

Hope in a Hopeless Time

Session 4: November 17, 2019 (Daniel)

1. Criticism

a. Author

- i. Multiple authors; attributed to Daniel (“God is my judge”)
- ii. Considered “fictional” in the sense that it is a crafted set of narratives instead of oracles
- iii. Written in Aramaic, Hebrew, (and Greek)
- iv. The text’s date is not settled; often considered Deuteronomical (with some of its sections deemed Deuterocanonical)

b. Audience

- i. [Old View] The faithful in captivity during the Babylonian exile
- ii. [Newer View] Reestablished Jews after the building of the Second Temple.
- iii. [Christian Symbolic] Christians wanting a description of the end times

c. Style (cf. Collins, *Daniel, with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, Eerdmans 1984)

- i. Legend [Daniel 1-6]
- ii. Historical Apocalypse [Daniel 7-12]
 1. *Ex eventu* prophecy: prophesies events that have already happened
 - a. Periodization of history
 - b. Regnal prophecy: “predictions” of the rise and fall of nations and rulers
 2. Eschatological predictions
 - a. Signs of the End Times
 - b. Description of Judgment Scenes
 - c. Epiphany of a Heavenly Figure
 3. VERSUS Otherworldly Journey Apocalypse (cf. Revelation next time)
- iii. Interpretation of Symbolic Dreams (throughout)
- iv. Numerology

d. Messages

- i. God is sovereign over the kingdoms of Earth (even if it doesn’t feel that way).
- ii. God’s Kingdom will survive and overthrow all earthly kingdoms.
- iii. Remain faithful to God; do not partake in pagan religious rituals.

e. Interpretive Frameworks

- i. Literal: The text describes the historical situation of the author, with an expression of hope about the immanent future pertaining to that situation.
- ii. (Christian) Symbolic: OT prophecy foretells of Jesus the Messiah.
- iii. Dispensationalist: The text blends both the Literal and Symbolic framework.
- iv. Apocalyptic: The text describes the end of the world, freed from the concrete historical particulars within which the text is written.

2. Outline of the Book of Daniel

(adapted from <http://biblestudytools.com/daniel/> and Collins [op. cit.])

- a. The Legends [1-6]
 - i. Introduction: Daniel and Friends Avoid the Royal Food (Ch. 1)
 - ii. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Ch. 2)
 - iii. The Fiery Furnace (Ch. 3)
 - iv. Nebuchadnezzar's Madness and Fall (Ch. 4)
 - v. Belshazzar's Feast and the Writing on the Wall (Ch. 5)
 - vi. Darius, Daniel, and the Den of Lions (Ch. 6)
- b. The Apocalyptic Visions [7-12]
 - i. The Four Beasts (Ch. 7)
 - ii. The Ram and the He-Goat (Ch. 8)
 - iii. Daniel's Prayer and the Seventy "Sevens" (Ch. 9)
 - iv. The Future of Israel and the Worldly Kingdoms (Chs. 10-12)
 - 1. Angelic Epiphany (Ch. 10)
 - 2. Prophecies against Persia, Greece, Egypt, and Syria (Ch. 11)
 - 3. Warnings of the "Anti-Christ"/False Messiah (11: 36-45)
 - 4. The End of Time (Ch. 12)

3. Today's Recommended Chapters

- a. Chapter 2: Four Kingdoms
 - i. Babylon → Medes → Persia → Greece [Literal]
 - ii. Babylon → Medo-Persia → Greece → Rome [Symbolic/Dispensationalist]
 - iii. Babylon → Greece → Rome → USSR [Apocalyptic]
- b. Chapter 3: Fiery Furnace and "Son of God"
 - i. The Archangel Michael
 - ii. Jesus
 - iii. One and the same → Melchizedek
- c. Chapter 7: Four Beasts (see Ch. 2)
 - i. Throne Vision
 - ii. Judgment Scene
 - iii. Epiphany of a Heavenly Figure
 - iv. The Ten Horns that point to Antiochus Epiphanes, Greek ruler
- d. Chapter 12: Resurrection and Judgment
 - i. Resurrection and Everlasting Life
 - ii. The Book of Life
 - iii. "Time, times, and half a time"
 - 1. 3.5 years → 42 months
 - 2. 1290 days and 1335 days

READING ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT TIME: Revelation 4-5, 20-22