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The Character of Canonical Daniel as Revealed in
Rabbinic, Apocryphal, New Testament and
Josephan Literatures

by

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DIGEST

This thesis attempts to explore the character of Daniel as revealed in the canonical Book of Daniel, Rabbinic Literature, the Apocrypha, the New Testament, and Josephus. Most scholarly work on Daniel has concentrated on linguistic, historical, or redaction problems. While we have made note of these works, our emphasis is on the character as developed in these literatures.

Chapter one examines various theories of character analysis, and puts forth a synthesis of these theories which is then applied in the rest of the work. The remainder of chapter one is an analysis of the character of Daniel as found in the canonical book, and extra-Biblical literature.

Chapter two is a creative attempt to cast the statements about Daniel found in the Rabbinic Literature into a short story, set in the academy of old. Chapter three concentrates on the Characters of Daniel as found in the Apocryphal stories of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, and other references. In addition to character analysis, we also examine some textual problems of these texts as discussed in the secondary literature.

Chapters four and five explore the character of Daniel as found in the New Testament, and in Josephus's The Antiq-

unities of the Jews. Chapter six contains our tentative conclusions as to how the character of Daniel appears in these different literatures, and speculates as to why these literatures portray Daniel in the manner they do.

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INTRODUCTION

Many books, articles, and monographs have been written in the last 200 years about the book of Daniel. Most, if not all of these works have concentrated in the classical areas of modern biblical study; that is linguistics, history, place in the canon, parallels to other semitic or ancient texts, origins of the imagery and names, dating of the text, and purpose of the text. In addition, because the imagery of Daniel features so prominently in the Christian church, much has been written about the Christological importance of Daniel. Scholars have also noted that Daniel is the first apocalyptic book included in the Bible and therefore have attempted to interpret the many visions and images in Daniel, either in their original milieu, or else giving them a modern Christological or Jewish interpretation.

Few scholars, however, have attempted to study Daniel as a work of literature, and even fewer have focused specifically on the character of the canonical Daniel. This work will attempt to do that, and more. In the pages that follow, we shall investigate how Daniel, the person, was understood and interpreted by the early rabbis, the New Testament authors, Josephus, and the Apocryphal authors.

Specifically, we shall examine all references to Daniel, the man, mentioned in the above corpuses of literature. We will not treat (except in passing) the uses of the images in Daniel, such as "son of man" or "the four beasts," as these have already been covered in other scholarly works and is not our interest in this work. We are interested in understanding the character of Daniel as revealed in these sources.

Most scholars agree that the canonical book of Daniel may be divided into two sections. These sections represent both a chronological division, and a literary division. Chapters 1-6 are considered the first or original Daniel. They were written during the 6-4 centuries, and are in style similar to folk tales or folk midrash. These are a series of six individual stories, which later became associated with the personage of Daniel. It is in these first six chapters that we gain the most insight into the character of Daniel; they contain episodes in the life of Daniel and his friends and allow us an insight into the character of Daniel. Hence, a major focus of this work will be those six chapters.

Chapters 7-12 contain the visions of Daniel. Scholars believe that these were written during the reign of Antiochus IV (175-164 BCE) and reflect the milieu of the Maccabean/Hasmonean revolt. These chapters are apocalyptic and messianic in content and do not reveal much about the character of Daniel, save that he was a man who was able

to have such visions, and to offer interpretations of them. Much of the later literature attempts to interpret these visions and images for the reader and are not really relevant to our topic.

Some may wonder why we are grouping all references to Daniel together and assuming that these all refer to the same person Daniel. Might there not be more than one Daniel? Are we falsely assuming that all references to the name Daniel may be assigned to the canonical Daniel? Is it not possible that the Daniel of Susanna refers to a different Daniel than the canonical Daniel? This is a very important question.

We agree that it is quite possible that we have made an error in grouping all these Daniels together. It would be far safer to assume a "proto-mythological ancient Daniel," and assume that what we have is a "variation on a theme" of many Daniels. That is, there is no inherent reason to assume that the Daniel of the canon is the same Daniel as in Susanna. But since the writing of these separate works, they have all been grouped together.

Our question is a modern question; the organizers of these ancient religious works assumed that there was but one Daniel and therefore included these other references to Daniel around the book of Daniel. We never find Susanna or Bel and the Dragon associated with any other book of the Bible. So while it may well be that originally, the Daniel of Susanna, or of a Rabbinic midrash referred to

another person in the ancient world who shared the name Daniel, for at least 2000 years it has been assumed that these all refer to the same Daniel, and we shall continue with that assumption. However, when possible, we shall note parallels to other Daniels in the ancient world and see if our present additions to Daniel, or works about Daniel, are in fact properly ascribed.

For our study, we will use as easy and straightforward a methodology as possible. Our goal is to find as many references to Daniel as possible in these various literatures, and then to organize them for literary analysis. To do this, we will use as many available tools and indexes as are currently available.

Studying Rabbinic literature is much more difficult. First, one must define and limit the corpus of Rabbinic literature. One must also attempt, however imprecisely, to date these materials. Finally, the majority of Rabbinic literature is not yet indexed in any coherent fashion. We will collect, translate and analyze the Rabbinic literature from the early Tannaim through the early Middle Ages. However, we will not explore any of the later medieval Rabbinic midrashim, such as are collected in the Eisenstein Jellinick collections, or in the Zohar. We realize of course that our collection of Rabbinic comments on Daniel is by no means complete.

CHAPTER ONE

In Search of a Methodology

"Every organized body of knowledge can be learned progressively; and experience shows that there is also something progressive about the learning of literature. While no one expects literature itself to behave like a science, there is surely no reason why criticism, as a systematic and organized study, should not be, at least partly, a science."¹ So wrote Northrop Frye in his masterpiece of literary criticism, Anatomy of Criticism. And yet, despite Frye's desire for a scientific approach to the study of literary criticism, few scholars have applied such criteria to the study of the Bible. Yes, many have studied the Bible and written about the literary forms of the Bible, but few have proposed methodologies for the study of character in the Bible. "Most of the central area of criticism is at present, and doubtless always will be, the area of commentary. But commentators have little sense; they are chiefly engaged in brightening the corner where they are. Most Biblical scholarship is either critical-attempting to establish the text, or traditional-commentary in line with theology."²

The most obvious reason for the absence of scholarly literary interest in the Bible for so long is that, in con-

trast to Greek and Latin literature, the Bible was regarded for many centuries, by both Jews and Christians, as the primary, unitary source of divinely revealed truth.³ Only in the last few years have some scholars begun to study the Bible as a literary work. Foremost among these are the "structuralists," whose approach is best represented in the journal Semeia. "While a few useful explications of texts have appeared, there have as yet still been no major works of criticism."⁴

Thus, in search for a satisfying methodology for the study of a Biblical character, we are forced to turn to traditional schools of literary analysis. But these theories, however good or bad they might be on their own, are seldom applicable as they stand to the Biblical narrative. This is because of the very nature of the Biblical story. First, the Biblical story tends to be so short. The entire book of Daniel is only 12 chapters long; Daniel only appears in 11 of them, and the majority of these relate to Daniel's dreams and visions, and his interpretation of those visions. We have a scant few lines where Daniel is actually talking, little is said about him as a person, and the other characters do not talk about him either. So, how are we to gain insight into the character of Daniel?

One of the more helpful approaches to character analysis is Frye's theory of archetypes. Frye's archetypal theory is itself based on the essay of C. G. Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious." "The search for archetypes is

a kind of literary anthropology, concerned with the way that literature is formed by pre-literary categories such as ritual, myth, and folktale."⁵

Frye's theory of archetypes allows us to understand a character's psyche through phases of the year. These phases include the dawn, spring and birth phase, zenith, summer and marriage or triumph phase, sunset, autumn, and death phase, and lastly, the darkness, winter and dissolution phase.⁶

And yet, even the use of an archetypal theory will not be totally satisfactory if we want to gain insight into the character of Daniel. Although we may have a psychological theory with which to understand the seasons of a man's life, we still do not know enough about our character himself.

Part of the problem lies in the nature of the Biblical narrative itself. The Biblical narrative is often laconic, but by no means in a uniform or mechanical fashion. Why does the narrator ascribe motives or designate states of feelings in his characters in some instances, but not in others, where he chooses to remain silent on these points? Why are some actions minimally indicated, while others are elaborated through symbol or detail? What accounts for the drastic shifts in the time-scale of the narrated events? Why is actual dialogue introduced at certain junctures, and on what principle of selectivity are specific words assigned to characters? In a text so sparse in epithets and relational designations, why are particular identifications of character noted by the narrator at specific points in the

story? Repetition is a familiar feature of the Bible, but it is in no way an automatic device; when does literal repetition occur, and what are the significant variations of repeated verbal formulas?

These, and other questions Robert Alter raises in his book, The Art of the Biblical Narrative. Alter believes that the author of the Bible used literary conventions, with which his audience was familiar, but which we, as modern readers, are uncertain of. Thus, while it was clear to the ancient reader what the imagery meant, we are not sure at all. "We have lost most of the keys to conventions out of which it (the Biblical narrative) was shaped."⁷ Hence, it is quite possible that many of the scenes in Daniel make use of obvious literary conventions, which we no longer understand or even recognize.

Thus, we are compelled to approach a character and his motives through a process of inference from fragmentary data, often with crucial pieces of narrative exposition withheld, and this leads to multiple, even wavering perspectives on the character. There is, in other words, an abiding mystery in character development as the Biblical writers conceive it, which they embody in their typical methods of presentation.⁸

How then does the Bible show characterization? Is there any method we can devise to study the character of a Biblical personality, since the Biblical authors seldom show a motive or a detailed rendering of a mental process? Sarna, Auerbach, Greenberg and others have shown that the

sparsely-sketched foreground of the Biblical narrative somehow implies a large background dense with possibilities of interpretation; but the critical issue here is the specific means through which that "somehow" is achieved.

Alter suggests, and we agree, that in fact "the Biblical writers actually worked out a set of surprisingly supple techniques for the imaginative representation of human individuality."⁹ Alter proposes a scale of means, in ascending order of explicitness and certainty, for conveying information about the motives, attitudes and moral nature of characters. Character can be revealed through "report of actions, through appearance, gestures, posture, costume, through one character's comments on another, through direct speech by the character, through inward speech, either summarized or quoted as interior monologue; or through statements by the narrator about the attitudes and intentions of personages, which may come either as flat assertions or motivated explanations."¹⁰

The lower end of this scale, i.e., character revealed through actions or appearance, leaves us substantially in the realm of inference. The middle categories, involving direct speech either by the character himself or by others about him, leads us from inference into the weighing of claims. With the report of inward speech, we enter the realm of relative certainty about the character. Finally, at the top of the scale, we have the reliable narrator's explicit statement of what the character feels, intends,

desires; here we are accorded certainty, or as much certainty as is possible, given the nature of the Biblical narrative.

It is this method that we shall attempt to use in our study of the character of Daniel.

Biblical and Extra-Biblical Sources
of the Name Daniel

The Aramaic and Hebrew form of the name Daniel is דניאל which means God (or El) has judged, or my judge is God. According to the Chronicler, one of David's sons was named Daniel (I Chron. 3:1). One of the Jews who returned from the Babylonian exile in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah also bore the same name (Ezra 8:2; Neh. 10:7). "Neither of these gentlemen, however, can be identified with the protagonist of the book of Daniel."¹¹ "The absence of a genealogy, contrary to custom, gives probability to the suggestion that the character of Daniel and his pious companions are legendary."¹²

Of greater interest, however, is the Daniel mentioned in Ezekiel 14:14, 20, and 28:3. Noah, Daniel, and Job are mentioned as men renowned for their piety, who were saved by their righteousness, while others perished in their wickedness. Noah, Daniel and Job all survived the wreckage of the old world order, and lived to see a new world reborn. Noah and his family survived the universal destruction in the Flood. Job was spared while his family and children met with fatal accidents. Daniel, who, according to the

canon, lived at the time when the Temple and State fell, was elevated to high office in the Babylonian court because he was steadfast in his loyalty to God, whereas his Jewish contemporaries suffered death or humiliation. The Rabbis also note this description. They note that these three ancient worthies were bound by a similar destiny.¹³

In addition, in Ezekiel 28:3, the prophet refers to Daniel's reputation for great wisdom in a sarcastic comparison. ("Behold thou art wiser than Daniel. There is no secret that they can hide from thee.") In none of these instances did their righteousness protect the wicked from their fate. "No deduction can be drawn from the verse about the date of the composition of the books of Job or Daniel. Their fame was apparently traditional before the books were written."¹⁴

Thus, Daniel was evidently a "pre-Mosaic saint (Ezk. 14:14, 20) and sage (28:3), and, as such, of a type conceivable in any land (14:13) and assumed by Ezekiel to have been heard of by the pagan prince of Tyre (28:1-3)."¹⁵ The relation of this legendary figure to the central figure of the book of Daniel is not certain, but the author probably was acquainted with a number of stories which had already shifted their location in space and time to Babylon, the new home of wisdom. In our authors' hands, Daniel becomes a young Jew, who is loyal to his ancestral religion and who is made by divine inspiration wiser than all of the sages of Mesopotamia. This combination of wisdom

and righteousness enables him to receive the visionary revelations which form the latter part of the book.

The older traditions make no reference to the other outstanding characteristics of the hero of the book of Daniel which are his unshakeable faith in God and courage of the highest order in the face of persecution. These we may consider to be bestowed upon the character by the author of our present book.¹⁶

But who was this pre-Mosaic saint that Ezekiel seems independently to confirm? It seems very probable¹⁷ that this Daniel is to be identified with the king bearing the same name in Ugaritic literature. In "The Tale of Aqhat"¹⁸ appears a King Danel who "Judges the case of the widow, who tries the case of the orphan." Daniel is also a righteous individual; it was his righteousness which achieved the miracle and redeemed his son. Thus, from very early times in the near-east the name Daniel must have been associated with outstanding righteousness and surpassing wisdom.

Character of Daniel in the Canonical Book

Canonical Daniel purports to give the story of one Daniel who suffered the first exile under Nebuchadnezzar and lived in the Eastern Diaspora. The story begins with the hero's youth, when he is a boy at school, and continues to an age when the promise of a life beyond the grave is a comfort (12:3). The book is divided into two nearly equal portions, not co-incidental with the two languages, Hebrew and Aramaic. We cannot help but immediately notice parallels to the Joseph story, and we wonder if our author or authors consciously modeled Daniel after the Joseph story.

The first section presents six anecdotes of Daniel's life in company with his friends. One of these stories is

confined to the experiences only of the latter, chapter 3. These six chapters can be summarized as follows:

Chapter 1. Gives us the setting and early background of Daniel. It narrates about the faithfulness of Daniel and his three compatriots in their education in the Babylonian court.

Chapter 2. Year two of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Daniel successfully interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a monstrous image.

Chapter 3. The martyr-constancy of his three companions in refusing to worship an image.

Chapter 4. Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a great tree.

Chapter 5. Last year of Belshazzar's reign. Daniel interprets Belshazzar's vision of an inscribing hand.

Chapter 6. Daniel's deliverance from the lion's den where he was cast for refusal to "worship" Darius, and his subsequent elevation in the reigns of Darius and Cyrus.

The second section deals with four visions granted Daniel.

Chapter 7. Year one of Belshazzar's reign. A vision of the conflicts of four monstrous beasts, of the fourth beast and its horns and the theophany which introduces divine dominion.

