

# The Princeton Theological Review

OCTOBER, 1921

---

## APOCALYPSES AND THE DATE OF DANIEL

Apocalypse means revelation. In Biblical literature and the literature connected with it, there is a large number of books either in part or in whole of an apocalyptic character, either real or assumed, in which there purports to be unveiled before us the secrets of the past, the present, or the future, which could not have been learned by mere human insight or foresight. The preliminary question, and perhaps the more important question, to be answered before we consider the specific case of Daniel, is therefore, whether such a thing as a revelation has taken place, or at least whether it is possible. Every one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God and also every one who believes in the claims of the prophets of the Old Testament, must believe both in the possibility and the fact of such a thing as revelation by God to man. It is to such, and such only, that the discussion in this article is addressed, and we shall discuss in their proper place whether there is anything in the revelations contained in Daniel either in form or in character and content which renders it impossible to believe in the possibility or in the actuality of their having been made in the 6th century B. C.

The necessity of entering upon this discussion arises, not from the fact that their predictive character is denied by those who reject the Theistic system, but because in its most essential features it is impugned by many who profess their belief that "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past unto the fathers and the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." The objections to Daniel to which attention is called will be stated, then, in the words of Professor Charles, profes-

sor in the University of Oxford, and in those of Professor Prince of Columbia University. They are as follows:

"Apocalyptic arose at a time when Israel had been subject for centuries to the sway of one or another of the great world powers. Hence in order to harmonize such difficulties with the Lord's righteousness, it had to take account of the *rôle* of such empires in the counsels of God; to recount the sway and downfall of each in turn, till, finally, the lordship of the world passed into the hands of Israel, or the final judgment arrived. The chief particulars of these events belonged, it is true, to the past; but the Apocalyptic writers represent them as still in the future, arranged under certain artificial categories of time, and as definitely determined from the beginning in the counsels of God and revealed by Him to His servants the prophets."<sup>1</sup>

"It should be noticed that the book of Daniel differs materially from all the prophetic writings of the Old Testament in the general style of its prophecies. Other prophets confine themselves to vague and general predictions, but the author of Daniel gives a detailed account of the historical events, etc."<sup>2</sup>

It is asserted, also, that the apocalypse of Daniel resembles the apocalyptic literature of the period from 200 B.C. onward to 135 A.D. rather than the visions of the earlier centuries.

These objections involve the following assumptions:

I. That the form in which the supposed predictive elements of Daniel are clothed is such as could not have been employed in the 6th century B.C.

II. That Daniel's apocalypse resembles those from the 2nd century B.C. to 135 A.D. rather than those of the Biblical writers of earlier times.

III. That the character of the predictive elements is such as to render it in the highest degree improbable, to say the least, that they could have been written before the events which they so accurately describe had actually occurred.

IV. That since apocalyptic writers represent past as future, Daniel is false simply because it is or contains apocalypses.

I. As to the form of the book of Daniel, it will be

<sup>1</sup> H. D. B., I, 110a.

<sup>2</sup> Prince: *Commentary on Daniel*, p. 21.

noted that only a part can be called apocalyptic. The first six chapters with the exception of a part of chapter two contain a narrative of some of the events in the life of Daniel and of his three companions. The form of this narration is not dissimilar from that followed in the case of Joseph, Samuel, David, Jeremiah, and Ahikar, so that no one perhaps would deny that so far as its literary form is concerned, aside from its linguistic characteristics, it might have been written as early as the 6th century B.C.; were it not that, since Daniel is considered to be a unit, it is thought necessary to bring this historical part down to a time when the apocalyptic parts, if *post-eventum*, must have been written.

Since, then, it is to the form of the apocalyptic portion that exception is made, we shall confine ourselves strictly to this point, and shall investigate it under the three heads which are naturally suggested by the subject-matter itself. It may be said in the first place that the apocalyptic material of Daniel is not an apocalypse but a number of apocalypses occurring under five subsidiary forms.

First, there is a dream and its interpretation (chaps. iv., vii.).

Secondly, there is a prayer and its answer (chap. ix.).

Thirdly, there are two or three visions each consisting of a symbol, or sign, and its explanation; these are to be found in chaps. viii., x., and xii.

Fourthly, there is in chaps. xi.-xii, 1-4 a direct address to the prophet without telling the manner of the coming of the information.

