

## Monday Night Discipleship: Week 23

### Overview:

1. Biblical Interpretation: Who or what determines the meaning of a text? (Part 1)
2. Longman Chapter 24 discussion:
  - a. Content: What Is Daniel About?
  - b. Authorship and Date: Who Wrote Daniel and When?
  - c. Genre: What Style of Literature Is Daniel?
  - d. Connections: How Does Daniel Connect to the Gospel?

### Biblical Interpretation: Who or what determines the meaning of a text? (Part 1)

1. The Reader as the Ultimate Determiner of Meaning
  - a. Also known as the reader-response approach to literature
  
  - b. What defines this approach?
    - i. In this approach, the reader is in “the \_\_\_\_\_ seat.” He has control to determine what the text actually means.
    - ii. This approach of interpreting literature is the dominant method within the secular academy.
    - iii. Plummer describes it this way: “According to this approach, even if the author were to stand up and say, “That’s not what I meant,” the reader would respond, “Who cares what you meant? This is the meaning *for me*.”
  - c. What is the product of this approach?
    - i. Contradictory conclusions-
    - ii. Plummer writes, “Adherents [of this approach] would rather affirm various irreconcilable interpretations than suggest that one interpretation is more valid than another. [...] In a pluralistic and multicultural society, it is seen as arrogant to claim final legitimacy for only one interpretation or opinion.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Plummer, Benjamin L. Merkle, *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2010), 128.

- d. What are the issues of this approach?
    - i. Everything is subjective-
    - ii. This method also assumes that “language is an instrument of oppression and liberation.”<sup>2</sup>
  - e. What are some examples of this approach?
    - i. Video discussion of reader-response teachings about the Bible:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2CBRYzCCwA>
    - ii. In what ways did the teacher/s evidence a reader-response approach? Explain.
    - iii. Plummer explains that whenever someone teaches with a reader-response approach to Biblical interpretation, “He or she has created meaning alien to the biblical author’s intent. The issue is not whether the interpreter’s point is valid [...]. The issue is: what was the purpose, intent, or meaning of the inspired author?”<sup>3</sup>
2. The Text as the Ultimate Determiner of Meaning
- a. Popular in the early to mid 20th century-
  - b. What defines this approach?
    - i. The philosophy of this approach invites readers to move past the history and biography of author/s, and study the text for what it \_\_\_\_\_ means today.

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Plummer, Benjamin L. Merkle, *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2010), 128.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Plummer, Benjamin L. Merkle, *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2010), 129.

- ii. Plummer explains that “Unlike the reader-response approach, the text-determined approach does accept an objective arbiter of meaning, but it is not the author. After the author finishes his work, the text is viewed as taking on a life of its own - containing meanings beyond the intent, and possibly contrary to the desire of, the original composer. Thus, knowing the historical setting and original addressees of a document is of no importance, according to this approach.”<sup>4</sup>
- c. What is the product of this approach?
  - i. Cynicism-
  - ii. Harsh literalism
- d. What are the issues of this approach?

Longman Chapter 24 discussion:

- 1. Content: What Is Daniel About?
  - a. Introduction:
    - i. “Daniel is a book of polarities.”<sup>5</sup> -
    - ii. Historical Background-
    - iii. Two major sections-
    - iv. One theme- “In spite of present difficulties, God is in \_\_\_\_\_, and he will have the victory.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Plummer, Benjamin L. Merkle, *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2010), 129.

<sup>5</sup> Raymond B. Dillard, Tremper Longman III, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 329.

<sup>6</sup> Tremper Longman III. *Introducing The Old Testament: A Short Guide to its History and Message* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2012), 140.

b. Outline:

- i. Narratives concerning Daniel as well as his ministry (Daniel 1-6)
  1. God allows the Judeans to be Captured and Trained in Babylon (Daniel 1)-
  2. Nebuchadnezzar's first dream and God's work (Daniel 2)-
  3. Nebuchadnezzar's Fiery Furnace and God's deliverance (Daniel 3)-
  4. Nebuchadnezzar's second dream and God's message of repentance (Daniel 4)-
  5. The Fall of Babylon (Daniel 5)-
  6. God delivers Daniel from the den of lions (Daniel 6)-
- ii. Daniel's visions displaying God's Sovereignty (Daniel 7-12)
  1. The Kingdom of God is coming (Chapter 7-8)-
  2. Daniel's Prayer and the 70 "weeks" (Chapter 9-10)-
  3. Daniel's final vision of God's deliverance (Chapter 11-12)-

2. Authorship and Date: Who Wrote Daniel and When?

- a. Author: Traditionally and most likely, \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ BC.

3. Genre: What Style of Literature Is Daniel?

- a. Major Prophets
- b. The first half is considered a theological history, while the second half is considered apocalyptic.

4. Connections: How Does Daniel Connect to the Gospel?  
Jesus Christ's Triumphant Return-

**R.E.A.P.**

Daniel 9:3-19

<sup>3</sup> Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. <sup>4</sup> I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, <sup>5</sup> we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. <sup>6</sup> We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. <sup>7</sup> To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. <sup>8</sup> To us, O LORD, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. <sup>9</sup> To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him <sup>10</sup> and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. <sup>11</sup> All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. <sup>12</sup> He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, <sup>[a]</sup> by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the LORD our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your

truth. <sup>14</sup>Therefore the LORD has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. <sup>15</sup>And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

<sup>16</sup>“O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us. <sup>17</sup>Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord,<sup>[b]</sup> make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. <sup>18</sup>O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. <sup>19</sup>O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.”<sup>7</sup>

1. **Read aloud together**
2. **Explain by answering the three questions: What does this passage teach us about \_\_\_\_\_?**
  - a. God:
  - b. Man:
  - c. Christ:
3. **Ask-** What question/s would help you understand the text more fully?
4. **Pray-** Using some of your observations and questions, write out a prayer to God.

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<sup>7</sup> The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Daniel 9:3-19. All passages of Scripture will come from this translation unless otherwise referenced.