Chapter 8. Year three of Belshazzar's reign. A vision of the conflict of a ram and a buck and of the little

horn and the latter's four horns, which grew great. This vision is expounded by the angel Gabriel as referring to the Meso-Persian and Greek empires, the latter culminating in a blasphemous tyrant whose end is foretold.

Chapter 9. Year one of Darius's reign. Daniel's prayer for the restoration of Israel, the appearance of the angel to him and his exposition of the "70 years" of prophecy.

Chapters 10-12. Year three of Cyrus's reign. In answer to Daniel's pious exercises undertaken for the boon of greater illumination, the angel again appears to him and unrolls a panorama of kingdoms and kings culminating in a godless and inhuman tyrant whose end is depicted, along with the transcendental vindication of saints and sinners. A supplementary vision and a word of personal assurance to Daniel ends the book.

We clearly see that the book of Daniel is divided into two parts, each of a different genre. In the first part, Daniel is spoken of in the third person. (Except chapter 3, where he is not mentioned.) In the second part, containing the four apocalyptic visions, Daniel is designated in the first person singular. He is no longer the interpreter of other person's dreams but is himself the dreamer and visionary. He is not a "prophet" however;¹⁹ he needs the help of an angel to understand what he sees.

"The book of Daniel, Chapters 1-6 is rightly compared with the stories of Joseph in Genesis as illustrating the

pride of the few that members of his race were able to play an important part at a foreign court and even win recognition for their religion from pagan potentates. It should be noticed, however, that the story of Joseph is integrated into the Heilsgeschichte, while the story of Daniel is linked with the promise of an end of history, which will imply God's triumph. The theme of God's sovereignty over history is common to both sections of scripture."²⁰

What kind of a person is Daniel in the canonical book? Is he only serious, or does he have a light side as well? Does the character of Daniel run one and the same through the book, or do we witness the growth of a character through stress and challenges? It is argued that the stories of the first part of the book show a different attitude to the heathen world than that of the visions in the second part. It must be pointed out, however, that even within the first stories, there is, in our opinion, a double attitude. Daniel, as a civil servant, is loyal to the heathen state as long as its royal master does not challenge his religious conscience. Yet in chapters two and seven, the doom awaiting the kingdoms symbolized by the beast is proclaimed. Is it not possible that the author of our book shared this double attitude?

Pusey writes that the character of Daniel himself remains the same throughout the book.

"His faith was the same, in whatever way God answered it. In that same strong faith, he, with his companions, obtained from God the knowledge of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its

meaning, which saved him from death. In that same simple faith, in his advanced age, he continued like the Psalmist to pray three times a day, openly, when the penalty was the den of lions."²¹

Pusey, in his analysis of the character of Daniel, sees humbleness to his God and humility as his simple, straight and unwavering characteristics. He views Daniel as a uni-dimensional character. We disagree with this portrayal of Daniel. We see him as a much more complex character, whose development is not continuous throughout the book. We shall show this further in the detailed analysis which follows.

In this book, the stories are told primarily for their inspirational value. The actors may or may not have their place in history; what first claims our attention is the relevance of the stories for the day for which they were recorded. It is therefore of no great consequence that the very first statement in Chapter one can be shown to be inaccurate. The book was written and our hero is meant to illustrate the following situation:

Jews were becoming increasingly conscious of a great world which could use their service and promise them scope for their gifts- character and ability. These claims were often difficult to reconcile with those of that unseen environment which their ancestral faith would not allow them to forget. In Daniel, it is the fortune of war which brings him to one of the centers of world power, and in that he is typical of his compatriots who had to share

the experience of exile after their state had collapsed. For others, the love of adventure, the lure of commercial gain and the desire to share in the life of the wider world were compelling motives that led many a few to journey beyond the narrow confines of his homeland. Daniel issues a challenge: "How do I remain loyal to my ancestry and yet survive and thrive in this new world?" And thus the character of Daniel, our hero, reflects this multi-dimensional challenge.

The first chapter of the book serves as an introduction: it sets the stage for the other stories and the visions that make up the rest of the book. The author here brings together the various strands that appear as separate units in the other chapters of the book.

This can be seen in the way our author introduces all four heroes of these stories in Chapter one practically as equals, although a certain prominence is given Daniel. In the older stories, Daniel alone is the hero (i.e., Chapters 4-6). In Chapter two his companions are mentioned, though this seems to be a later addition;²² only in Chapter three is Daniel absent.

Our first information about Daniel is descriptive. Daniel is part of an entire group of youths of noble aristocratic origin. They are the "best and the brightest"- "youths of whom there is no blemish, but well favored, skillful in wisdom, deserving in knowledge, perceptive in understanding (1:4)," and quick to learn. This group was to be acculturated into their new environment, taught the language

of their new court, and serve this court.

The first crisis in the fortunes of Daniel and his companions arose from the circumstance that, as candidates-in-training for the court, they were expected, like the other candidates, to eat food and drink wine from the royal table. Perhaps the food was associated with idolatrous worship, or perhaps it consisted of animals regarded by the Torah as unclean; we are not told why Daniel would not partake of this food. Even more perplexing is his refusal to drink the wine. Several scholars have suggested that this is evidence that Daniel and his companions were Nazarites, but we see no compelling reason to assume this.

In any case, the emphasis is on Daniel, who consciously decides "not to defile himself (1:8)." Daniel then acts—he asks the chief of the eunuchs permission not to eat the food. We are not told the actual words of this request, but only that his request was openly accepted. Evidently Daniel had a good relationship with this authority.

It is interesting that the chief first approaches Daniel. "Why are you not eating?" he asks. He is concerned for his job. If Daniel is not eating, this will reflect poorly on him. But Daniel, the leader, who speaks for himself and his three companions, has a suggestion: "Let us eat vegetables instead."

Why does Daniel not tell the chief exactly as he feels—that he is afraid to "defile himself." We think that this again reflects on Daniel's personality. He is not opposed to serving the King. In fact, Daniel is unusually anxious to

be of service to the King. Not once does Daniel hesitate when called upon. We think this reflects a highly motivated personality- Daniel knew he was good, and he wanted to get ahead.

Daniel's request not to "defile himself" by eating the King's food is granted. Almost as a result of their pious behavior, the narrator would have us believe, these four youths were rewarded. All four were granted "intelligence and proficiency in all writings and wisdom, and Daniel was granted the special ability to understand and interpret dreams and visions (1:17)," which, of course, plays an important role in the rest of the book. These four compatriots were also good: the text tells us that whenever they were called upon, they knew the answer immediately.

Is it of significance that Daniel is always mentioned first in the list of names? We think so. Again, this is a convention of the Biblical writer, which, while seemingly unimportant, gives us a clue to the character of Daniel as seen by this writer. By mentioning Daniel first, we are to understand that Daniel is the more important and more powerful personality.

Unfortunately, we are not told anything of Daniel's dress or appearance, only that he "looked healthier and better than all the youths who were eating the King's food (1:15)." Again, we draw the picture of Daniel as "the best and the brightest".

Finally, we note that Daniel's trial period in this chapter lasted ten days. Why, we wonder, did the author

pick ten days? Again, this is a literary convention with which the ancient reader was very familiar, but to which the modern reader has lost the key. "The period of ten days for a spiritual trial is a common motif in the literature of the time." (cf. Rev. 2:10, Jubilees 19:8, Testament of the 12 Patriarchs, Joseph 2:7, Pirke Abot 5:4).²³

II

The second chapter fulfills the expectation aroused in the first chapter that Daniel's special endowment with wisdom and with the skill to interpret dreams will be given scope at the Babylonian court. "This story is made up of a theme within a theme. The latter (verses 1-28, 46-49), which forms the framework for the former (verses 29-45), tells how the wisdom of the Jewish sage Daniel surpassed that of the pagan men, and it stresses the fact that such knowledge which is able to foretell four centuries of history can come only from the God of Israel."²⁴

Of course, there are many parallels between the story of Daniel and that of Joseph. Again, we cannot help but believe that the interpretation of dreams by a young man in a foreign court was a standard literary convention in the ancient world. What makes this story exciting and different is the way it differs from the Joseph sequence.

Daniel performs a feat far greater than Joseph's. Daniel not only interprets the dream, but he is able to

tell the King the exact contents of the dream itself. The end of our chapter as well parallels the Joseph story and therefore must be considered a standard Biblical narrative convention,- the convention of the successful courtier. Besides giving Daniel religious homage and praise, Nebuchadnezzar makes him the superior of all the counselors at the Babylonian court. The political authority that the King bestows upon Daniel reminds us of the high office in Egypt that the Pharaoh gave Joseph for successfully interpreting his dreams.

In this chapter, Daniel is not introduced until verse 13, well after the stage and scene have been set. Is it significant that Daniel and his friends were not among those included in the "magicians, exorcists, sorcerers and Chaldeans" (2:2) originally summoned in verse 2 to divine and interpret the King's dream? After all, they were included in the doom pronounced on the class of wise men as a whole. We think this is done primarily for its literary effect. It is far more suspenseful to have Daniel called in later, rather than be included from the beginning. This also helps to show off Daniel's superiority vis-a-vis the rest of the wise men. Daniel is clearly supreme!

When Daniel finally arrives on the scene, we note a striking parallel in his behavior to that in chapter one. When Daniel learns of the decree to kill all the wise men, he immediately appeals to the man directly in charge. He does not go directly to the King, but to his immediate

superior. And again, Daniel is the leader.

He goes to the King to ask for time and then goes to his companions to tell them that he has included them in his plan. Together, they will save all the wise men of Babylon. All three pray, but to Daniel alone is revealed the mystery in a nocturnal vision. Again, we see Daniel as the leader.

Does this episode reveal a social consciousness on the part of Daniel, a feeling of communal responsibility, in that he wants to save all of the wise men of Babylon, or is he just out to save his own neck? We think that the author is trying to tell us that Daniel was concerned for all, "so that Daniel and his colleagues would not be put to death together with the other wise men of Babylon. (26:18)"

Of great interest to us is Daniel's reaction and action after the vision of the meaning of the King's dream. Daniel "blessed the God of heaven (2:19)" and offers a psalm of thanksgiving. If the prayers of men reveal their inner concerns and true selves, then this prayer can be revealing about Daniel's character, for as Alter argues, when we are given the inner feelings of a character, even though this is extremely rare, we are relying on the best kind of evidence.

Daniel's prayer is centered on power, especially the power of knowledge. God removes and replaces kings, and gives the wise their wisdom. And Daniel freely acknowledges his own power and wisdom. ("You, who have given me power

and wisdom (2:23).")

The action of the narrative now climaxes as Daniel goes to Arioch and asks him to arrange an appointment with the King. Arioch snatches the chance to escape his disagreeable duty and loses no time in introducing Daniel into the King's presence. The fact that verse 25 seems to contradict the end of chapter 1 need not concern us; Hartman suggests this entire chapter is a conflation of two separate accounts;²⁵ Porteous suggests simple emmandation.²⁶ In any case, for our purposes, this problem is not to be taken too seriously.

Daniel is then announced before the King. Daniel replies, "it is God in heaven who reveals the secret things. (2:28)." This sentence is revealing in several ways. First, we can understand this response as a standard literary convention of the time. Thus, we are not surprised that it parallels the Joseph story (Gen. 41:16).

However, it is also possible to view this statement as a revelation of Daniel's character. Daniel is a gentleman, kind and sincere; he is a dreamer. This statement reveals a kind of modesty; "it is not I, but God who has the power to interpret." The "we" of verse 36b also shows this caring quality of Daniel in his counseling his three compatriots. This would explain verse 49 as well- Daniel is rewarded, but he requests that his friends also share in the reward. Appropriately enough, Daniel was not only given the highest civil post under the King, but he was placed as prefect over the whole corps of wise men and practitioners of the magic arts.

Another possibility also remains. If we assume that the character Daniel reflects the author's motives, that the theme of Daniel is how a Jew can remain loyal to his ancestral religion and yet serve a pagan king, then these verses assume new meaning. Daniel serves as a foil. His ultimate aim is to show the superiority of Judaism over and against the court religion. Thus, Daniel tells the King, "It is not I, but God who reveals and knows all." This is a key theme of the book; YHWH is truly Lord and Master of human history. Verse 37 can now be understood

in the same manner. While part of this verse may reflect standard court flattery, the important words are "to whom God of heaven has given..."

This is also how we understand the end of chapter two. It is inconceivable to us that Daniel could literally have allowed worship of himself by the King and his court. "We may suspect almost a touch of humor here. The Jew who was so often in a position of the inferior liked to indulge in the fantasy of having the tables turned on occasion."²⁷ But the king's confession of Daniel's God as God of gods is the real climax of the story. Daniel has shown the truth of YHWH to the pagans.

It is also interesting that the king accepts Daniel's interpretation without question! This reflects the power of personality and conviction Daniel must have had. He overwhelms the king!

How do we understand Daniel's absence in chapter three? Arguing from silence is always most dangerous and therefore we must proceed with caution and offer only a tentative theory. Is it possible that Daniel volunteered so quickly in chapter two to interpret the king's visions because it offered no personal danger? Hartman proposes a combination of two independent stories in chapter two. In the second story, verses 24-28

"the Jewish exile is evidently not regarded as having been one of the King's official sages... he himself therefore is in no danger of being put to death for not solving the king's problems, he intercepts Arioch

as the latter is about to carry out the royal decree to kill the wise men of Babylon, and he volunteers to tell the king his dream and its meaning for the sake of saving the lives of these men. The fact that Arioch must introduce Daniel to the king shows that this story came immediately after 1:1-12. No mention is made in this account of Daniel's three friends."²⁸

Thus, in this story, Daniel is much more selfish and self-motivated to get ahead, to gain prestige for himself. Daniel offers to interpret the King's dreams, for he will benefit. And when he is rewarded at the end, he stays at the court of the King, while he arranges for his three friends to hold positions away from the center of power. Why then is Daniel absent from chapter three? Because he is afraid. By refusing to bow down to the King, Daniel directly contradicts the King's order. This he is unwilling to do, for it places him in too much personal danger.

This would, of course, be a more negative view of the character of Daniel. In this view, Daniel is out for personal gain, power. Thus, 2:27 is understood as meaning, "they cannot possibly interpret your dream, but I..." Daniel's fast in Chapter one would again call special attention to him; true, a risk, but also a way to get ahead.

There is a more sound argument as to why Daniel is absent in chapter three; we merely assume that a cycle of stories about these three Jewish men once existed as an independent unit, distinct from the Daniel cycle of stories, and that our author/editor later combined them. In his

combining of our stories, he also had to explain how our three men arrived at their positions in the court of Babylon; thus their rise to power was secondarily joined to Daniel (1:17-20, 2:49).

Chapter four resembles, in many ways, the form of the story of Daniel in chapter two. Again, the King has a dream which greatly troubles him. He calls his magicians, enchanters and diviners to interpret his dream, but again, they are unable to. Daniel is now a member of the King's court. In both stories, the king has a dream that none of the Babylonian soothsayers, but only Daniel, enlightened by YHWH, can interpret. In both stories too, the dream motif forms a framework for an inner theme; the successive world empires in chapter two, in chapter four the king's insanity and its cure. In both cases, the reader is first left in suspense concerning the content of the dream; in both stories the pagan soothsayers utterly fail, but in chapter four the king is easier on the soothsayers; instead of demanding that they first tell him the content of the dream, he only demands that they interpret its meaning to him.