Fifthly, God, or his angel, speaks directly to someone.

1. As to the first of these, the dream apocalypses, we have abundant parallels in the literature preceding the time of Daniel (cir. 535 B.C.), both profane and sacred. In the Scriptures, we have among others the dreams of Joseph, of the chief butler and chief baker, and of Pharaoh, recorded in Genesis xxxvii., xl., and xli., and the dream of the Midianite mentioned in Judges vii. 13, 14: in which the

Lord revealed his will through dreams. In all these cases, as in that of Nebuchadnezzar, the dreams are such as the persons dreaming them would naturally have had and the interpretations are in harmony with the person and circumstances concerned. The narratives differ in length but not in essential characteristics from those of Daniel.

In profane literature, I shall cite parallels only in the case of five kings, one of Lydia, one of Assyria, one of Babylonia, one of Persia, and one of Greece. Gyges, king of Lydia, is reported by Ashurbanipal to have seen a dream in which Ashur revealed the name Ashurbanipal to Gyges and said: "Grasp the feet of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, and thou shalt through his name conquer thy enemies."<sup>3</sup>

Again, Ashurbanipal says<sup>4</sup> that he slew Teumman, king of Elam, in the power of Ashur and Marduk the great gods his lords who had encouraged him by means of a sign, an oracular dream, the message of a priest, and again<sup>5</sup> that the goddess Ishtar had caused his troops to see a dream toward the end of night in which she said to them: "I am going before Ashurbanipal the king whom my hands have made"; and that "relying upon this dream, his troops crossed the Idide river in good spirits." He tells, moreover, of a seer of dreams (*shabru*) who lay down toward the end of night and saw in a dream that upon the sickle of the moon stood written: "Whoever plans evil and undertakes war against Ashurbanipal, King of Assyria, him will I cause an evil death to overtake; through the quick iron sword, the fire-brand, hunger, the plague of Gira, will I put an end to his life." When the king heard this dream he relied upon the word of Sin his Lord; for as he says<sup>6</sup> the gods had announced to him continually joyous messages concerning the conquest of his enemies and had made his dreams upon his bed favorable.

<sup>3</sup> KB II, 172, 173.

<sup>4</sup> KB II, 253.

<sup>5</sup> KB II, 201.

<sup>6</sup> KB II, 233.

So Nabunaid<sup>7</sup> was caused to see the following dream:

In the beginning of my enduring reign they caused me to see a dream; Marduk, the great Lord, and Sin, the light of heaven and earth stood beside me. Marduk spoke to me: Nabunaid king of Babylon, with thy horses and wagons bring bricks, build Ehulhul and let Sin, the great Lord make his dwelling therein. Fearfully spake I to Marduk the Lord of the Gods: That temple which thou hast ordered me to make, the Umman-Manda have surrounded it and great is their might. Then spake Marduk to me: The Umman-Manda whereof thou speakest, their land and the kings who stood by their sides to help them exist no more.

Herodotus tells us that Xerxes was not at first inclined to make war against Greece but was driven thereto by a couple of dreams.

The first night he imagined that a tall and handsome man stood before him and said: Do you, then, change your mind, O Persian, and resolve not to lead an army against Greece, after having ordered the Persians to assemble their forces? You do not well to change your resolution, nor is there any man who will agree with you; therefore pursue that course which you resolved upon in the day. The second night, after that Xerxes had paid no attention to the first dream, the same dream came to him again and said: Son of Darius, you have, then, openly renounced, in the presence of the Persians, the intended expedition, and make no account of my words, as if you had not heard them from anyone. Be well assured, however, of this, that unless you immediately undertake this expedition, this will be the consequence to you: As you have become great and powerful in a short time, so you shall become low again in an equally short time.<sup>8</sup>

Josephus<sup>9</sup> says that Alexander the Great told Jaddua the high priest that while he was at Dios in Macedonia he had seen him in a dream in the very habit in which he came to meet Alexander when on his way to Jerusalem; and that in this dream Jaddua had exhorted him boldly to pass over the sea, for that he would conduct his army and give him the dominion over the Persians.

2. As a parallel to the prayer of Daniel in chapter ix. and its answer we have in the Scriptures the instance where Hezekiah laid the letter of Sennacherib before the Lord and prayed and the answer came to him through Isaiah the

<sup>7</sup> KB III, II, p. 99.

