

Daniel 2:20-23

Aramaic and Late Classical Hebrew

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The original Aramaic is presented in Tiberian Masoretic dress. Vertical alignment of versets facilitates the observation of parallelisms. A verset of two to three stress units is given a line of its own, with stress units marked by the use of the *maqeph* like MT, but not always in accordance with it. Interstitial gaps of varying dimensions set off lines, strophes, and stanzas. A circulus is placed over a word if its consonantal skeleton or vocalization is at variance with MT. An introduction to the building blocks of ancient Hebrew and Aramaic verse, discussions of individual poems, and background essays of a technical nature are offered elsewhere.¹

Differences in the use of blank spacing define stress units, versets, lines, strophes, and stanzas. Minimal use of capitalization and punctuation is intentional. By and large capitalization marks the onset of a stanza as defined in the general rule.²

The translation into late classical Hebrew illustrates the degree to which liturgical Aramaic and Hebrew in Judaism of the Persian and Hellenistic periods resembled one another. With few exceptions, the vocabulary, set phrases, and syntactic patterns of the Aramaic have natural equivalents in late classical Hebrew. A selection of syntactic and phraseological parallels are listed in the left margin. Alternative equivalents of זְמַנֵּיָא and נְהוֹרָא: הַזְמַנִּים (Est 9:27; Qoh 3:2; etc.) and נְהַרְרָה (Job 3:4), respectively, loans into Hebrew from Aramaic. So far as I know, exact equivalents of נְהִירָו and שְׂרָא are unavailable.

¹ See the writer's "Regularities in Ancient Hebrew Verse: An Overview," and supporting essays, at www.ancienthebrewpoetry.typepad.com.

² The general rule: ancient Hebrew and Aramaic verse is confined within a system of "twos and threes": two to three "stress units" make up a "verset"; two to three versets a poetic "line"; two to three lines a "strophe"; two to three strophes a "stanza"; two to three stanzas a "section"; and two to three sections a poem, or an extensive section thereof.

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Ps 113:2; Jb 1:21	יְהִי שֵׁם	לַיהוָה שְׁמָה
Dn 9:4; Ne 8:6	הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל מְבָרָךְ	דִּי־אֱלֹהָא רַבָּא מְבָרָךְ
Ps 106:48	מִן־הָעוֹלָם וְעַד־הָעוֹלָם	מִן־עֲלָמָא וְעַד־עֲלָמָא
Jb 12:13	כִּי־חֲכָמָה וּגְבוּרָה	דִּי־חֲכָמְתָא וּגְבוּרָתָא
Gn 31:16	לֹא הִיא	דִּי־לָהּ הִיא
Gn 2:11; Ps 89:35	וְהוּא הַמְּשֻׁנָּה	וְהוּא מֵהַשְּׁנָא
Dn 12:7; 2 Ch 12:33	הַמוֹעֲדִים וְהַעֲתִים	עֲדָנְיָא וְזַמְנֵיָא
2 Sa 3:10; Dn 11:20	הַמַּעֲבִיר מַלְכִים	מֵהַעֲדָה מַלְכִין
1 Sa 2:8; Jr 30:9	וּמְקִים מַלְכִים	וּמְהַקִּים מַלְכִין
2 Ch 1:11-12	הַנּוֹתֵן חֲכָמָה לְחֲכָמִים	יְהִיב חֲכָמְתָא לְחַכְמִין
Dn 1:4; 1 Ch 12:33	וּמַדְע לִידְעֵי בִינָה	וּמַנְדַּעַא לִידְעֵי בִינָה
Jb 12:22	הוּא הַמַּגִּלָּה	הוּא גִלָּא
Jr 49:10	עֲמֻקּוֹת וּמִסְתָּרוֹת	עַמְיֻקְתָא וּמִסְתָּרְתָא
1 Sa 26:18; Qo 1:4	יָדַע מֵהַבְּחוּשׁ	יָדַע מָה בְּחֻשׁכָא
Jdg 19:9; Ps 19:5	וְאוֹר עֲמוּ חָנָה	וּנְהוּרָא עַמָּה שְׂרָא
Dn 11:37	לֵךְ אֱלֹהֵי אָבֹתַי	לֵךְ אֱלֹהֵי אָבֹתַי
Ps 117:1	אוֹדָה וְאֶשְׁבַּח	מְהוֹדָא וּמִשְׁבַּח אָנָּה
Ex 36:1	כִּי־חֲכָמָה וּתְבוּנָה	דִּי־חֲכָמְתָא וּנְהוּרְוֹתָא
2 Ch 1:11-12	נְתַתָּה לִי	יְהִבְתָּ לִי
Ex 33:12	וַעֲתָה הוֹדַעְתָּנִי	וּכְעַן הוֹדַעְתָּנִי
Dn 1:8; Est 2:15	אֲשֶׁר בְּקִשְׁנוּ מִמֶּךָ	דִּי־בְעִינָא מִנְךָ
Jb 14:23	כִּי־דָבַר הַמְּלִךְ הוֹדַעְתָּנוּ	דִּי־מַלְתָּ מַלְכָא הוֹדַעְתָּנָא
1 Sa 21:9; 1 Kg 15:5		