The theme of this chapter is summed up in verse 25, Nebuchadnezzar discovers, after he has been disciplined by God, that "the Most high is sovereign over the kingdom of men, giving it (sovereignty) to the man of His 'choice'."

How do we understand Daniel in this chapter? Has he changed from our encounter in chapter two or are there consistencies in his character; or is each chapter a separate unit.

We first note that Daniel is now in a position of prominence in the king's court. He is called the King's chief

magician. This we learned at the end of chapter two. Daniel has a reputation- he is now known by first name by the King and needs no one to introduce him. In fact, the King has such faith in the ability of our Daniel that he declares that there is "no mystery which can baffle him (4:6)." Daniel is received courteously and invited to derive a meaning for the dream, which the King proceeds to describe.

Although Daniel understands at once the meaning of the dream, he hesitates for a moment, out of courtesy and humility to explain its dire portents to his royal master.

"Daniel was perplexed for awhile, and alarmed by his thoughts... My Lord, would that the dream were for your enemy and its meaning for your foe (4:16)." Perhaps he is afraid of the king's reaction - after all, Daniel is about to tell the all powerful King that he will be overthrown, that his kingdom will be taken away from him. Certainly, Daniel is not in an enviable situation. Or do Daniel's opening words reveal a kind of compassion that our Daniel has for his king. He is distressed by the situation the King is in, and generally concerned. This would be more in character with our Daniel, who does care about his compatriots.

It is interesting that after Daniel interprets the dream for the King, he gives him advice, apparently unsolicited. Again, this reflects Daniel's caring attitude. He advises the King to repent for his sins, and to give charity to the poor. His dream is not necessarily fact - Daniel does not

believe in fate. There are acts that man can do to redeem himself, in order to restore his serenity. Daniel leaves the door open for the King to avert disaster.

Once again, Daniel's interpretation of the dream is accepted by the King without question. This must speak of the authority with which Daniel is regarded by those around him. We suspect that Daniel is a sensitive man (hence his concern in telling the King the dream's meaning), and a truthful and forceful man. He is regarded as a leader by those around him. Whomever he spoke to is persuaded by his manner and reason.

Is Daniel a sycophant? It is easy to read this into his behavior and actions. He readily volunteers to aid the King, puts down those around him, and addresses the King as "My Lord" or "My King." We think that this is not evidence enough to call Daniel a sycophant. Rather these titles represent both the literary convention, and the way a subject addresses his King.

-v-

It is in Chapter Five that we begin to learn the most about the mature character Daniel. In this chapter, Daniel has more dialogue and monologue than the others, there is also more description about him by other characters and person-ages than in our previous four chapters. In this chapter, Daniel assumes true heroic qualities - he rebukes the King in front of his companions in a stirring "sermon." (v. 5:17-24)

Evidently some time has passed since the last story. We have a new king, Belshazzar, the son of Nebuchadnezzar. The historicity of the facts need not concern us, for we are doing a literary character study, not a historical study. For reasons unexplained, Daniel is no longer in a position of prominence. In fact, Belshazzar does not seem to know who this Daniel is. Had Daniel fallen from power under Nebuchadnezzar? No evidence is given in the text. It seems more probable that when a new king came to power, he brought with him his own advisors, and court personalities, much like, when a president is elected in the United States, he replaces those previously in power in the court bureaucracy with his own people. What Daniel did in the time that has passed is not indicated.

In this chapter, Daniel is introduced by the queen.²⁹ How it is that she remembered Daniel is also not explained in the text.

The queen then describes Daniel. "There is a man in your kingdom who is endowed with a spirit of holy diety;

in your father's time, illumination, understanding, and wisdom like that of the gods were to be found in him, and your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, appointed him chief of the magicians, exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners... there is to be found in Daniel extraordinary spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, to explain riddles and solve problems (5:11-12)." This is quite a complimentary description of our character.

We think it is also interesting that Daniel always uses his Hebrew name, while the non-Jews call him by Belshazzar. (At least the previous King did.) This indicates that Daniel was proud of his Hebrew heritage, and not an assimilationist. (If such a word can be used here.) King Belshazzar however only calls Daniel by his Hebrew name.

No mention is made by the queen of the feats that Daniel performed under the previous King. Is this significant? After all, she does mention that he had been appointed chief over all the court soothsayers, etc. So why not mention his interpreting of the King's dreams and his tremendous accuracy? Whatever the answer to these important questions may be, the fact is that the queen describes Daniel's God-given wisdom and success with such conviction that her advice to have Daniel summoned to solve the mystery of the handwriting on the wall is accepted by the King.

Daniel then enters and once again we observe the

confrontation between a heathen king and a Hebrew sage. Belshazzar treats Daniel with the greatest of courtesy, quoting the queen-mother's recommendation of him. He then expresses confidence that Daniel will succeed where the wise men have failed, and announces the reward for success.

Disclaiming an interest in material reward, Daniel affirms his intention to interpret the mysterious writing for the King - no doubt because he feels he must deliver God's message. Daniel very brusquely waves aside the royal promise of reward. As he accepts it later on, the refusal may be rhetorical and is, we think, out of character. Perhaps it is meant to indicate what the attitude of a Jewish sage to a heathen potentate should be. Under the previous king, Daniel never protested against receiving any reward or material comfort. As we shall see, at the end of this chapter, Daniel does accept the King's reward.

Before continuing to the handwriting on the wall and its meaning, Daniel delivers a stinging rebuke to the King in a short sermon "worthy of the ancient prophets."³⁰ This sermon, more than anything Daniel has said or done previously, reflects his great courage. To speak out like this in front of the King, who is already anxious in the extreme because of this hand coming out of the wall, and a bit drunk as well, requires great courage.

Daniel minces no words in his condemnation of the King. He contrasts him to his father, "You, Belshazzar,

did not humble yourself (rather) you exalted yourself against the Lord of Heaven. You have desecrated the vessels' of God (5:23)." Daniel then continues to condemn the King and his associates. "You fools! You worship idols that cannot see, hear or understand, and call them gods! And you ignore the God who controls your life and every move you make- Him you did not glorify (5:22-23)."

Daniel is speaking with righteous indignation. He then reads and interprets the handwriting on the wall. One can imagine the silence that must have been in that room as Daniel delivered his rebuke.

What is amazing is that Daniel is rewarded for his interpretation. He is made the third highest appointee in the kingdom!

What do we learn about Daniel in this chapter? Most important, we learn that Daniel is not afraid to speak his mind when he sees injustice (here, specifically, idolatry). We do not know if Daniel had a "social consciousness"- if he would speak out for the widow, orphan and poor, though this is hinted at in chapter six. He speaks, rebukes, and condemns, without regard to his own personal safety. There can be little doubt that rebuking the King requires courage.

Second, Daniel is not adverse to having power, but it must be put to good use. (This becomes very clear in chapter six.)

-VI-

This story begins by describing the position of pre-eminence that Daniel has attained under the new regime. Daniel is again at the top of his class. His reliability, efficiency, and honesty are such that no charge could be brought against him in respect to the performance of his official duties. In short, Daniel is a man of complete integrity, both personal and official. Not only is he loyal to his King and his job, but he is loyal to his people and his religion. Daniel's religion must have been more than one of belief; it also included act and ritual. If Daniel's religion had been a vague religiosity, it would not have provided the opportunity his enemies sought.

Obviously, this story has many parallels to chapter three, where Daniel is omitted.

"Both stories belong to the literary genre of martyr stories or witness literature in which heroes are willing to suffer death rather than deny faith. In both stories, the heroes are saved from death by God's intervention, while their enemies suffer the dire fate that had been intended for the martyrs. Both stories also agree in having the pagan king profess, in the end, his faith in the God of Israel.

On the other hand, there are certain clear differences between the two stories. Besides the obvious differences in the heroes, in the pagan kings, and in the nature of the punishment, there is the difference in the religious test to which the martyrs are subjected. In Chapter three, this is of a negative character; the three Jewish men refuse to participate in idolatrous worship; in Chapter six it is of a positive character; Daniel continues to practice his Jewish religion even after it is proscribed by the pagan king."³¹

It should be also noted that this story has a parallel in the apocryphal Daniel and the Dragon, which we will analyze in the appropriate section.

When the officials learn that the King is thinking of making Daniel head of them, they resolve to get him in trouble with the King. But because of Daniel's integrity, they can not bring a criminal or political charge against him. Their means therefore, is to have the King issue a decree whereby he will unknowingly bring about the death of his Jewish friend. The text tells us that Daniel is a man of honesty and integrity, but does not give us evidence of this. Still, if even Daniel's enemies admit that he is beyond moral reproach, Daniel must indeed have been an outstanding man. It is also interesting to note that some kind of reproachment must have occurred between Daniel and the King. Throughout this story, the King tries in all ways to help Daniel, whom he considers his friend. He is deeply grieved when he learns of the legal bind he has created and that his friend may suffer harm.

When Daniel hears of the edict and realizes at once that it is directed against himself, he decides without any hesitation to continue in his daily regime. It is not a question of flaunting his religion and thus gratuitously courting trouble. Rather, it is that a man like Daniel is not prepared to lower his standards and values when trouble threatens. He is convinced that he is acting properly. He goes up as usual to his roof chamber which faces toward Jerusalem and says his prayers. We think that

the use of the roof chamber is again a standard biblical literary convention. (Hence its use also in Judg. 3:20, I Kings 17:19, II Kings 1:2, 4:10, Jer. 22:14, and other places.)

There is no dialogue between Daniel and the King when Daniel is arrested. If Daniel is such a favorite of the King, we would expect that the King should ask Daniel whether the charges are true or not? Perhaps this speaks more about the King's character than Daniel's. It is also interesting that Daniel does not argue with the King or deny any wrong-doing. This is in keeping with our character. Daniel has faith in the most high God and is convinced that his faith will prevent any harm coming to him. Thus, there is no need for him to agree with the King's statement in verse 17.

Why was Daniel cast into the lions' den? (The rabbis will have much to say about this later.) For our author, the function of this story is to again show the trust Daniel has in his God (5:20). Daniel explains to the King that his rescue is due to the justice of God, who will not permit the innocent to suffer unjustly. On the other hand, the wicked must suffer. Hence, the men who had slandered Daniel, together with their families, are thrown into the lions' den. To argue that if Daniel were truly compassionate, he would argue that these men and their families be saved is to misunderstand both the character of Daniel and the Biblical mind.

Once again, Daniel is amply rewarded for his bravery. We leave Daniel in middle-age, a wealthy and prosperous individual with great power. He is a man of integrity, honesty and justice.

This last scene stands in contrast to the preceding one because of its calmness. Daniel does not "rush about" the room as do the ministers and satraps; he simply perseveres in the exercise of his faith in the Living God. Daniel's resistance lies in his constancy and faithfulness. There is no bravado or provocation on his part. He demonstrates that the authentic movement is not agitation but conformity to the faithfulness one has chosen. Daniel turns toward Jerusalem and prays three times a day. What the Babylonian wise men,- representing the nations caught up in their static world view,- hold against Daniel is his hope.

A final literary note before moving on. "Daniel's sojourn in the lions' pit is an echo of the myth of the descent of the hero, particularly a king, to hell. This ritual, parallel to that of the king of Babylon, or that of Orpheus, belongs to a cycle. After life comes death, and after death comes a new life, also doomed to die, etc."³² This thought is also echoed in Frye's concept of the heroic archetype.

With chapter seven, we enter into the second part of Daniel. This part, which comprises chapter 7-12, stands apart from our first section in several respects. Most

scholars agree that this section was written later and belongs to a different literary genre, that of the apocalyptic tale. It is composed of four separate apolyptic dreams or visions. (Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10-12). Unfortunately, the linguistic division of the book (Hebrew/Aramaic) does not correspond to the literary division. There is also a dramatic change in the person of narration: chapters 1-6 are told in the third person, chapters 7-12 in the first person. Much ink has been spilled trying to interpret these four visions. We will not concern ourselves with the meaning of the visions, but rather try to glean some insights into the character of Daniel from these visions.

Several brief remarks can be made which seem to summarize all four visions. First, we see that Daniel is a dreamer and visionary, although he does need the help of an angel to understand the meaning of these visions. This allows us great insight into the character of Daniel-- it takes a certain personality to be able to dream. (Dreams speak in the language of symbols; if we were qualified, we could analyze these dreams from a psycho-analytic vantage, be it Freudian, Jungian, or other. Unfortunately, we do not possess this ability.)

A general attitude can be discerned about Daniel from his dreams. Daniel is in no way a revolutionary, one who advocates armed struggle, rather, he believes that a final triumph is assured in a battle to be waged by God. Daniel

recommends patience, waiting, even death if necessary, but to wait for this climactic end, and not to take this struggle into human hands. It is God who directs history, not man.

Chapter seven contains the famous vision of the "Four Beasts and Man." What we immediately notice is the tremendous anxiety that this vision produced in Daniel. "It terrified me. The vision that came to my mind frightened me... I was so greatly terrified by my thoughts that my face blanched." (7:15-16, 28)

Many scholars have noted the similarity between Daniel's dream in chapter seven, and Nebuchadnezzar's dream of chapter two. The question arises, why this dream so terrified Daniel, while the dream of the King, which had a very similar meaning, did not seem to upset him at all? First, this dream or vision is very different from Daniel's later dreams. "Whereas in the second Apocalypse of the latter part of the book (chapter 8) Daniel receives merely a vision, and in the third (chapter 9) and fourth (chapter 10-12) merely revelations, from an angel, only in his first apocalypse and in chapter two is the vision said to have "come in a dream."³³ Thus, the word "dream" deserves special attention.

Chapter eight contains the second of Daniel's visions, the vision of the ram and the goat. Again, Daniel needs help in order to understand the meaning of this vision. And again, Daniel is told to keep the meaning of the vision a secret. This secrecy is not a problem, but rather the

nature of apocalyptic literature. And again, we note that Daniel is "dazed and ill for some days." Only later is he able to rise and take care of the King's business. But this vision is different, for even after having received an explanation, Daniel does not understand its meaning.

During the explanation of the vision, Daniel falls prostrate to the ground. This is to be understood in two ways. First, it shows the absolute power of the vision. It literally knocks him off his feet. He is very frightened. It also shows Daniel's modesty and humbleness.

In this dream, Daniel is transported to Susa. This is probably why some Rabbinic legends locate the tomb of Daniel in Susa. It is hard to know why Susa was selected as the place of the vision.

Chapter nine contains the revelation of the seventy weeks of the year. Before the revelation proper, a long petitionary prayer by Daniel is found. Most scholars believe that this prayer is of independent composition and origin, the prayer playing the role of "angelus revelator."³⁴ The primary purpose of the revelation of chapter nine is to assure Jewish patriots that the religious persecution that they are suffering at the hands of Antichous IV will very soon be brought to an end by their God, who, as the master of history, had long before set the date on which the persecutions end.

Before Daniel receives his revelation, he prays, fasts, and does other forms of bodily penance.

The prayer given in verses 4-20 is of an entirely different nature from the apocalypse that follows. It is a prayer of repentance, begging God for forgiveness, so that Jerusalem and its destroyed Temple may be restored.

We also note that Daniel must be a student of sorts as well. He evidently studies the scripture regularly, and ponders the meaning of some of its more esoteric passages. Do these verses indicate that Daniel is a mystic? The form of the prayer is similar to many found in Apocalyptic literatures, especially of a later period. However, its content gives us some clue as to the piety of our hero.