<sup>8</sup> Book VII, 12, 14.

<sup>9</sup> *Artiq.* xi, viii, 5.

prophet assuring him that Sennacherib should return to Assyria without capturing Jerusalem (Isa. xxxvii. 10-35). In like manner Assurbanipal says that on account of the wickedness which Teumman king of Elam had spoken he went to the exalted Ishtar, stood before her, and bowed down to her, his tears aflowing, and said:

"O Mistress of Arbela! I am Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, the creature of thy hands . . . of the father thy begetter. For the renovation of the temples of Assyria and the completion of the great cities of Accad, I have sought thy holy places and have gone to worship. . . . But as to Teumman, king of Elam, who honors not the gods, do Thou, O Mistress of Mistresses, goddess of battle, mistress of conflict, queen of the gods, who speakest favorably before Ashur thy father, thy begetter; do thou (destroy) him who has set his army in motion, and made war and taken up arms, to go against Assyria. Do Thou, the warrior of the gods, like a *bitte* in the midst of the battle put him in disarray and smite him with a storm and an evil wind." Ishtar heard my sougning sighs and said, "Fear not" and encouraged my heart. She said: "On account of the raising of thy hands, which thou hast raised, and of thy eyes which are filled with tears, I will show thee favor."

Toward the end of that night in which I had turned myself to her, a seer laid himself down and saw a dream-vision, a vision of the night Ishtar caused him to see, and he told it to me, as follows: "Ishtar who dwells in Arbela entered and to right and left she hung quivers. She had her bow in her hand and drew from its sheath a sharp warlike sword. Before her didst thou enter. She, like the mother who bore thee, spake with thee. Ishtar, the exalted of the gods, spake to thee and issued the command to thee: "See that thou givest battle(?); wherever thy person (*panuki*) dwells, I shall go." Thou spakest to her: "To the place where thou goest, will I go, O Mistress of Mistresses". She told thee: "Thou mayest abide here in the place of the habitation of Nebo, eat food, drink wine, make music, honor my godhead, till I go and do that work and fulfill the wish of thy heart; thy face shall not blanch and thy feet shall not turn (*inarridu*), nor shalt thou put thy *kurget* in the midst of the battle; in her good bosom shall she cover thee (*taḥṣinka*) and protect all thy form(?). Before her, a flame will flare up and for the conquest of thy foes she will cause it to burst forth. Against Teumman, king of Elam, with whom she is enraged, her face is fixed."<sup>10</sup>

3. As to the vision consisting of a symbol and an explanation, we find it to be the favorite method of the prophets just as it was in the case of Daniel. Thus Amos has the

<sup>10</sup> Dream of Nabunaïd.

visions of the plumbline (chap. vii.) and of the basket of summer fruit (chap. viii.). Isaiah has the vision of the Lord in His temple (ch. vi.), and that of Mahar-shalal-hash-baz (chap. viii.). Jeremiah has the vision of the two baskets of figs. (chap. xxiv.). Ezekial has the visions of the cherubim (chaps. i. & x.), of the fire (chap. viii.), of the dry bones (ch. xxxvii.), and of the temple (chap. xl-xlviii.). Zechariah has those of the red horse, of the four carpenters (chap. i), of Joshua and Satan (chap. iii.), of the golden candlestick and the two olive trees (chap. iv), of the flying roll, and of the woman sitting in the ephah (chap. v.), and of the four chariots (chap. vi.). Compare also the vision of the burning bush in Exodus iii., Elijah at Horeb, 1 Kings xix., and Micaiah before Ahab, 1 Kings xxii.

So in profane literature, an Assyrian writer<sup>11</sup> tells the story of how a fox made its way into the royal park of the city of Assur and took refuge in the lake but was afterwards caught and killed.<sup>12</sup> This was interpreted by the astrologers as a sign.

Nabunaid<sup>13</sup> says that on account of the conjunction of a great star with the moon he was thoughtful in his heart, etc.

4. Fourthly, the prophet predicts without telling in what manner he got his information, xi.<sup>14</sup>

5. A fifth kind of prediction is frequently found in the prophets of the Old Testament wherein God or his angel is represented as speaking to the prophet without the intervention of a dream or vision, e.g., Dan. ix. 22-27.

So, also, Ashurbanipal says that the goddess Nannai foretold saying: Ashurbanipal shall bring me out of wicked Elam and shall bring me in to Eanna.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> K 551.

