

The Intertestamental Period



An Open Seminar
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What is the Apocalypse?







Revelation/Apocalypse

- Means to reveal what is or was hidden
- Basic meaning of “unveil” or “uncover”
- Does not imply anything to do with coming disaster or end of the world
- “Apocalyptic” is a genre of literature that grew out of the Intertestamental Period. Familiar examples are Ezekiel, Daniel, Revelation.

Rome, 999 CE



The Millerites, 1843 CE



Insane Millerites. The physician of one of the Insane Asylums in Massachusetts, in which are quite a number of insane persons who have been believers in the Second Advent, says in a late report,

“The believers in the second advent who have become insane, are subjects of the highest excitement: they are full of ecstasy, and think of nothing but being soon transported to all the enjoyments of heaven. But there is another class who have not embraced the doctrine, but who have feared it might be true, who have distracted their minds by puzzling over it, thinking about it, and dreading its approach, who have sunk into deep and hapless melancholy, which it is a hard task to remove.”

Characteristics of Apocalyptic Literature

- Universality
- Cosmic dualism
- Chronologic dualism
- Ethical dualism
- Predestination
- Exclusivism
- Limited Theology
- Portrait of a violent God
- Eschatological preoccupation
- Symbols and code words



The Process of Radicalization

- Perception of an existential threat to the community
- Return to “roots”
- Hardening of position
- Embrace of absolutes



Daniel: A Tract for the Times

- Daniel was being co-opted into the Babylonian bureaucracy
- Augustine: believers live in two cities at once; the temporal and the eternal.



**How does one respond constructively
to deleterious influences?**

**How does one be “in the world
but not of the world”?**

Daniel, Chapter 1: The Food Test

- Daniel and his companions rejected the King's Food
- Adherence to ritual purity, or resistance to foreign domination?



Food Laws in Daniel

- Vegetarian/Vegan
- Avoiding meats offered to idols
- Avoiding meat improperly slaughtered
- Food laws understood to be a gentle path to vegetarianism.



Food Laws in Daniel, Continued

- Wine is okay
- Kosher diet does not specifically promise wisdom as reward for compliance
- Rejection of the King's largess (cf. Joseph)