This prayer also reveals Daniel's ultimate optimism. While he acknowledges the evil that has befallen him and his people because of their sin and guilt, he refuses to

accept as final the calamity that has befallen Jerusalem. The people sin and are punished, but Daniel continues to express his belief in a forgiving God, who will one day restore his people to their city.

Chapters 10-12 form one unit, which is known as the final revelation. There are three dramatic parts to this revelation; the prologue, which describes Daniel's preparation for this revelation, the initial conversation with the angel with the revelation of the future, the epilogue, which forms the concluding scene, and the angels final words to Daniel.

Although Daniel is in the company of several men, only he sees the vision. This points out to Daniel's uniqueness, only he is fit for such a revelation. This is in keeping with the entire book - Daniel is always singled out as special, better, brighter, and more prepared than the others who surround him for whatever task. Apparently, however, his friends sense that something extraordinary is happening and they flee. Perhaps Daniel went into trances or fits of ecstasy during his visions - this would also explain the elaborate preparations before his visions, and the total exhaustion that seems to occur after his visions.

Throughout this vision, Daniel is absolutely terrified, and awestruck. He is unable to talk or respond to the questions posed to him. He is told twice not to fear. We see again that Daniel is addressed as a "man greatly beloved," that is to say he is favored by God and chosen to be the recipient of divine revelation. The revelation of the final days follows.

The book of Daniel finishes on a peaceful note. Daniel

is bidden to go now to meet the end which awaits him in the grave. Daniel does not speak, does not argue. We are not told of Daniel's final days.

CHAPTER TWO

The Character of Daniel in Rabbinic Literature

Rabbi Johanan began,¹ "It is time for us to discuss the character of Daniel, the man greatly beloved, who devoted his entire life to acts of loving kindness."

"What were these acts of loving kindness to which Daniel devoted himself?" one of the disciples asked.

Rabbi Johanan quickly replied, "He provided for the bride and made her rejoice, he attended the dead to the grave, he gave alms to the poor, he prayed three times daily, and his prayer was accepted with favor, as it is written in scripture, 'And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house- now his windows were open in the upper chamber towards Jerusalem- and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime (6:2)'."²

Another disciple continued, "In many respects, Daniel was so beloved by God, that he even resembled his creator. For the righteous have their hearts under their control; hence, it is written, 'Hannah spoke to her heart' (I Sam. 1:13) 'David said to his heart' (I Sam. 27:1) and our Daniel 'proposed to his heart' (1:8). Thus, they resembled their

creator, who also spoke to his heart."³

Rabbi Isaac then took over, "Lord of the universe, if all the wise men of the other nations were on one scale of the balance, and Daniel the man greatly beloved were on the other, would he not be found to outweigh them all?"⁴

"Here, here!" the other members of the academy answered.

R. Eleazar b. Hanina then said, "Let not the blessing of an ordinary man be lightly esteemed in thine eyes, for two great men in their generation received from ordinary men blessings where were fulfilled in them, these being David and Daniel. David was blessed by Aravnah (II Sam. 24:23) and Daniel was blessed by Darius (6:17)."⁵

One of the younger students then stood up and asked the sages, "Masters, tell us, please, tell us more about our beloved Daniel. From what tribe did he descend? And why is he known by more than one name in the Bible? Is this not unusual for such a saint?"

A silence, a hush fell over the academy as they waited for the reply. The masters consulted. Finally, one of their number stood up and gave this reply.

"My friends, Daniel was from the tribe of Judah, as were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, wise men of whom it is written, 'Now as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom.' Miracles and wonders were brought on their behalf in Babylon, as it says, 'Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night

vision; then Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, and worshipped Daniel'." ⁶

"There is further proof that Daniel descended from the tribe of Judah," one of the older students continued. "We read in Ruth 'And he measured six measures...' He was vouchsafed that there should arise from her six righteous men, each of them possessing six virtues. And who were these six? None other than David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Haninah, Mishael, Azariah, Daniel, and the Messiah." ⁷

"I have heard that Daniel was also given the name Shesh, and am reminded of this, for you, dear colleague, have mentioned the six descendents from the tribe of Judah. Why was he called Shesh? Because in his lifetime six (shesh) ordeals (zar) came (bah): his ordeal in the lion pit, the ordeals of Hananiah and his companions in the fiery furnace, the ordeal referred to in the verse 'Then the decree went forth, and the wise men were to be slain (2:13),' (His colleague next to him whispered- 'So wise was Daniel, and so righteous, that were it not for Daniel, all the wise men of Babylon would have perished.' ⁸), the ordeal of Johoiakim being carried away into exile, and finally the ordeal of Zedekiah's being carried away into exile." ⁹

Another student continued. "There is still further proof, my rabbis, of why Daniel descended from Judah. We studied this together last week. We learned at a 'vav' was added to Nahshon hinting that six righteous men would come forth from his tribe, each of whom was blessed with

six virtues. These men are David, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, and Daniel. And what six qualities did Daniel possess? 'He was a surpassing spirit and knowledge and understanding, interpreting dreams and declaring riddles, loosening knots- all these were found in this man Daniel (5:12).' And still to descend from Judah is the Messiah."¹⁰

"My friends," Rabbi Johanan interrupted, "You look for left handed answers. There is an easy proof that Daniel descended from the tribe of Judah, which you have all omitted. How do we know that Daniel descended from Judah? For it says so in the very book of Daniel, "Now these were the children of Judah, who were youths and whom there was no blemish (1:4)'. "¹¹

"Alas, my friends, it is true, that Daniel descended from the tribe of Judah. Why then, am I so sad?- For these alone are left of the remnant of Judah: only Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah."¹²

"It is time now to pray. Let us remember that it is from Daniel that we learn of the requirement to pray three times a day. When we return, we shall continue our discussion of the righteous character of Daniel." Slowly, the men of the academy left to pray.

R. Johanan called the academy back to order. "Let us continue with our discussion of the character of Daniel," he said. "Last session, we spoke of the lineage of Daniel. Most of us agree that Daniel was a descendant of the tribe of Judah. We saw how this was foreshadowed in many places in scripture. We also noted the various names by which Daniel was known. But the outstanding quality of Daniel, by far, was his righteousness. R. Zechariah will start our discussion.

"Not only was Daniel righteous," he was also modest: he did not even call himself the servant of God. However, God the Holy One Blessed be He, recognizes humility when He sees it, and called Daniel, 'My servant'."¹³ (6:21, Sifre Deut. 27).

"Not only this, but Daniel, like Abraham, was quick and speedy in his work, as we learn in 8.27."

The Rabbi continued, remarking, "I never knew of a man as righteous as Daniel. He prayed three times a day, even when his very life was in danger. He was so righteous, that in the lions' pit, God Himself brought an angel in the form of a stone to shut the pit. We also find that Daniel showed respect for royalty, as it said, 'And when he came near the King... (6:21).'¹⁴ And, when in the king's service, he refused to eat the sweet bread, even though he was fairly certain that it was kosher.¹⁵ Daniel refused to use even their oil."¹⁶

R. Hama b. Haninah then observed. "I would like to

comment on the verse, 'In whom there was no blemish, but well favored, and skillfull in all wisdom and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace (1:4):' "So perfect were they, that they did not even bear the scar made by bleeding." R. Hama b. Hanina concluded, "This teaches that they restrained themselves from levity, conversation, and sleep."¹⁷

Rab concluded this session with a question on who would be the Messiah. He replied: "If he is living, it would be our holy master R. Judah Ha Nasi; if of the dead, it would have been Daniel, the most desirable man. In fact, the Messiah's name might very well be Daniel."¹⁸

R. Judah began: "My friends, it is time for us to consider the question of whether or not to count Daniel as one of the prophets.¹⁹ This is a very difficult question. There is little doubt amongst any of us that Daniel certainly was a very wise man; in fact, one of us remarked that if Daniel, the wisest man of his time, were put on one side of a balance, he would outweigh all the wise men of his generation. But does this qualify him to be a prophet? I have heard that both Josephus and the Christians count Daniel among the prophets. But how do we stand on this issue? "Great is the power of the prophets, who compare that which is created to its Creator, as it is written, 'And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of the Ulai (2:2)'."²⁰

"Before the land of Israel had been especially chosen, all the lands were suitable for divine revelation, after the land of Israel had been chosen, all the other lands were eliminated. Thus it would seem that Daniel cannot be counted as one of the prophets."

An objection was raised. "I might cite the case of the prophets with whom He did speak outside the land of Palestine. True, He did speak to them outside the land, but only because of Zechut Avot... and even though He did speak with them outside the land, He only did so at a pure spot near water. And Daniel did receive revelation by pure water, as it said, 'And I was by the stream Ulai (8:2),' and 'I was by the side of the great River Tigris (10:4).' Thus Daniel could be counted as a prophet."²¹

R. Nahman then rose and continued: "Malachi is the same as Mordecai. Why, then, is he called Malachi? Because he was next in command to the king. Thus, we can conclude that Baruch b. Neriah and Serayah b. Mahseyah and Daniel and Mordecai, Bibshan, Haggai, Zecharia and Malachi all prophesied in the second year of Darius."²²

R. Yotzan continued: "'Who is a wise man, and who knows how to interpret the matter?' (Eccl. 8:1) 'Who is a wise man.' this refers to the Holy One, Praised be He, and 'who knows how to interpret and understand the matter.' this refers to the one who can interpret the Torah of Moses."

"The wisdom of man illumines his face," said R. Yochan. "The strength of the prophets is similar to the strength of the one on High, as it says, 'and I heard the voice of a man.'"²³

One of the younger students stood up. "I have looked for the answer to our question in Seder Olam Rabba, and behold, Daniel is there counted as one of the prophets. It says, 'All of these prophesied near the Hurban. Baruch b. Nuryah, and Sarayah b. Mahsay, and Daniel, the man greatly beloved, all of them prophesied in the time of Nebuchadnezzar. And not only this, but Ezekiel and Daniel were called the 'son of man'."²⁴

R. Abbahu then rose and spoke next. "I have learned from my teacher, R. Simeon b. Lakish, that if you look, you find that the Holy One Praised be He revealed the end to Daniel. What further proof do we need that Daniel was in-

deed a prophet?"²⁵

"What you say, my friend, that God revealed to Daniel the end of days, and its timing, is not true," said Raba. "For Daniel made a mistake in this calculation, as it is written, 'In the first year of his reign, I Daniel meditated in the books... (9:2).' From his use of the words 'I meditated' we can infer that he made a mistake.²⁶ Thus, he is not to be counted as one of the prophets, for he erred."

R. Aha remarked: "This is no refutation, my friends! All that the Holy One intends to perform or make afresh in the world to come, He has done in this world through the prophets. What are examples of these acts you ask? He made the sea dry through the prophet Moses, (Ex 15:16). He remembers the barren through Abraham, (Gen. 21:1). He causes kings to bow down to you, as through Daniel (2:46), and will make the blind see, as through Elisha (2Kings 6:17)."²⁷

"How are we to understand the verse, 'And I Daniel alone saw the vision; the men who were with me did not see the vision, yet they were seized with a great terror and fled into hiding (10:7)'?"

"This shows that Daniel alone saw the vision, like Moses," said one of the younger students.²⁸

R. Hiyya b. Abba said: "First we must know who were these men, these wise men. They were Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. They were superior to him in one way, but he was

superior to them in another. They were superior to him, for they were prophets, and he was not. He was superior to them for he saw, on this occasion, and they did not see. Although Daniel saw the visions, he did not admonish or exhort the people, and therefore cannot be considered a prophet."²⁹

A murmur arose within the academy. He has an excellent point. A visionary is one thing, but to call one a prophet, must he not exhort and admonish the people?

"But since they did not see it, why were they so terrified?" R. Hiyyah b. Abba replied, "This is simple. Though they themselves did not see anything, their guardian angel did see it."³⁰

The head of the academy for the day then rose. "My friends, where does this discussion leave us? It seems to me that Hiyyah b. Abba has a most important point. All of our other speakers have included Daniel among the prophets for he had visions and interpreted dreams. And yet, these interpretations were not always correct. And just because one of us has a vision, even if divine in origin, need we be included among the prophets? A prophet must also have a message, he must exhort and, if need be, admonish our people. Thus, we should not include Daniel among the prophets. A wise man, a man of great learning and ability he certainly was, but not a prophet."

With this the discussion ended.

As the masters left the academy, a few of the disciples remained behind to continue their discussions. Night was falling- soon they would all have to leave and return home, for it was not safe to be on the roads or outside in the evening. Only Rabbis Abin and Yudan remained with their disciples.

The conversation centered on the day's discussion in the academy. "Didn't Daniel ever do anything wrong? All we hear is praise for this beloved servant of our God. It is hard to believe that one who was not a prophet could be so perfect!"

"I have heard that Daniel was also called Hatach. Our teachers say that Hatach is the same as Daniel because he was cut down (Hatkuhu) from his greatness, he was called Hatach. And yet today, we learned only that he was called Hatach because he made decisions (Hatach) on affairs of state."³¹

Rabbi Abin then spoke. "My friends, I agree with you that we are only hearing one side of the story of Daniel. Everyone seems to be afraid to say anything against Daniel. Well, this was not so in my early days at the academy. Let me share with you some of the negative characteristics of Daniel. R. Levi b. Prata taught me the following: Because we had in the days of Moses one who could make sweet for us our bitterness, does it say 'Wayyehal Moshe'; but in the days of Daniel we had no one to sweeten our bitterness, for it says, 'yet we have not entreated (hililun) the favor of the Lord our God (9:13)'."³²

R. Yudan spoke next. "Today we learned that the Holy One, praised be He, revealed the time of redemption to Daniel. But not only did Daniel miscalculate the end, he did not ever understand the revelation of God. I learned from my teacher, R. Eleazar b. Abina, the following: The Holy One, praised be He, revealed the time of redemption to two men, Jacob and Daniel. To Jacob, we have proof in scripture for it says, 'Jacob called his sons together and said... that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the end of days (Gen. 49:1).' At that moment, however, God hid the secret from Jacob, for instead of revealing the future, Jacob said, 'Reuben, thou art my first born (Gen. 49:3).' God also revealed the end to Daniel saying, 'Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people... (10:14).' Yet when Daniel was about to have the secret revealed, what was commanded to him instead? "But thou o Daniel... (12:4),' and Daniel said, 'I heard but did not understand... the latter end of these things (12:8)'."³³

"In fact, Daniel was heard in his prayer only because of the merit (zechut) of Abraham."³⁴

R. Joshua then spoke. "My friends, the most damaging evidence we have against Daniel we can use tomorrow. I have heard that Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, not as a test of his faith, but because he gave advice to Nebuchadnezzar and thus Daniel was punished, as it is written. 'Wherefore, a king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and atone thy sins by righteousness and thine iniquities

by showing mercy to the poor, if there may be a lengthening of tranquillity (4:24)'. If we join this evidence with Daniel's name change to Hatach, we may be able to defeat this pro-Daniel movement."³⁵

The men of the academy gathered, as was their custom, for morning prayers. One was appointed Shaliach Tzibur, and stood at the front of the prayer hall. The rest filed in and sat in their customary seats. As the prayers continued, they reached the section of the service where it was customary to engage in a bit of study. Together they recited the prayer '... who has commanded us to engage in study'.