<sup>12</sup> R. C. Thompson, *The Reports of the Magicians and Astrologers of Assyria and Babylonia*, p. xvii.

<sup>13</sup> In Num. 8 of LZ, Col. vii, 4.

<sup>14</sup> Compare Deut. 32, 33, Gen. 49, and numerous tablets in Thompson's *Reports*.

<sup>15</sup> KB II, 211.

II. But not only is the form in which the visions and dreams of Daniel are presented to us permissible in the 6th century B.C., we can go further and say that it was not a common form in use in the 2nd century B.C. Of all the apocalyptic literature of the Hebrews, the only one of which the whole or parts are thought to have been written in the 2nd century B.C. are Jubilees, the XII Patriarchs, and parts of Enoch, of the Sibylline Oracles, and of Baruch.

As to *Jubilees*, the form is not at all that found in Daniel. This book gives citations from the historical portions of the Pentateuch and then gives a sort of commentary upon them, in which the author attempts to show that the principal laws of the Pentateuch were in existence in the time of the men whose history is recorded in Genesis, and that in many cases God had revealed these laws to the fathers long before the time of Moses. Long passages of Genesis are cited almost verbatim and certain laws which were afterwards clearly enunciated by Moses are inferred as having been not merely implied in these narratives, but as having been expressly declared at the time when the history was enacted. The form is not that of dreams and visions which are interpreted, with the prayers and the answers of Moses, such as we find in Daniel; but it resembles rather the admixture of history and law which is found in Numbers, or Chronicles.

As to *The XII Patriarchs*, the twelve so-called visions of it are fashioned after the prototype of the blessings of Jacob recorded in Gen. xlix. and those of Moses found in Deut. xxxiii. Each one of the patriarchs before his death calls his sons together and makes predictions as to their future, just as Jacob and Moses are said to have done, except that their sons are not mentioned by name nor their blessings divided. The age of each of the patriarchs at the time of his death is usually given at the beginning of his blessing and at the end it is said that the bones of each one of them, except Joseph, were carried up and buried in Hebron. One patriarch discusses the harmful effects of lust, another of theft, another of murder, etc. In the case



of others, such as Joseph, the virtues of continence and mercy are exalted. The form is the same in all the twelve and in no one of them is there any resemblance to any one of the visions or dreams of Daniel.

The form of that part of the apocryphal book of *Baruch* which is usually put in the 2nd century B.C.<sup>16</sup> is like the narrative in the book of Jeremiah and has no resemblance whatever to that of the book of Daniel. The confessions of the people are mostly taken apparently from Neh. ix. and Daniel ix. but are not followed by a vision as in Daniel.

The parts of the *Sibylline Oracles* which are thought to have been written before 100 B.C. comprise most of Book III. They are all written in the metre of Homer's *Iliad*. No author is mentioned, nor is any date given. They are admitted to have been formed after the analogy of the heathen oracles of the Sibyl, and nothing like them was, so far as we know, ever composed in Hebrew, and certainly nothing like them is to be found in Daniel.

There remain only the portions of *Enoch* which are said to have been written before 100 B.C. These are the only apocalyptic writings of this period which in form may be said to resemble Daniel. The principal argument is that both authors assert that they have received the subject-matter(?) of their narratives by a revelation and this commonly from an angel. But as we have seen above, nearly all of the prophets say that they had visions; and angels are said to have spoken to Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and especially to Zechariah. The differences however between Daniel and Enoch are very great and should not be overlooked. For example, Daniel always gives a definite time and place for his visions, Enoch never. Daniel confines himself to earthly localities for his revelations. Enoch is snatched off to the heavens for his. Daniel speaks of well known potentates of earth, such as Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus; whereas Enoch mentions no man by name, but confines his personal designations to archangels, good and

<sup>16</sup> See Churton, on *Baruch* in *Com. on O. T.* of the S. P. C. K.

bad. Daniel confines himself to dreams and visions such as would naturally be suggested by his earthly surroundings, situated as he is said to have been in the courts of the kings of Babylon and Persia; but Enoch hies away like a witch on a broomstick to sweep the cobwebs from the sky. Daniel confines himself to prose, or the higher style of prophetic discourse; whereas Enoch slips off into poetry, in which more than half of his material is composed. Daniel is so definite and clear in his allusions and statements that in some parts (as chap. xi.) what he writes might well be taken as an outline of the history of the times of which he speaks and all commentators are agreed as to the events to which the larger part of his apocalypse refers; whereas Enoch is so indefinite, that it is only with great difficulty that any two commentators can agree as to the events to which he refers. Daniel by his frankness boldly challenges the world to investigate the truth of his statements; whereas Enoch hides himself behind a mass of dark figures and recondite allusions and veiled and dubious utterances, as if he feared that which he meant should be revealed to those whom he addressed.

