

The Book of Daniel ch 2-3

Recap: Daniel is placed fourth in the "Great Books" of Prophecy. But it is not so much a prophecy as it is addressing problems faced by the Jewish peoples living under the Greek Antiochid monarchy, in the period following Alexander. While it is set in the period of Exile, (6th century) it was composed in the second century BC. *Further it falls into two halves; first is ch 1-5 (Daniel's Adventures and 6-end his "prophecies." This first part is a series of stories which each have a message to the Jews of their day.

- Ch 1: the question of diet, which was not simply a matter of religious law but also of maintaining a culture. Daniels says that by observing the laws (Parve) and eating only vegetable, the people were both healthier and wise
 - Note: 1 Maccabees 1:41, and 2 Mass 7 death before profanement
- The problem of production of "texts"

Characteristics of classical Hebrew Prophecy

Collections of poetic statements

Early: seers with a natural ability to figure things out

Classical beginning of the 8th century: Amos, Hosea

Exilic: God is going to fix things: Ezekiel's dry bones, Isaiah 40

Post-exilic: Haggai: cheerleaders for the new temple, beginnings of apoc

Accusations are aimed at Idolatry which is compared to adultery

Hosea 4:12

Punishment in this life is promised: you will go into exile

A real life event occurs and an inner message is revealed (Isaiah 6) Amos 8

The prophet often does an act which makes it irrevocable

ref. Ezekiel and the two sticks

Jesus words at the Last Supper

Often a call to national repentance to stave off a pending disaster

Characteristics of Apocalyptic literature "revelation"

Planned prosed literature

A common form of literature: 33 known, inc. Mark 13 and Revelation.

It is very pessimistic: this are bad and getting worse

Often attributed to some famous: name is often a front

Offers information on a secret, but often coded language: they loved numbers and specific ages of time

Often speaks of resurrection from the dead

Often speaks of unfulfilled prophecy

Often a dualistic universe, conflict between good and evil

Supernatural beings often appear
Often the rise of messianic beings are involved
Symbols are used which only a few will get

Comparison: Prophecy looks to the present and recent past
Apocalyptic concerns a future time

C 2: The King's dream and five kingdoms: how shall we live under the Greeks?

*the kings wise men are a gang of idiots and charlatans

Many claim to be smart, but are they wise?

*Daniel relies on his trust in God and not on his own wits: and is answered

* Daniel, unlike others, does not desire the death of the wise men

* The four kingdoms

Gold - Babylon - an obvious compliment to the King

Silver: the Medes

Bronze: the Persians, who became powerful the same times as the Medes but as time went on overcame them

Iron *a base metal, and clay, a mineral not a metal

A bastard kingdom and doomed v. 43

The Antiochids are screaming doomed despite appearances

Who will take their place (v. 44) the Romans

Daniel and friends rewarded

Message: hold on, it's not long now and is ordained by God

c. 3 Situation: how do we deal with divine right monarchy?

Polytheism: the king claims to be a bit divine (Korea, USSR)

Can one be loyal to such a ruler? Answer: loyal but not obedient
on one hand one will be condemned to death

On the other: it may not be carried out. Solution: adoration belongs
to God alone and trust in Him must be maintained

Question: what is it to bless something? Azariah's prayer of blessing

Judaism has no priesthood today and no power; one blesses
God for things, it is an act of worship not a cosmic zap.

*an angel goes before the condemned and they are saved

*the King himself converts to the worship of the One God and persecutes
those who blaspheme it

*what is missing here? A reference to the afterlife

*compare with 2 Macabees 12:38 ff.