A question- "Is it permissible to recite all three services (Shachrit, Mincha, Maariv) at one time?" The students eagerly looked to their teachers for an answer. This was a favorite game at this time of the service- the students would ask their masters a Halachic question, and the masters tried to answer, basing their response on the biblical character they were studying that day.

"The rule is shown in Daniel," one of the masters replied, "'And he kneeled upon his knees three times in a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God (6:11).' Thus, we learned that we must pray three times, separately, and not all three services together."³⁶

"Might we infer from this statement that a man should pray the whole day?"

"This has already been expressly stated by the hand of Daniel," answered another Master. "'And three times in a day he prayed... (6:11)'."

"But perhaps this practice began only when he went into captivity."

"No, for if you will read the text clearly, then you will see that it says, 'As he did aforetime (6:11)'."

"Are we permitted to pray in any direction we wish?" asked a third student.

"No, for the text clearly says, 'toward Jerusalem.' Thus, we too pray towards Jerusalem."³⁷

"Let us move on in our prayer. Some of us must work for a living; not all of us have the luxury of serving God as Daniel did. For how did Daniel serve God? By prayer, for we read, 'And he kneeled upon his knees and prayed (6:11)'."³⁸

"Let us be like Daniel, and not neglect our prayer, as Darius testified that Daniel never neglected the prescribed prayers."³⁹

The men of the academy continued their service, until they reached the Amidah. Rabbi Simeon, as was his custom, announced the order of the Amidah prayer. He began with a question. "Why were the men of the great assembly called great (Gadol)? Because they returned greatness to their assembly (Gedolah), as in days afore by fixing the order of prayer."

"Rabbi Pinchas rebutted, "No, it was Moses who fixed the order of Prayer, for he said, 'the great, mighty and awesome God'."

"Yes, this is true, but not all our fathers used this formula. Jeremiah said 'the great and mighty God,' but did not include awesome. Why did he do this? For he lived in

the days of the destruction of the Temple, and believed that there was nothing as awesome as the Temple; thus, he could not say 'awesome'."

"Daniel, in his order of prayer, said 'O Lord, the great and awesome God,' but not 'God the mighty.' Why not? Because, as Daniel asked when his children were put in chains, 'where was God's might'?"

"So why was he still able to say 'God the awesome'? Because, as he explained, this One did awesome things for us in the lions' den and in the fiery furnace, hence, it is proper to call him awesome. However, when the men of the Great Assembly arose, they restored the manner of praising God's greatness to its ancient form, saying, 'now, therefore our God, the great, mighty and awesome God (Neh. 9:32)', because, as they explained, God remains above every praise by which men could exalt Him."⁴⁰

"Let us not forget to include prayers of repentance, as did Daniel, when he said (Hatanu, vehaevnu vehershanu vemaradnu)."⁴¹

Thus, the men of the academy continued with the Amidah prayer, and finished their morning service.

R. Eliezer b. R. Jose, the Galilliean, began the morning's lecture. "It is time for us to discuss the episode of Daniel and the lion's den. Let me recall for you this wonderful story of faith and righteousness. The Persians and Medians sought to slay Daniel and decreed him to be cast into the lion's den, as it said, 'whomever shall ask a petition of any god or man... say of thee o king, he shall be cast into the den of lions (6:8)'. But a miracle was wrought for Daniel as he was saved and they themselves were cast into the lion's den as it said, 'those... men were cast... into the midst of the den of lions (6:25)'.⁴²"

"Why was Daniel cast into the lion's den? So that the Holy One, praised be He, might be able to perform miracles and mighty deeds to sanctify His name in the World."⁴³

At this point, a large smile formed on R. Joshua's face. "My learned rabbis, I have heard that Daniel was cast into the lion's den as punishment, for he gave advice to that evil king Nebuchadnezzar."⁴⁴

Some of the rabbis began to move uncomfortably in their seats. What was R. Joshua up to?

"Hear me out, for I have more evidence. Daniel was not saved by his own righteousness or prayer, but only through the prayer of those unsung heroes Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. We learn this from David, who said, 'I behold Daniel, who is to rise up out of my tribe, and how, though he be cast into a den of lions, they will not touch him.' Thereupon, David said: 'He hath delivered my soul in peace

so that none came nigh to me (Ps. 55:19)', that is, the lions would not come nigh to Daniel. And who brought it about that Daniel was delivered? Those who 'in multitudes were with me', by which is meant Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who also put prayers together for Daniel. Hence David said, 'God shall hear and answer them (Ps. 55:20)'.⁴⁵

Silence descended upon the academy. Who would rise to the challenge of R. Joshua. The traditional thinking on this subject had indeed been challenged. All thought that even though Daniel was cast into the den of lions, God still delivered him, for it says in the text, 'My God has sent His angel and hath shut the lion's mouth (6:23)'.⁴⁶

R. Simon spoke first. "Daniel was cast into the lion's den to show the excellence of the deeds of the righteous. God let the angels see Daniel go down into a pit of lions, ride upon their necks and suffer no injury."

"In fact, God delivered four of Judah's descendants, as was predicted in Genesis. There, we read that 'Judah, thee shall thy brothers praise! Since he confessed with Tamar, he merited that thirty kings would be descended from him. (i.e., Perez through David) Judah also saved Joseph from death, as well as Tamar and her two children; therefore God delivered four of his descendants. And who are these four? Daniel from the lion, as a reward for saving Joseph, and three from fire- Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, as a reward for Perez, Zerach, and Tamar."⁴⁷

"Exactly, R. Simon," said R. Joshua. "You see, Daniel

was saved, not because he was righteous, but because of the zechut of others."

Someone else tried to refute R. Joshua. "A man has a protector (patron) and yet he is arrested for his crime and cast into a den of wild beasts. Where then is his patron? Though Daniel was cast into the den of lions, still God delivered him. Whence do we know this? For it says, 'My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lion's mouth (6:23)'."⁴⁸

"Yes, but how does this prove that Daniel was not being punished?"

"We read, 'Judah is my sceptre (Ps. 60:9)'. If a man should say that the Holy One, praised be He does not deliver from wild beasts, then Daniel, who belonged to the tribe of Judah, can testify that God delivered him from the lions (6:23)."⁴⁹

R. Abbahu said, "What is more, God performed a miracle to save this righteous man. 'And a stone brought itself and laid itself upon the mouth of the den (6:18)'. Now, how did they get a stone in Babylon, for they use bricks in Babylon since stone is scarce (Gen. 11:3). The only explanation is that it rolled from the land of Israel and arrived just for this particular moment's use. And the Lord did this for flesh and blood."⁵⁰ This is why He calls it a 'night of watching (Ex. 12:42)'. Because on that night, He performed great things for the righteous, just as He had wrought for Israel in Egypt. On that night he saved Hezekiah, Hananiah and his companions, Daniel from the lion's

den, and on that night, the Messiah and Elijah will be made great."⁵¹

R. Johanan continued. "Yes, Daniel was saved by a miracle from God. The Holy One, praised be He made a stipulation with the sea that it should divide before Israel. Not with the sea alone did God make a stipulation, but also with everything which was created in the six days of creation. He commanded the sea to divide and the heavens to be silent before Moses, He commanded the sun and moon to stand still before Joshua, He commanded the ravens to feed Elijah, He commanded the fire to do no harm to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, He commanded the lions not to harm Daniel, and the heavens to open before Ezekiel, and the fish to vomit forth Jonah."⁵²

"All of what you say may be true," replied R. Joshua. "I do not deny that Daniel may have had righteous moments. But none of you have been able to refute my contention that Daniel was cast into the lion's den as punishment. True, once he was in the lion's den he was saved, and God does save the righteous, and even performs miracles on their behalf. But what was he doing in that den of wild beasts?:"

"I do not know why Daniel was cast into the lion's den, but I can offer a reason why he was saved. He was saved because he offered prayers to the Holy One, blessed be He who is described as a lion, as it is written, 'they shall walk after the Lord, who shall roar like a lion (Hos. 11:10)'. Daniel belonged to the tribe of Judah who was also called a

lion, for it says 'Judah is a lion's whelp (Gen. 49:9)' and it also says, 'Now among these are, of the children of Judah, Daniel (1:6)'. Thus the Lion came and delivered the lion from the mouth of the lion... since he was like the lions, being himself a lion, he was therefore not injured."⁵³

(i.e., because he was descended from Judah (the lion) he was miraculously made to appear like a lion to the lions in the cage.)

Rabbi Tahalifa offered this view: "The satraps and heathen counselors, because they could not prevail against God in heaven, took counsel against Daniel, as it is said, 'All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps... took counsel together that the king should establish a statute, and make a strong interdict, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the interdict and sign the writing (6:8-9a)'. Now King Darius signed the interdict and when Daniel knew that the interdict was signed, he went into his house... when they sought out Daniel, they found him praying, whereupon Daniel uttered the following words before God. 'These men come tumultuously upon me, Hide me from the council of the evil doers; from the tumult of the workers of iniquity (Ps. 64:3)'. As soon as the presidents and satraps found the means, they approached the King, as we have read. The King did not want to enforce his own edict, but feared for the life of our righteous Daniel.

The presidents and the satraps reproached the King. He replied, 'Look you: You are not to be believed', and so they kept quiet all the day. At the going down of the sun, Daniel began to pray, saying: 'Because of these wicked men, should a man not pray?' Hence it is written, 'The King labored till the going down of the sun to rescue him'. Surely, if Daniel did what he did for the sake of a prayer, which a man may omit without fear of being cut down by heaven or being put to death by a court, how much more ought we to heed other obligations for whose neglect we are liable to be cut down by heaven or put to death by a court: And although the King sought to save him, he could not, and so Daniel was cast into the lion's den."

"The King went to his palace, and spent the night fasting and praying for Daniel, and early the next morning went down unto the den of lions, and called out for Daniel, and though Daniel heard, he did not answer, because he was reading the Shema. Then said Daniel unto the King: 'O King, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lion's mouth (6:23)'. How did this happen? When Daniel went down to the lions, they became like tame beasts in his presence, as it said, 'The lion which is mighty, and turneth not away from any (Prov. 30:30)', became like a tame beast."

"Then the King was exceedingly glad, and commanded that 'they should take Daniel up out of the den... and the King commanded and they brought those men who had accused Daniel

and they cast them into the lion's den (6:24,25)', for the accusers had said to the King: 'Because the lions were already satiated they did not devour Daniel.' The King said to them: 'If the lions are satiated, you go down and lodge with them this night. Then we shall see whether they are satiated.' When the accusers were cast into the den, they were at once devoured."⁵⁴

"Rabbi Joshua has asked why was Daniel cast into the lion's den? It was not as punishment. 'When a man trusts in Me, I deliver him...' and so too with Daniel. I delivered him only because he trusted in My name, as it is said, 'then... the King commanded... that they should take Daniel up out of the den of lions (6:24).' Wherefore? Because he had trusted in his God."⁵⁵ Let us all in this time of trouble learn to trust more in our God."

R. Simeon b. Yohai stood. "Gentlemen," he began, "I would like for us to consider the following story. Once again it reflects on the courage of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar set up an image, and selected twenty three from every nation to bow down to it, including twenty three from Israel."

Rabbi Simeon interjected, "I learned that Nebuchadnezzar selected three from every nation, and the three Israelites were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Now, they made up their minds not to worship the idol. They went to Daniel and said to him: 'Our master Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar has set up an idol and has selected us from all Israel. What shall we do? Shall we bow down to it or not?' He replied: 'There is a prophet within reach; go and consult him.' So they went to Ezekiel, and told him the same story as they had told Daniel."

"You see!" exclaimed Rabbi Joshua, "Here is further proof that Daniel was not always so righteous and wise, nor a prophet. Again, we have a case where he was unable to give advice on his own."

"Let me continue" said Rabbi Yohai, "Nebuchadnezzar tried to entice Daniel, saying to him, 'Will you not bow down to the image, for it is strong and real? Come and see what it can do.' He said to him, 'And you will bow down to it yourself?'"

"What did the wicked king do? He took the plate of the High Priest and put it in the mouth of the image, and then he brought together all manner of musicians who played

hymns to it, and it responded 'I am the Lord thy God.'

When Daniel saw this, he said, 'Will you permit me to go up to it and kiss your image on the mouth?' 'Why on the mouth?' he said to him. 'Because,' he replied, 'it speaks so excellently.' He thereupon gave him permission. Going up to it, he adjured the plate, saying, 'I am flesh and blood, and I am the messenger of the Holy One, blessed be He; I bid thee take good heed that the name of heaven should not be profaned through thee, and command thee to follow me.' He then approached to kiss it and took that which it had swallowed (e.g., the plate had been swallowed up in the mouth of the image) out of its mouth. When he came down the various magicians assembled and played hymns before it, but it made no response; and straight away the wind blew down the image. When the heathen saw the wonders and mighty deeds that God had wrought with Hananiah and his companions, they took their idols and broke them, and made them into bells which they hung on their dogs and asses, and when they tinkled them they said, 'You see now what we used to bow down to,' to fulfill what is said, 'Bel boweth down, Nebo Stoopeth': their idols are upon beasts, and upon cattle (Is. 46:1)'.⁵⁶

Someone rose in the back of the academy. "Excuse me, Rabbi Yohai, but I have heard a slightly different tradition. I agree with you that Nebuchadnezzar set up a great dragon. But there, our traditions part. I have heard that this dragon swallowed up everything thrown to it. Said

Nebuchadnezzar to Daniel, 'How great is its might that it swallows up everything that is thrown to it!' 'Give me permission,' he rejoined, 'and I will make him weak.' On being granted permission, what did he do? He took straw, hid nails in it, and threw it to the dragon, and the nails lacerated its bowels. That is the meaning of the verse, 'And I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up'.⁵⁷"

"Both of these stories show that Israel did not trust in the shadow of their creator and came with their wives and sons and bowed down to the idolatrous image, except Daniel, whom they called by the name of their God."⁵⁸

R. Yohai again rose to speak. "We have been exploring the character of the great Daniel these last few days, and yet, not one of us has spoken about this man of dreams, that is, we have yet to explore the significance of Daniel's dreams, and what they reveal to us about his character. How can we hope to fully understand this man, if we ignore this important part of his personality?"

"What you say is true. But we all know the danger of exploring these dreams. They are so easily misused, one must be much older to dive into the mystical and hidden world. Let us resolve to explore this aspect of Daniel, but to tread lightly, and not explore too much."⁵⁹

"I am not sure Daniel even had the (ketz) revealed to him. Is Daniel here, not like Jacob, to whom the end was about to be revealed, only to be hidden. For we read of

Daniel, 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book (12:4)'.⁶⁰"

"I am afraid I must disagree. Daniel can only be compared to Abraham, for both foresaw the empires engage in their subsequent activities. The text surely bears this out, 'I saw in my vision by the night, and behold, the four winds of the heaven broke forth upon the great sea, and four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse, one from the other... (7:2f)'.⁶¹"

"Let us concentrate instead on Daniel's ability to interpret other people's dreams. To this, he can surely be compared to our master Joseph. When Nebuchadnezzar beheld the dream, Daniel came to him and saw that he would be driven out, as it says, 'That thou shall be driven from en (4:22)'. He then pretended to tremble and be afraid, as it says, 'Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while (4:16)'. He was asked: 'Why art thou afraid?' The reply was: 'I see the dream but cannot declare it.' He said to the king: 'My lord, let the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine adversaries.'