Nor is it correct to say that the form of the visions of Daniel was a common form of the apocalypse after 100 B.C. For:

1. The books of *Enoch* and the *Sibylline Oracles* are just as different from Daniel in their later as in their earlier portions. 2. The seven portions of the *Apocalypse of Baruch*, which Professor Charles dates from shortly before 70 A.D. to between 130 and 180 A.D., when a redactor is said to have put them together, have an artistic form that is utterly foreign to Daniel. According to the scheme of the final editor, the seven parts are divided from each other by fasts. Thus in v. 2, ix. 2, xii. 5, xxi. 1, xlvi. 2, there are fasts,—the last four being each of seven days.<sup>17</sup> In each part the fast is generally followed by “a prayer; then a divine message or revelation, then an announcement of this

<sup>17</sup> These may be compared to the fasts mentioned in Dan. ix. 3, 29-21.

either to an individual or to the people, followed occasionally by a lamentation."<sup>18</sup> In some of the parts we find indications of the form of vision given to Daniel (e.g., xxii. 1, liii. 1, lv. 3); but in general it is copied rather after the style of Jeremiah.

3. The *Assumption of Moses* is in the form of a dying charge from Moses to Joshua, similar to the blessings of Jacob in Gen. xlix. and that of Moses in Deut. xxxiii., only that it gives the fortune of the people of Israel rather than the fortune of the individual tribes. In parts, such as the ninth verse of chapter vi., it resembles, it is true, in its detailed statement of events, the eleventh chapter of Daniel. But, in chapter x. 1-10 it is more like in form to the Sibyllian Oracles, or to the poetical parts of Enoch, which have no parallel in Daniel; and in chapters vii.-ix. it seems to be in imitation of Deut. xxviii. It nowhere purports to contain a vision, or a dream, or an interpretation of a dream; but like the blessings of Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, gives a lengthy prediction of the history of Israel from the standpoint of the time of the supposed speaker. The rest of the book is an expansion of the last scenes and words between Moses and Joshua as recorded in the last chapter of Deuteronomy.

4. The so-called *Ascension of Isaiah* is divided by Professor Charles into three parts—of these, the first, called the "Martyrdom," purports to be and is written as if it were historical, after the manner of the book of Kings. The second part, the "Testament of Hezekiah," is a professedly predictive description of the coming forth of the Beloved (the Messiah) from the seventh heaven and of his life on earth, of his crucifixion, and the sending forth of the twelve disciples, etc. It is derived apparently from the records of the *Gospels* and of the *Acts of the Apostles*. It appears from iii. 13 that it was meant to represent the contents of a vision of Isaiah. Parts of it may be compared to Daniel xi.; though it is much more definite and

<sup>18</sup> Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, p. 9.

explicit than anything in Daniel. Parts of it, however, are more like the predictions in the letters of Paul and in the Revelation of St. John and in the discourses of Jesus recorded in Matt. xxiv., Mk. xiii. and Lk. xxi, and to those in Jer. (50), Deut. xxviii. and elsewhere in the Old Testament.

The third part of the *Ascension of Isaiah*, called by Prof. Charles the "Vision of Isaiah," is based partly on the vision of the sixth chapter of Isaiah and resembles in part the visions of the Revelation of St. John. In form it is like nothing in Daniel, resembling rather the Babylonian poem of the Descent of Ishtar with the seven heavens put in place of the seven departments of Hades.

5. The book of 4 *Ezra* is divided by its latest editor, Dr. Box, into six parts. (1) The Salathiel Apocalypse, (2) an Ezra Apocalypse, (3) the Eagle Vision, (4) the Son of Man Vision, (5) an Ezra-piece, and (6) the parts added by the Redactor.

