Bible was categorized as "history," then the rules of genre were employed to try and comprehend the times, peoples, customs and languages, etc. that, supposedly, embraced the biblical past.

#2. However, the genre rules would say, since those times were distant and had no analogy to the contemporary (those times were not like ours), then human rationalism found no way to connect Scripture to the world of thought, speech and behavior.

#3. A theory was formulated under the assumption that the Bible was an artifact of far-removed cultures and strange, pre-modern ways of living.

#4. So, they would say, the Bible was shaped by the remote times of antiquity. *Its teachings could be and should be discarded--* and they were.

#5. It was inconceivable to skeptics that the biblical documents were all written at different times and yet with the same eternal purpose: to serve as *the control document* for human language use.

#6. Once human language be bound to revelation, then rationalism would be displaced as the key to life on earth.

#7. A TRANSPORTED MEANING: Belshazzar saw "the fingers of a man's hand" writing on the wall v. 5. The consequences: "the king's face grew pale and his thoughts alarmed him, and his hip joints went slack and his knees began knocking together" v.6. Belshazzar's mind *suddenly went into parallel* with the manifestation of revelation. The world had changed.

Old rules are irrelevant. Often believers and churches experience similar fears when confronted with parallelism to the word of God. Parallelism violates what we think we know about the world, about God and about ourselves.

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PARALLELISM BRINGS HOME THE MEANING, PART 4

#1. Generating meaning from the Bible by parallelism has an immediate effect upon *general knowledge and the knowledge of particulars*.

#2. Our inclination is to rely upon general knowledge of the world, not Scripture. Example: The world has many dangerous diseases. The knowledge of particulars serves us well; better than Scripture, some think. Example: A virus can insert itself into human cell structure.

#3. As events unfolded in the banquet hall, it was discovered that general knowledge and the knowledge of particulars were of no use v.5-9. Those present were "perplexed". There was *no natural explanation* for that set of conditions.

#4. What was needed was "an extraordinary spirit, knowledge and insight" v.12; "illumination, insight and extraordinary wisdom" v.14.

#5. What was needed, then, was someone who could transcend knowledge, general and particular, and bring the perplexed to a parallel relation with revelation. That was Daniel v.13.

#6. And that is ever the eternal purpose of revelation, the Word of God. Parallelism stakes everything on the irreducible belief that knowledge, general and particular, has been transcended by revealed truth and its meaning.

#7. Unbelief stridently opposes this contention. So, natural explanations are pursued much above revealed wisdom. Even in the churches, reliance upon human derived knowledge suppresses the truth of the Bible.

#8. A TRANSPORTED TRUTH: Knowledge, general and specific, are helpful and continually growing. But that knowledge must be understood to fluctuate under the higher leverage of the Word of God.

Believers trust in revelation and language in parallel to it, and the direct effect of revelation and God's power on material reality. Proof: "That same night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain" v.30. He did not die of natural causes nor of human will.

From Daniel 5

PARALLELISM BRINGS HOME THE MEANING, PART 5

#1. The practice of generalization is *the engine of parallelism*. Generalization has nothing to do with interpretation. This practice starts with the grammatical structure of the Word of God. In contrast, interpretation begins with human reason and experience. Generalization from Scripture to temporal existence is *the anti-interpretation*.

#2. The purpose in parallel thinking and generalization is *to bring the Word of God to bear upon the mind*. And that reverses the almost irresistible practice of bringing the human mind to bear upon the revelation.

#3. From Genesis 3 forward through the scriptural record, faithlessness is always directly accompanied by the historical actor's mind coming to bear on the expressed will of God.

#4. This is habitualized into how one reads the Bible.

#5. The movement from *the text-->to generalization-->to parallelism-->to application in the material order* gives the profile of the ascendant mind. This is a condition of mind ascending above its temporal setting.

#6. Of massive significance is this generalization from Daniel 5: True and therefore revealed understanding of the God of creation transcends all personal cognition. Such knowledge of God displaces personal, cultural, sociological, psychological, anthropological impressions and assumptions about God. Politically correct statements about the Lord are irrelevant.

This means that the terms of our temporal existence are, in fact, *non-temporal*. "But the God in whose hand are your life-breath and all your ways, you have not glorified" v.23. Exaltation of the self and the collectivity of selves carries with it invisible yet imminent danger.