"You who speak this verse are causing Daniel to speak reproachfully of God, for he said to Nebuchadnezzar, 'My Lord'. Can there be a greater enemy to him than God, whose Temple he destroyed and whose children he exiled? Moreover, Israel also were his enemies, and he (Daniel) was thus cursing them: But Daniel directed his thoughts towards God and

said: 'Lord in heaven, cause this dream to come to this enemy of thine'."

"Nebuchadnezzar then told Daniel his dream, and Daniel offered an interpretation. When he told him the dream, he asked: 'What shall I do? How do you advise me?' Daniel replied that he 'Do charity and fling open they treasury' for he saw the Israelites leaving Jerusalem destitute, with not a goat in their hand, and for this reason did he counsel him to practice charity."⁶²

"We see the true piety of Daniel in the events after he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream. When he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, what is said? 'Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel and commanded that they should offer an offering and sweet odours unto him (2:46).' He indeed commanded that they should offer to him, but Daniel declined it, saying, 'Just as idolaters will be punished, so will their gods be punished'."⁶³

R. Azariah said: "I learned from my teacher, R. Judah b. Simon, that Daniel was more than a passive interpreter of dreams. Not often, but at times, he played advocate with God. We have mentioned one such episode already, namely Daniel's version of the Avot. I share with you the following: When the sins of the people produced their effect and the enemy entered Jerusalem, they took the mighty men of Israel and bound their hands behind them. The Holy One, blessed be He said, "I wrote in the Torah, 'I will be

with him in trouble (Ps. 96:15)'. " Now that my children are plunged in distress while I am at ease- if it is possible to say so, He drew his hand behind His back. Subsequently he revealed it to Daniel, as it is stated, 'But go thou thy way till the end be.' Daniel asked, 'What will the end be?' He answered him, "To give judgment and reckoning for the sins Israel had committed.' The Holy One told him 'And thou shalt rest (12:13).' Daniel asked, 'Is the rest in death to be forever?' He replied to him, "And thou shall stand up.' Daniel asked, "With whom? With the righteous or the wicked?' He replied to him, 'To thy lot,' which indicates the righteous. Daniel asked, 'Will this be the end of days or the end of thy right hand?' He answered him, 'At the end of the right hand; that right hand which has become enslaved while Israel is in captivity. I have set a term for my right hand; when I have redeemed My children I shall have redeemed My right hand'."⁶⁴

R. Hana b. Hanina said: "The good advocate knows how to present his case clearly before the tribunal. Moses was one of two advocates who arose to defend Israel and set themselves, as it were, against the Holy One, blessed be He. These two were Moses and Daniel; Daniel we infer from 'And I set my face unto the Lord, to seek by prayer (9:13).' These were two men who set their face against the attribute of strict justice in order to plead for mercy on Israel's behalf."⁶⁵

"What happened to Daniel in his final days? Did he live to see the return to Jerusalem, or did he die in Babylon?"

"Let me tell you. The king did not forget Daniel's words. He worried about the fate of this people and felt sympathetic to them. He asked to see maps of Jerusalem, and plans of the ruined Temple. He studied the customs and traditions of the Jews. His scholars were ordered to tell him the history of the Jewish kings and the sayings of the prophets. Their great faith in an invisible God moved him. He came to a definite decision. Daniel was the first one to hear it."

"Daniel; said Cyrus, 'Your invisible God has chosen me. You may return to your homeland. The Temple in Jerusalem is to be rebuilt at the King's expense. I will give the holy treasure back to your people.' Daniel fell to his knees and thanked God, and then the king."

"The king's edict filled the prisoners with joy and excitement. Daniel thought back to his youth, how he had come here as a young captive, and had now lived to see the fulfillment of his dream- that his people be allowed to return to their homeland. But Daniel was old now."

"The preparation took weeks. Some people decided to stay in Babylon. The king had left it to them to decide. They had started businesses and achieved high office and wealth. The country had become their homeland. Many of them were old. They could not embark on such an arduous

journey. And Daniel?"

"He sensed that his life was nearing its end, that he had fulfilled the task which God had given him. 'Come with us,' the returning people said. 'We will provide a carriage for you.' Daniel smiled. 'My greatest wish has been fulfilled. I shall stay here but my heart will abide with you'."

"The day of departure came. Daniel watched from his rooftop. The column kept pausing as the returning travelers stopped and looked up to greet him. Daniel knew many of them, the children of Gibbar and Bethlehem, the men from Jericho and Ramah, the singers, priests and temple servants from Jerusalem. The tears ran down his face. He went with them in his thoughts. The sun slowly set, and Daniel spent his final days in Babylon."

CHAPTER THREE

The Character of Daniel as Gleaned from the Apocrypha

Susanna

Resume of the Story

Susanna was the beautiful wife of a prominent Jew in Babylonia named Joakim. Susanna's beauty was matched by her piety, for her parents had instructed her in the law of Moses. Joakim, her father, was very wealthy; his home in Babylon had become a frequent meeting place where Jews regularly gathered to discuss the affairs of the day. Among the frequent visitors were two elders who had recently been appointed judges. These two men were totally undeserving of the honor, for, unknown to the Jewish community, throughout their lives they had broken the laws of God and man. These two judges developed a secret passion for her; one day, having ostensibly departed each to his own home for the midday meal, they both returned to the garden to watch Susanna bathe. This required a mutual explanation and they were forced to admit their lust. Then they arranged for a time when they might find her alone. (vs. 1-14)

One very hot day, while the two elders were hidden in the garden, Susanna decided to bathe in the garden pool. She sent her maids to shut the garden doors against intrusion and to bring her what she needed for her bath.

No sooner had she dismissed the maids, than the two elders ran up to her and insisted that she have sexual relations with them, right there and then, or they would testify that they had caught her in the act of adultery, but that the young man had escaped. (vs. 15-21)

Unwilling to sin against her God by committing adultery Susanna started screaming, whereupon the two elders opened the garden gates. When the household servants came to investigate the commotion, the elders told their concocted story. (v. 22-27)

The next day Susanna's trial for adultery was held at the scene of the "crime." Susanna came accompanied by her parents, her children, and all her relatives. As she was veiled, the two elders ordered her unveiled, that they might feast upon her beauty. Her two accusers, full of dignity and righteous indignation told their story. The presiding elders and community did not deign to ask Susanna for her version. The circumstantial evidence, especially since it was undergirded by two witnesses whose age and rank put them above suspicion, was enough to convict her, and the community sentenced her to death. (vs. 28-41)

Protesting her innocence, Susanna lifted her voice to God. She prayed not in vain, for as Susanna was being led away to be put to death, God "inspired" the young boy Daniel to challenge the verdict and assert that she had been framed. Daniel demanded the right to cross examine the witnesses. (vs. 41-49)

Appeal from the verdict was granted and, as 'counsel for the defense,' Daniel had the villains separated so that they could not hear one another's testimony. Then Daniel asked each of them the same question, "Under what tree did you see them making love?", to which they each gave a different answer, thereby totally discrediting their testimony. Since it was evident now that their accusation had been false and malicious, Susanna was honorably acquitted and the guilty elders were promptly put to death (in accord with the statute of Deut. 19:18-21). Thus that day, Susanna, an innocent person, was saved and the boy Daniel "had a great reputation in the eyes of the people." (vs. 42-64)

Several things should be noted about the above summary. First, the English version given above is that of θ which differs from the older(?) LXX at a number of important points. But because the θ version of Daniel replaced the LXX version in the early Christian church, to such an extent that no LXX manuscript of Daniel was even published until 1772¹, we will take the story of Susanna in θ as the basis, or starting point, for discussion. "The striking differences between LXX and θ cannot blind us to the fact that the story told by both is, in its essence, one and the same... each is probably the product of an independent manipulation of an identical original."² Nonetheless, scholars have written voluminously about the problem of the versions of Daniel, and this will be treated later.

Second, a detailed resume is not a whole lot shorter

than the actual story itself, a fact which

"underscores the brevity and fast-moving pace of this ancient story. Brief though it is, in both the LXX and θ , the principal characters are well developed, and the plot is simple and direct, with mounting suspense and sudden resolution. The story is a skillful admixture of three of the most basic and universal fascinations of man: God, sex and death."³

Metzger calls Susanna "one of the best short stories in the world's literature, a real gem."⁴

Textual Problems

The position in which Susanna is inserted is variable. It either precedes the canonical Daniel, or is appended after Daniel, as chapter twelve. From a literary point of view, it makes more sense to have Susanna precede the canonical Daniel, for it serves to show the reader that the young Daniel has been very courageous and spiritually precocious long before he attained full adulthood. (vs. 44, 62) "In Cod. Chisianus, and in the Vulgate Susanna forms chapter thirteen of Daniel (the Syro-Hexaplar). However, in the Greek MSS (A, B, Q, θ) and the common editions, the narrative is commonly given as Dan. I."⁵

Comparison of the Story in LXX and θ

"It is very easy to show how the LXX and θ of Susanna differ from one another; it is virtually impossible to say why. Unlike the differences between the LXX and θ in the other additions to Daniel, which are relatively minimal, their differences in Susanna are considerable. In fact, scholars have been far more struck by the differences than by their similarities."⁶ When the two Greek texts are printed side by side (as in Charles p. 647ff), one need not even read a word of the text to see at a glance that there are striking differences. Some of the additions improve the logic of the narrative, more important, many of them increase the story's drama and tension. In spite of the changes, the plot remains essentially the same. "Inevitably, there are differences in 'details of fact' such as the time of day the alleged crime occurred (dawn in LXX, midday in θ) or the time and place where the trial took place. By far the most important difference is one of emphasis, namely in θ . Daniel himself is given far more prominence than in the LXX."⁷ Moore and others note that when Daniel is mentioned, it is not until vs. 45! And when he is, in the LXX it is the angel that gets top billing. This, plus other considerations, suggest to these scholars that Daniel may not have figured at all in the original Susanna story. However, this is largely irrelevant for our purposes, as we want to analyze the character of Daniel as he appears in our two extant texts.

For the reader's convenience, we have reproduced from Charles the two texts from vs. 41 f., for this is where Daniel makes his first appearance.

- 44-45 And as she was being led away to be destroyed, behold! *there came* an angel of the Lord; and as it had been commanded him, the angel bestowed a spirit of discernment upon a young man, **48** *this* being Daniel. Then separating the crowd Daniel stationed himself in the midst of them and said, Are ye so foolish, O sons of Israel, that without examination and knowledge of the truth ye have condemned a daughter of Israel to **51^a** die? Now therefore take these men apart from each other, that I may cross-examine them.
- 51^b** And when they were separated, Daniel said to the synagogue: Now consider not that these men are elders nor say, They can never be false; but I will examine them with reference to that which **52** is suggested to me. And he summoned one of the two, so they brought forward the elder before the young man. Then said Daniel to him: Hearken, hearken, thou ancient of evil days! now have overtaken thee thy sins which thou hast committed in time past.
- 53** Being trusted to hear and to decide capital cases, thou hast both condemned the innocent and hast acquitted the guilty, although the Lord saith: 'The innocent and the righteous slay thou not.'
- 54** Now therefore under what tree and at what sort of place in the garden hast thou seen them together? The impious man answered, Under **55** a mastick tree. Then said the youth, Right well hast thou borne false witness against thine own soul; for the angel of the Lord will cleave thy soul this day.

lasting God, that knowest the secrets, that knowest all things before they be: thou knowest **43** that they have borne false witness against me, and, behold, I must die; whereas I never did such things as these men have maliciously invented against me.

And the Lord heard her **44** voice. Therefore when she was led away to be **45** put to death, God raised up the holy spirit of a young youth, whose name was Daniel: and he **46** cried with a loud voice, I am clear from the blood of this woman. Then all the people turned them **47** toward him, and said, What mean these words that thou hast spoken? So he standing in the **48** midst of them said, Are ye such fools, ye sons of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth ye have condemned a daughter of Israel? Return again to the place of judgement: for these **49** have borne false witness against her. Wherefore **50** all the people turned again in haste, and the elders said unto him, Come, sit down among us, and show it us, seeing God hath given thee the honour of an elder. Then said Daniel unto **51** them, Put them asunder one far from another, and I will examine them. So when they were **52** put asunder one from another, he called one of them, and said unto him, O thou that art waxen old in wickedness, now are thy sins come *home to thee* which thou hast committed aforetime, in **53** pronouncing unjust judgement, and condemning the innocent, and letting the guilty go free; albeit the Lord saith, The innocent and righteous shalt thou not slay. Now then, if thou sawest **54** her, tell me, Under what tree sawest thou them companying together? Who answered, Under a mastick tree. And Daniel said, Right well **55** hast thou lied against thine own head; for even now the angel of God hath received the sentence of God and shall cut thee in two.

44-45. Mishna Synhed. vi. 1, 2 prescribes appeals for fresh evidence after the verdict is given, 'When the person to be stoned is led out, a herald must precede proclaiming these words: This person N. M., son of N. M., is on the way to be stoned, for the crime (specified), on the testimony of N. M. and N. M.; whosoever can show his innocence, let him approach and set forth his reasons.' If none appeared, when they came within ten cubits of the place of stoning, the condemned was invited to confess, in deference to Joshua vii. 19.

51^b, with reference to that which is suggested to me, *κατὰ τὸ ἐπισημασμένον μου*. Divine inspiration is the source of his suspicion. The Philoventian Syriac says 'according as God has given to me'. Daniel condemns the first elder before his evidence is proved inconsistent with that of the second elder. His insight into their past is not the result of the examination. 'Any indication of the will of the Invisible King was sufficient in the Theocracy to supersede the operation of ordinary rules and restrictions; the theory being that the Divine Sovereign chose His own ministers when and how and whence He pleased' (Ball, *in loc.*). The elders of v. 50, Theodotus, are thus not the two who have given witness, but their colleagues on the bench.

53. The innocent and the righteous slay thou not. Quoted exactly from Exod. xxiii. 7 LXX *ἀθὼν καὶ δίκαιον οὐκ ἀποκτενίσαι*.

54-55. Under a mastick tree, &c. *ὑπὸ ἄγινου . . . ἄγινου καὶ ὑπὸ πικρίας . . . κωνοπικρίας*, v. 59. Origen says (Epistle to Africanus, 48 L): 'This passage gave me no rest and I often wondered about it, so I betook me to several Hebrews, asking what *πικρία* was called in their language, what was the verb for *πικρία*, also how they rendered *ἄγινου* and *κωνοπικρία*.' His inquiry was intended to refute the contention of Africanus that the play on the words proved that Susanna had been composed in Greek, not in Hebrew. That Hebrew could use paronomasia even in a death sentence appears from Achan's condemnation by Joshua, vii. 25. That the LXX would copy a play upon words appears, e.g., in Judges x. 4: עירם . . . עירם 'colts . . . cities', Gk. *πῶλον . . . πόλιν*. Some of the versions succeed in preserving the Greek play in Syriac. With some liberty in choosing the trees, the play can be furnished by Hebrew, e.g. *בַּשֵּׁן*, which occurs in Cant. vi. 11:

וַאֲמַרְי תַּחַת אֲשֵׁן: וְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיָּסֵב קִטְרָה עַל בִּשְׁשֵׁךְ כִּי מָוֹן יִשֹׁן סִלְבָּה * אֲתִּיבֶשְׁךָ בְּעֵצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:

Other ways are given in Ball, *Apost. ii.* 324.

56 Then removing the one he gave command to bring the other before him, to whom he said: Wherefore is the seed that is in thee become perverted as that of Sidon and not as that of Judah? beauty has beguiled thee, base passion!