The *Salathiel Apocalypse* consists of four visions. Each of these is preceded by a fast, followed by a prayer in answer to which the angel Uriel reveals the contents of the Vision. These contents are in the form of a debate relieved by many poetic passages of great beauty. The *Ezra-Apocalypse* has also alternating selections from a poem inserted by the Redactor in the midst of the first three visions of Salathiel. The *Eagle Vision* of chaps. xi-xii, which Dr. Box thinks to have been excerpted from a book of dream visions, is more like the visions of Daniel than any other apocalypse, consisting of a dream, a prayer and an interpretation, and followed by a command to write what he had seen in a book to be put in a secret place. The *Son of Man Vision*, also, is after the same form except that it omits the seal of the vision. The Ezra-piece, the so-called *Seventh Vision* or *Ezra Legend*, is modelled partly on the account of Moses at the burning bush, partly on that of Elijah under the juniper tree, but has nothing specifically like anything in Daniel, except in its reference to the esot-

eric nature of its disclosures. A large part of it, also, is poetic in form.

6. In the *New Testament*, also, most of the apocalyptic portions differ largely in form from that used in Daniel.

(1) In the apocalypse contained in Matt. xxiv. and in the parallel passages in Mk. xiii., and Lk. xxi., Jesus as usual speaks on his own authority and without the intervention of dreams, visions, or angels, avoiding, also, the form of debate characteristic of Daniel and of others of the apocalypses.

(2) In the apocalyptic parts of the *Epistles*, also, the form is different from that found in Daniel. In the short apocalypse recorded in 1 Tim. iii. 1-3, and in that in 2 Tim. iii., the Spirit is represented as the speaker, no dream vision, or angel being mentioned. The apocalyptic portions of 1 Corinthians and of 1 and 2 Thessalonians describe the coming day of Christ; but they are cast in a form different from that of the ordinary apocalypses. In 2 Peter iii., the apostle bases his apocalypse on the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets and on the commandments of the apostles.

(3) The book of the *Revelation of St. John*, also, cannot be said to be an imitation in form of the book of Daniel, though in many minor points it resembles it. It has no definite dates like the visions of Daniel, nor any dreams or prayers; nor does it mention the kings by name, nor concern itself preëminently with the kingdoms of this world as Daniel does. In one great particular, however, they are alike: for they both alike make the culmination and consummation of every vision to be the time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

From the above review of the forms of the apocalyptic literature from the time of Isaiah to 135 A.D., it is evident that there was never any time during this period when as far as form is concerned Daniel might not have been written. During this whole time, with the exception of the

years from Zechariah to the 2nd century, we have apocalypses resembling these in Daniel in some particular and differing from them in others. No two apocalypses are exactly alike in form. Some of those that are most unlike came from the same period; for example, the Sibylline Oracles, and Jubilees and Enoch and the Testimony of the XII Patriarchs from the 2nd century B.C.; and Baruch, the Testimony of Hezekiah and the Revelation of St. John from the 1st century A.D. In respect to the form of Daniel, then, it seems clear that the critics of Daniel have been drawing on their imagination for their facts, both when they have asserted that judged by the criterion of form it could not have been written in the 6th century B.C. and when they have asserted that judged by the same criterion it must have been written in the 2nd century B.C.

III. With regard to the third assertion, that Daniel must have been written after the events which are so accurately described in it actually occurred, we claim that this is not a specific indictment of the book of Daniel but of the whole system of Christianity which is based upon the possibility and the fact of a supernatural revelation. If we put Daniel at a late date simply because of the fact that otherwise we would be compelled to admit that it accurately predicts events occurring after the 6th century B.C., we must for the same reason put Luke xxi. after 70 A.D.

If Christ were a mere man, his claim to predict events might be cast aside. Were Daniel not a prophet of the Lord, so his also might be cast aside. But if holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit and if God at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto men by the prophets and in the latter times through his Son by whom he made the worlds, then they spake for God who knows the end from the beginning. If God spake by the prophets, and Jesus acknowledged Daniel as a prophet, what man can put a limit to the extent and accuracy of that which God spake? "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets hath spoken," your *musts* are not the *musts* of

the prophets,—your musts are not the musts of God who hath showed the things that are to come hereafter that they may know that he is God.