57 Even so were ye wont to do with daughters of Israel, who through their fear companied with you; but a daughter of Judah scorned to endure

58 your pestilent licence. Now therefore tell me, Under what tree and in which spot of the enclosure didst thou detect them consorting together? Who answered, Under a holm tree.

59 Then said Daniel, Thou sinner! even now the angel of the Lord is standing with drawn sword, till the people shall make an end of thee, that he may cut thee to pieces.

So he put him aside, and commanded to bring the other, and said unto him, O thou seed of Canaan, and not of Judah, beauty hath deceived thee, and lust hath perverted thine heart. Thus have ye dealt with the daughters of Israel, and they for fear companied with you: but the daughter of Judah would not abide your wickedness.

Now therefore tell me, Under what tree didst thou take them companying together? Who answered, Under a holm tree. Then said Daniel unto him, Right well hast thou also lied against thine own head: for the angel of God waiteth with the sword to cut thee in two, that he may destroy you.

With that all the assembly cried out with a loud voice, and blessed God, who saveth them that hope in him. And they arose against the two elders, for Daniel had convicted them of false witness out of their own mouth: and according to the law of Moses they did unto them in such sort as they maliciously intended to do to their neighbour: and they put them to death, and the innocent blood was saved the same day.

Therefore Helkias and his wife praised God for their daughter Susanna, with Joakim her husband, and all the kindred, because there was no dishonesty found in her. And from that day forth was Daniel had in great reputation in the sight of the people.

60-62^a Then the whole synagogue shouted aloud in praise of the young man because from their own mouth he had proved them both to be confessedly false witnesses. And they dealt with them according as the Law prescribes, doing to them just as they maliciously intended against their sister.

So when they had gagged them, they led them out and hurled them into a chasm; then the angel of the Lord cast fire in the midst of them. And thus was innocent blood kept safe on that day.

62^b For this cause the young men are beloved of Jacob by reason of their sincerity. And as for us, let us watch over young men that they may become men of worth, for so young men will be God-fearing, and there shall be in them a spirit of knowledge and discernment for ever and ever.

60-62. the Law prescribes. Deut. xix. 16-21 prescribes the treatment of a false witness, v. 19, וְהָיָה לְכָל עֵדוּתוֹ וְלִכְלָמָתוֹ יָמוּת וְלֹא יִשְׁעוּתוֹ וְלֹא יִשְׁעוּתוֹ יָמוּת, LXX καὶ ποιήσει αὐτὸν ὡς τὸν ἄδικον ἐπισημασάμενος τῷ πλησίον ποιῆσαι (cf. θ'). On the application of this rule the Pharisees and Sadducees differed acutely during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus, 105-79 B.C. If the person falsely accused has actually suffered death, only then shall this regulation be carried out, said the Sadducees. The Pharisees maintained that if the perjury has been detected before its victim has suffered, then the same penalty must be inflicted on the false witnesses. The elders must therefore perish, in accordance with the Pharisaic interpretation of Deut. xix. 19 (*Hamburger Real-Encycl. für Bibel und Talmud*, ii. 1050; Mishna *Makkoth* i. 6; Sifre on Deut. xix. 19; Gemara *Makkoth* 5 B).

Cf. Code of Hammurabi, § 3: 'If a man in a case pending judgement . . . has not justified the word that he has spoken, if that case be a capital suit, that man shall be put to death.'

60. ἀφίμωσεν, 'muzzle', 'put in the pillory'. Cf. Matt. xxii. 54, 'The Pharisees when they heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence . . .'. Possibly more than a mere verbal coincidence. Strangling or suffocation is mentioned in the Talmud as the mode of death for false witness (Brüll on v. 60-62). Here it denotes symbolically that silence is imposed, no further defence can be offered.

62^b. beloved of Jacob. The patriarch Jacob trusted his younger sons Joseph and Benjamin, and of Joseph's sons preferred the younger, Gen. xlviii. 14 (Brüll). For ἀπλόγη cf. 1 Macc. ii. 60.

62^c. let us watch over young men, καὶ ἡμεῖς φρουρασάμεθα εἰς υἱὸς δυνατοῖς νεώτερος. Meaning must be sought from the Semitic original: הֲלֵינוּ נִשְׁמְרֵם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד שֶׁיִּשְׁמְרוּ אֶתְכֶם. For εἰς = ה' as translated above, v. LXX, 1 Sam. xviii. 17; 2 Sam. ii. 7, xiii. 28; Dan. xi. 33, &c. הַלֵּנוּ נִשְׁמְרֵם = υἱὸς δυνατοῖς, 2 Sam. ii. 7; = υἱὸς δυνατῶν, 1 Sam. xiv. 52; 2 Sam. xiii. 28, xvii. 10. The Semitic metaphor 'son of valour' forbids Fritzsche's emendation of εἰς into ὡς, 'let us guard as sons virtuous young men.'

If the epilogue enforcing the didactic side of the story is an addition (Brüll), it has been added in Hebrew, not in Greek. Cf. 'One of the objects that Simon ben Shetach had greatly at heart was the promotion of better instruction. In all large towns high schools for the use of young men from the age of sixteen sprang up at his instance' (c. 75 B.C.) (Graetz, *History of the Jews*, Engl. edition, vol. ii, p. 50).

A careful consideration of the Greek texts of θ and LXX permits us to make several generalizations. First, the θ and LXX are more different than alike in verses 45-64. There are only four verses with virtually identical wording (48, 52, 57, 58) and seven with roughly parallel content (45, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 61). θ adds five verses to the LXX (46, 47, 49, 50, 63) and has deleted one verse (51b); greatly abbreviated another (62) and "replaced" a third (64). The LXX mentions Daniel by name only four times while θ does six times. The effect of the additions of θ is to increase the story's dramatic effect. It would be very helpful for one's understanding of the additions if one could know their original purpose; that is, why the ancient author supplied this or that addition and what he hoped the addition would accomplish. It is, however, much easier and safer to describe the addition's effect, "for the particular effect, which may or may not have been intended by the ancient editor, is nonetheless objectively observable, whereas the ancient editor's purpose can only be guessed."⁸

The primary effect of the changes above is the elevation of young Daniel in θ , that is, Daniel is not nearly as dominant a figure in LXX. Consider the following variants:

- v. 45b LXX And the angel gave, as he was ordered, a spirit of understanding to the youth named Daniel.
- θ God roused the holy spirit of a young boy by the name of Daniel;

- 46-47 (only in the θ) and he shouted out, "I'm innocent of this woman's blood!" Then all the people turned to him and asked, "What do you mean by that?"
- 49-50 (only in the θ) "Go back to the place of trial; these men have framed her." So all the people hurried back. Then the presiding elders said to him, "Come sit with us and inform us, since God has granted the authority to you."
- 64 LXX Because of this the young are beloved of Jacob - on account of their simplicity. And let us watch over the young that they be courageous sons. For the young are idealistic, and a spirit of knowledge and understanding will always be in them!
- θ From that day forward Daniel had a great reputation in the eyes of the people.

Who is the Daniel of Susanna?

Who this Daniel really is cannot be clearly made out. Several options are open to us:

- I. This is the same Daniel as the character in canonical Daniel, only here is a picture of a younger Daniel.
- II. This is a Daniel to be connected with some other biblical figure also named Daniel (i. e., the Daniel of Ezk. 28:3).
- III. It is an independent Daniel, well known as a folk hero in the ancient world, but independent of any biblical Daniel.

Let us carefully examine each of these possibilities.

I.

There are few scholars who hold the position that the Daniel of Susanna is meant to be the same Daniel as the canonical book. Nonetheless, on the surface there are arguments for this case. They conclude:

a. The fact that the additions are attached to canonical Daniel. While it is true that Susanna varies in the manuscripts as to its exact place vis-a-vis the canonical book, nonetheless the book is almost always attached to canonical Daniel. If nothing else, both characters share the same name.

b. Location — both stories take place in Babylonia.

c. The purpose of the book may have been to further extol Daniel and his judicial acumen. There is a resemblance in this respect to the tone of several chapters of the Book of Daniel, especially two and four. His penetration and his prophetic gifts as a young man are set forth. "Indeed the last two verses of the LXX version almost make praise of youthful piety the moral of the book."⁹ But this, edifying as it may be, is scarcely to be taken as the chief object of composition; and ¹⁰ substitutes another conclusion as to the gratitude of Susanna's family and the growth of Daniel's reputation.

There is also a general inconsistency of the character of Daniel, as depicted here, with that of canonical Daniel. Here, "he is made to condemn one of the elders before he has heard the contradictory evidence of the other,

on which the condemnation is ostensibly based; and to the incredible supposition that Daniel is able, notwithstanding his youthfulness, to reverse, by word, a solemn judicial decision of the Sanhedrin."¹⁰ It is also objected in Hastings (IV p.631b) that "Daniel loudly condemns both culprits before he adduces any proof of their guilt."¹¹ This, scholars note, is inconsistent with our canonical Daniel.

Yet, "literalists" are able to reconcile this apparent contradiction:

"Surely this was justified by the prophetic office and the spirit within him, which endowed him with an abnormal insight into the true state of affairs. Personally, he was assured from the outset of their guilt, but secured public proof to satisfy the people. This objection is a rather poor ground on which to assail the historic nature of the piece. In fine, a religious tone befitting the time intended is consistently maintained."¹²

Later, Daubney continues,

"we see the courage and penetrating acumen which are so characteristic of his whole career, impressing all with whom he was brought into contact. He weighs a matter carefully before coming to a decision. By unmasking hypocrisy and securing justice he is delighted to set right a grievous wrong. He appears as the best judge... Daniel further exhibits a decision and an absence of self-distrust in undertaking tasks of great risk, quite in accord with his character as portrayed in the canonical book and in Bel and The Dragon. In each case, he is alert, acute, and fearless; his conduct in different circumstances is quite in keeping with itself. Using his talents throughout he makes full use of his ministry."¹³

Although Daubney may have a gift for homiletics, a careful reading of the text still reveals inconsistencies

with our canonical Daniel.

1. "The earlier form of the story seems to have had no connection with either Daniel or Babylonia. In LXX Daniel is an intruder. He does not appear until verse 45 and is introduced awkwardly. His name is mentioned only four times (vs. 48, 51a, 52, 59). In the epilogue he is forgotten."¹⁴

2. If Susanna was written by the same author or canonical Daniel, why is Daniel re-introduced in 1:6? Of course, we may have reference to the same figure, and not require that it be by the same author.

3. Julius Africanus, in the 4th century, already recognized differences in the role of prophecy in Susanna vs. Daniel. "Daniel never prophecies in this way (declaring Susanna innocent before the testimony) but by visions and dreams, or an angel appearing to him."¹⁵

Thus, there seems to be strong internal evidence against identifying the Daniel of Susanna with Daniel in the canonical book.

II.

Several scholars think it far more likely that the Daniel of Susanna is to be connected with the Daniel of Ezk. 14:14, 20. "Daniel is mentioned as a particularly righteous man in Ezk. 14:14, 20, apparently as a figure of remote antiquity together with Noah and Job, and particularly wise in Ezk. 28:3. This does seem very probable,

especially (if side by side) when we take into account the story of Susanna, which fills out the picture of Daniel as wise."¹⁶ Unfortunately, we know so little about the Daniel of Ezekiel, except that he was a character in the ancient world known for wisdom, that it is impossible to draw any meaningful parallels. There is also the problem that the setting of Daniel in Ezekiel is not the same as in Susanna.

III.

A final option open to us is that the Daniel in Susanna is a figure from the ancient world, whose character is developed independently from that of the canonical book. This is a solution which is most appealing to us. Why force parallels in character when there need not be any?

"The Susanna narrative belongs to a group of biblical stories which were originally profane in origin but have been taken over by Judaism from its environment. More precisely, here are two narrative motifs; one of accusation of the innocent woman and the other of a wise young judge."¹⁷

Their late and eventual transference to the name Daniel came about in a two step process:

1. The ugaritic namesake of wise and righteous man.
2. The tie into Ezekiel and eventually canonical Daniel.

As in other cases, the alien material has been completely saturated in the spirit of Judaism.¹⁸

Moore goes so far as to suggest that Daniel may not have figured at all in the original story.¹⁹ Ball also has

an interesting footnote.

"The conception of Daniel as a judge cross-questioning the witness is conspicuous by its absence from the Talmudic and Midrashic stories about the wicked prophets and Susanna; that is to say, it is unknown to popular tradition (Volks-sage) and did not belong to the original story of Susanna."²⁰

Let us now return to our original question. If we only had Susanna as a source of information of what would we know? What kind of an image could we form of Daniel? As mentioned, there are significant enough differences between the LXX and θ versions of the text that we shall have to look at two images.

Let us look in detail at verses 45-64 of the LXX. We start here, for this is where Daniel first makes his appearance. Although, as we have noted, the θ and LXX differ in respects prior to this point, they are of detail concerning the account of the elders and Susanna, and not of Daniel, and therefore need not concern us.

In v. 45, we are first introduced to Daniel, a youth. Both Daniel and the angel, who gives him 'a spirit of understanding' are subservient to the unnamed master of this story, God. Certainly an important message of this story is that God does protect the innocent and falsely accused.

The young Daniel now takes charge. He addresses the crowd, in a very accusatory tone. "Are you such fools, sons of Israel? Would you decide against a daughter of Israel without first cross-examining and discovering its

accuracy? Now separate them for me some distance from one another in order that I may discredit them (v. 49-50)."

He then continues, after they have been separated, "Now don't take into consideration that these are elders saying (to yourselves), 'They would not lie.' I, however, will interrogate them as things occur to me (v. 51)."

We note that this character Daniel, unlike the canonical, does not hesitate to challenge authority. He also shows a keen grasp of human psychology - we do tend to trust those in positions of authority. The fact that such a strong challenge to authority occurs only in LXX and not in θ may explain why the church preferred θ over LXX - perhaps the church felt that this would challenge its authority as well. Daniel here is not at all modest. He does not indicate that he speaks for a higher authority, or that it is not he, but God or an angel, that speaks. We compare this to when Daniel offers to interpret the King's dreams; there he implores the help of God, here Daniel takes complete control.

It is also interesting that no one seems to challenge Daniel. He must have had a certain charisma, or power, that as a youth he was able to successfully challenge the elders' authority.

Daniel then continues, speaking to one of the elders. "Listen, listen you who have grown old in wickedness... (v.52)." Again, Daniel's youth is contrasted with the age of the elder. There is no doubt in Daniel's mind that

these men are guilty. He goes through his questioning not for himself, but for the benefit of those who surround him.

When Daniel begins to question the second elder, he has but one question to ask him, "Under what tree and in which part of the garden did you catch her making love (v. 54)." But before Daniel asks this question, he first curses the elder. In a modern court of law, we can imagine the defense jumping out and shouting, "objection." But young Daniel is very self assured.

When Daniel successfully shows that the two men have perjured themselves, he again shouts forth condemnation. He does not wait for the jurors to say anything. It is only now that we learn of the reaction of the audience, "then all of the congregation raved about the youth, how through their own testimony he had established their perjury (v. 60)." The last sentence may give us further insight into the audience's reaction to young Daniel, "because of this the young are beloved of Jacob - on account of their simplicity. And let us watch over the young that they be courageous sons. For the young are idealistic, and a spirit of knowledge and understanding will always be in them (v. 62)."