IV. But, finally, the critics intimate or assert that the book of Daniel is false simply because it is, or contains, apocalypses. This is based upon the presumption that all apocalypses are false. Of course, if we define an apocalypse as an account written after certain events have happened and purport to have been written before they happened, then all apocalypses would be false. But certainly no one would claim that the Revelation of St. John is such an apocalypse; nor do we think that anyone could show that large parts of the books of Enoch, or the 4th Ezra, would come under such a definition of an apocalypse. Nor can the parts at least of any of the pre-Christian apocalypses which speak of a judgment, or a resurrection, or a Messianic kingdom, be put under that definition.

The fact is, however, that an apocalypse claims to be a revelation of events yet future from the standpoint of the writer, or the speaker of the vision. The question for us to determine is, whether this claim to be an apocalypse is true or false. All apocalypses might be false; all might possibly be true. Each must be investigated and judged according to the laws of evidence proper to such predictions. *A priori*, no man can dogmatically assert that all such predictions are false either in intention or fact; because no man is omniscient. Nor can any man lay down rules for the possibility or character of a divine revelation.

To all who admit the possibility of a revelation from God to man, the truth or falsity of any apparent apocalypse will depend upon its claim and the evidence in support of that claim. Thus, in the case of Matt. xxiv., Mk. xiii., and Lk. xxi. the direct claim is that it is an apocalyptic discourse of the Lord with reference especially to the destruction of Jerusalem. The text of this chapter is supported by the same direct evidence as that which we have for the remaining parts of the books in which they occur. The

ability of Jesus to make such a revelation of future events will not be disputed by anyone who believes that he was the Son of God. The fact of the revelation and the trustworthiness of it, were never disputed by the early writers, so far as anyone knows. So far, in fact, as the account in Luke is concerned, the evidence for the rest of the book is so overwhelming that Prof. Harnack can reject the 21st chapter only on the ground that it is apocalyptic.

So, also, in regard to the apocalyptic parts of Daniel. The text of the apocalyptic parts is supported by exactly the same evidence as that for the rest of the book. The unity of the book is so generally admitted on reasonable grounds by critics of all schools that it scarcely needs to be defended. In fact, it would probably never have been assailed, were it not for the difficulty of the problem suggested by the apocalyptic parts of the book. To Christians the truth of the claim of Daniel to be a true narrative of the life and apocalypses of the man Daniel would seem to be confirmed by the treatment accorded to it by Christ and the New Testament writers in general.

Again it cannot be said that any Jews of the early ages ever denied the canonicity or authenticity of Daniel on any ground whatever, nor especially on the ground that it was, or contained, an apocalpse. In *Yadayim*, iv. 5, it is expressly stated that "the Aramaic passages in Ezra and Daniel defile the hands," *i.e.*, are canonical. No reference, or allusion is to be found either in the Talmud, or Josephus, or any other source, suggesting that any Rabbi, or Jew, of ancient times ever questioned the genuineness, authenticity, or canonicity, of the Hebrew portions of Daniel. The canonicity of Esther is said to have been questioned on the ground that it was not dictated by the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> Ezekiel was in danger of being suppressed, because its contents were alleged to be contradictory to the words of the Law.<sup>20</sup> Some desired to withdraw the book of Proverbs from use because

---

<sup>19</sup> *Megilla*, fol. 7d.

<sup>20</sup> *Moed Katan*, 5a.



it contained internal contradictions.<sup>21</sup> Some are said to have withdrawn Proverbs, the Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes, from public use, because they spoke in proverbs.<sup>22</sup> Some would have withdrawn Ecclesiastes, because it is self-contradictory, contradicts the words of David, and favors heresy.<sup>23</sup>

These instances from the Talmud teach us that the canonicity of certain books was questioned because of the language in which they were written, on the ground of their proverbial character, of their self-contradictions, or of their disagreement with the Psalter or the Law; or, because they were thought not to have been dictated by the Holy Spirit. No one ever disputed a book on the ground of its apocalyptic character. It remained for the heathen, Neo-Platonic philosopher Porphyry, at the end of the third century, A. D., to enunciate and elaborate this objection to the book of Daniel<sup>1</sup> It is a heathenish objection, resting simply on the philosophical assumption that there is no such thing as predictive prophecy.

*Princeton.*

R. D. WILSON.

---

<sup>21</sup> *Sabbath*, 30 b

<sup>22</sup> *Aboth di Rabbi Nathan*.

<sup>23</sup> *Sabbath*, 30a, *Midrash Vayyikra Rabba*, c. 28.