These sentences best express what the author wishes us to admire about Daniel. He was young, idealistic (we might say almost brash and arrogant), and simple. ("Simple" here has the connotation of pure.)

We conclude our discussion of the LXX version of Susanna with two final comments. First, we note that in the LXX (as in the θ) Daniel plays a real prophetic role, and this is absent in the canonical Daniel. In Susanna, Daniel is represented as prophesizing under direct inspiration, and elsewhere this is missing. Second, only in Susanna is Daniel a judge, elsewhere he has nothing to do with things judicial. In fact, the entire action of Susanna develops in a hall of justice. Had we only Susanna as a source of information about Daniel we could, we think, safely conclude that Daniel is indeed a prophet, who is concerned about judicial justice and proceedings.

We now turn to the θ version of Susanna. The primary effect of the θ version is to elevate the person of Daniel. This occurs already in the first verse when Daniel makes his appearance. In the θ version, God rouses the holy spirit already in Daniel. The LXX version has the angel "give the spirit of understanding to the youth (v. 41)," and is consistent with verses 9:21 and 10:5f of Daniel, the θ version is consistent with Daniel 4:9, 18 and 5:11 according to which Daniel was endowed with the "spirit of the holy gods in virtue of which no secret was hidden from him."

Also, θ notes that Daniel is a young boy, and not just a youth. The effect of both of these changes is to give more authority and power to Daniel.

Daniel's first words in θ are extremely powerful, "I

am clear from the blood of this woman (v. 46)." Our author notes that Daniel shouts these words. Although the inspiration under which Daniel speaks is divine, the youth none the less proclaims that he will be no partner in the wrong that is about to be done.²¹ We learn from these words of a young man, who is not afraid to take a stand. He is extremely serious; there does not appear a smile on this young man's face.

The people who are around this court of justice are obviously startled by Daniel's remarks, and ask, "what do you mean by this? (v. 47)" Neither of these two verses appear in the LXX.

Verses 49-50 also only appear in the θ . They emphasize that Daniel's positiveness is natural, on the assumption that he is guided by a divine spirit. This also explains the sudden revulsion of popular feeling caused by his words. Again, we note Daniel's ability is recognized by those among him; the elders invite him to sit with them, as equals, "since God has given thee the honor of an elder (v. 50)." There can be no doubt that the total effect of the θ version is to give much more prominence to Daniel. We see here a young man, with divine inspiration, who commands the presence of those around him, and takes charge of the situation. All are awed by him and his power.

The re-examination of the two witnesses is roughly parallel in the two versions; we do not gain a significantly new or different insight into the character of Daniel based on

middle verses.

The most important change in the θ version is the very last verse, "from that day forth Daniel had a great reputation in the eyes of the people (v. 64)." One gets the impression that Daniel went on to even greater renown and fame, and Daniel is certainly the hero of this story. In the LXX it is youth in general, and not necessarily Daniel, who gets top billing.

Bel and the Dragon (Snake)

Bel and The Snake consists of two "confrontative narratives"²² in which Daniel, a confidant of King Cyrus of Persia courted his own destruction by deliberately setting out to disprove the divinity of two revered Babylonian deities, the idol called Bel, and a very large snake. The main purpose of both stories is the denunciation of idoltry. These stories,

"depict Daniel, distinguished for his wisdom and piety, as the successful, though sorely tried, opponent of heathenism, and as the representative of the living God. His character, to a great extent, resembles that portrayed in the rest of the work bearing his name. It is shown how he continued to face and to solve the difficult problems of court life in Babylonia. Though he secured no small measure of fame and perhaps of popularity, at the time, these earthly results in their abiding form, it has lain with posterity to give him."²³

The sordidness and trickery of heathen priests is contrasted with the righteousness and single-minded devotion of Daniel. His God moreover delivers him, but their gods do not deliver them. The character of Daniel, without fear or reproach, is not out of keeping with that displayed in the canonical book. He affords an example of the following:

a. Courage. He is fearless in his attacks upon idolatry, attacks which, as the events proved, could not be indulged in with assurance of safety. He faces terrible crises at much personal risk, with decision and absence of self distrust. He boldly defends his religion when it's called into question.

b. Resistance to temptation. He refuses to worship as the King wishes Nor is half compliance suggested, such as worshipping both Bel and God.

c. Endurance to persecution for righteousness' sake. One trial overcome, a yet greater trial presents itself, but with unflinching constancy he faces it and passes unharmed.

d. Wisdom. He was a man of right understanding, clear insight, and practical knowledge, as shown by his methods of dealing with opposing forces, moral or physical. A man of great resource, he rapidly adapts himself to fresh conditions.

e. Perseverance. Daniel does not rest on his laurels, having won over Bel, but proceeds against the Dragon. His promptitude of resource is not mere rashness but is combined with steady determination in pursuing his task. As an active and diligent worker he is far-sighted.

f. Gratitude. On receiving Habakkuk's visit he at once acknowledges God's faithfulness and addresses himself immediately to God as the ever-watchful shaper of events.

His aims are realized without any trace of self-

aggrandizement; these aims are directed to his maker's glory rather than to his own glory.

g. Pleasure in serving his God. The force of the whole story implicitly conveys the idea that Daniel enjoys and is happy in the achievement of these works, because they are designed to honor God and to benefit man. Thus he finds his tasks thoroughly interesting and congenial.

It is finally to be noted that Daniel's character is in contrast to everyone in the story except Habakkuk.²⁴

Now that we have noted some preliminary generalizations concerning Daniel's character in the two stories, let us look in detail at each of these stories.

Bel and the Dragon

A. Resume of the Plot

We find Daniel a confidant of the King, 'more honored than all his friends (v. 2).' There is in Babylon an image of Bel, which Daniel refuses to worship, though no form of worship is mentioned except supplying the god with food. The King, mentioned as Cyrus in 8, asks Daniel why he refuses to worship the god Bel, pointing out to him that surely Bel is a great god; how else is one to explain the vast amounts of food that Bel consumes every day. Daniel "chuckles" and replies, "Don't be misled, Your Majesty, for it is just clay on the inside and bronze on the outside. He has never eaten nor drunk anything! (v. 7)"

Daniel asks that the matter be put to a test. This is granted, and Daniel is shown the sacred tables, covered with food, which the alledged god will consume during the night. It is agreed that the doors of the temple be sealed for the night after the departure of the priests. In addition, Daniel takes the precaution of having ashes scattered on the floor of the entire temple. When the morning breaks, the doors are still shut with the seals intact, but the food has disappeared, evidence, the King thinks, that it has been consumed by Bel. Again, Daniel "chuckles (v.19)" and,

holding the King from going in, declares, "Look at the floor and observe the footprints of men, women and children! (v.19)" Thus, Daniel has proved by direct evidence that the priests have entered the temple by secret doors and removed the food. Angered by the trick which his priests have played on him, the king has them put to death, and the image is handed over to Daniel who destroys it and the temple.

Textual Problems

Versions

Once again, we have the problem of two distinct versions of this story, the LXX and θ . Most scholars agree that neither is an original, that both are somehow translations of an original Hebrew, or Aramaic source.

Charles is of the opinion that:

"the LXX is a translation from a Hebrew original. This is made exceedingly probable by the presence of a large number of Hebraisms..., that θ contains a much larger number of Hebraisms than LXX, suggesting that Theodotion corrected LXX with the aid of a Hebrew original before him."²⁵

Moore notes that :

"in Bel and the Snake the θ differs from the LXX both in style and content, occupying in this regard a middle position with respect to the other Additions to Daniel. The LXX of Bel and the Snake is the better Greek translation in that it usually avoids clumsy Semiticisms, while θ abounds in them... As noted earlier, these two Greek versions are separate translations of two different Semitic texts which may not have been in the same Semitic language."²⁶

Yet, ten pages later in the same work, Moore remarks that:

"from a literary point of view, the story of Bel is told far more effectively in θ ... there are some distinctive features which make θ more readable. The Bel narrative of θ is better edited; the story itself, for instance, is far better integrated into the canonical Book of Daniel and raises fewer questions in the minds of its readers; then too, the θ evidences a greater use of emotive words (Daniel 'chuckled' and said, 'infuriated the king.')... Most important of all, θ shows a greater precision and specificity... From a religious or moral point of view, the story of Bel as presented in θ is again preferable... Daniel is made to seem less deliberately relentless in his persecution of his enemies. He is also more conspicuously successful in his struggles against idolatry, in that it was Daniel himself who destroyed Bel and its temple."²⁷

From a practical point of view, once again θ displaced the LXX at a very early time; already in the Hexapla it is the θ that is usually cited. We shall proceed in our examination of the character of Daniel in the two versions as we did in Susanna that is, we shall use the θ as our standard, and when deemed appropriate, make references to the LXX.

Place in the Canon

Bel and the Dragon always occur at the end of canonical Daniel. In the θ it comes after Daniel Chapter 12; in the LXX and Vulgate after Susanna. Owing to the thematic similarity between these stories and chapter 6 of Daniel, as well as chapter two and three, we wonder why no manuscripts place it here in the canon? From a dramatic and literary point of view, it would tie in much better

thematically. However, this can only be an academic question, as no manuscript evidence exists for this position.²⁸

Analysis of the Character of Daniel in 'Bel.'

We note first that the LXX has a superscription which the θ lacks, "From the prophecy of Habakkuk, the son of Jesus of the tribe of Levi." "This title in LXX owes its existence to the interpolated incident in vs. 33-39."²⁹ Verse two of the LXX is also riddled with problems. Daniel is introduced to his readers, seemingly for the first time, and not as a prophet or seer, but as a priest. This is in direct conflict with Daniel 1:3, 6. Of course, this raises the whole issue of whether or not the Daniel mentioned in Bel is to be at all associated with the canonical Daniel. This would force us to posit another independent Daniel, different from the canonical work, and different from the ancient wise man in Ezekiel and the other extra-Biblical sources. This has led Moor to conclude that "at the very least, the Semitic Vorlage of Bel (and the Snake) was originally independent of the canonical Daniel."³⁰

The θ version, in contrast, opens with a very different description. We learn that Daniel lives with the King, and is honored above all his friends.³¹ "Daniel's relation to the King is so close that Daniel could presume to chuckle at the king (vs. 7, 19), and even lay a restraining hand on him (v. 19), all of which suggests a relationship that is the product of time and intimacy."³²

The details of the worship to the idol Bel are significantly alike as to cause us no problems. What is of interest, however, is Daniel's response to the King when asked why he does not join in worship of the idol Bel.

LXX: "None do I worship save the Lord, the God who created the heaven and earth, even Him who has sovereignty over all flesh (v. 5)."

θ: "Because I may not do honor to idols made with hands, but to the living God, who hath created the heaven and earth and hath sovereignty over all flesh (v. 5)."

In the θ version, Daniel is much more confrontive. Moore notes that "the 'I' in the LXX is more emphatic in both form and position than in the θ. Daniel was clearly courting trouble with such a response."³³ This may be so linguistically, but it seems to us that the θ is much more confrontative, for there Daniel calls the god what it is, "an idol made with hands (v. 5)." It would seem to us that in the θ version, Daniel much more clearly courts possible trouble. His statement shows us his courage; Daniel is an individual of conviction, one not afraid to speak up for his views. In the θ version, Daniel's stance is more antithetical. He contrasts idols which are manufactured, and therefore lifeless, with the living God, who made all things and is the rightful God of all the living.

Daniel's response to the King's next question, "Do you not think that Bel is a living God? (v. 6)" also give us insight into his character. The LXX omits the word "laugh"

or "chuckle" in Daniel's response, thought it is more emphatic. "By no means let any man mislead thee by false argument, and I swear unto thee by the Lord the God of gods that this one hath never eaten anything. (v. 7)"

The fact that in the θ version, Daniel both "laughs," yet addresses the King as "your Majesty" is very important. First, it shows that Daniel must have had a very close and intimate relation with the King; yet he is smart enough to realize that he is still the King's servant, and therefore must address him as such.

The King, furious at Daniel's intimation that Bel is not a real god, suggests a test. In both versions, Daniel agrees, though in the LXX he includes his friends in his fate.

Verses 11-17 differ considerably in the LXX and θ texts, though no one seems able to satisfactorily account for these differences. The roles of Daniel and the priests are reversed in the two Greek versions. i.e., in the LXX it is the priests who take the King to the temple, and Daniel who suggested the procedures and precautions to be taken, whereas in θ it is Daniel who took the king to the temple, and the priests who suggest the procedures and precautions. In verse 16, the sequence of events is also reversed in the two versions; according to the LXX Daniel and the others arrive at the temple the next morning, the priests having already removed the food, whereas in θ the priests remove the offering during the night, and then the next morning

Daniel and everyone arrive at the temple. The θ version is preferable from a literary point of view for the sequence of described events follows better chronologically, and is more accurate and precise.

Also, in the θ version, Daniel is represented as far more the confidant of the King. Daniel and the King arise the next morning together; Daniel spreads out the ashes in front of the King. It is almost as if in the θ version, the King wants Daniel to be triumphant.

The ending of the story also differs in the two versions. In the LXX Daniel relentlessly spells out the details of the crime, whereas in the θ it is the King, having now made the discovery of the fact of a ruse, who eagerly prosecutes the matter. Again, in the θ version Daniel is more central, i.e., in the LXX the King destroys Bel, but in θ it is Daniel who destroys Bel and its temple. In the LXX, the King delivers the priests up to Daniel to be killed, while in the θ the King slays them. Again, we note that in both versions, Daniel laughs when the King discovers the deception of his priests.

What, if any generalizations may be drawn about the character of Daniel from the story?

1. The hero is, without exception, Daniel, and he is introduced in the third person. (versus chapters 7-12 where Daniel speaks in the first person.)
2. The most important personage, and the one with whom the hero must deal with in the story is the then reigning King.

3. The hero, by virtue of remaining true to the demands of his religion, always finds himself in a degrading or dangerous situation.

4. The hero's faithfulness is always rewarded by the king.

5. The enemies of the hero get their just desserts.

6. At the end of the story, the King acknowledges, in effect, that the God of the hero is the mightiest God of all the gods. There is however, no claim for monotheism.

The Snake or Dragon story

Resume of the story

There is in Babylon a great living serpent (dragon) worshipped by a large number of inhabitants, who feed it lavishly. The King challenges Daniel: "Surely you must agree that this is not a living god, so worship him (v. 24)." Daniel replies that he will not bow down to the snake, and throws out a challenge to the King, that, if permission is granted, he will destroy the creature, with "sword or stick (v. 26)." Receiving the requested permission, Daniel prepares a mixture of which pitch is the primary ingredient, feeds it to the creature, which bursts and dies. Infuriated at the death of their god, the populace accuses the King of becoming a Jew, and demands that Daniel be put to death. The King yields to their demand and puts Daniel into the den of lions, the usual punishment for such a crime. Though Daniel remains in the lions' den for seven days, he suffers no injury.

A later interpolation is also included in the story. On the sixth day, Daniel is miraculously supplied with food. The prophet Habakkuk has prepared a meal for his reapers, and is on the way to the fields where they are. An angel stops him and tells him that he is to bring the meal to Daniel who is in the lions' pit. Habakkuk responds that he is ignorant of the location of the lions' pit, or even of Babylon; the angel "flies" Habakkuk to Daniel where he gives Daniel the food, sees that he is safe, and is returned to Judea.

On the seventh day, the King goes to see if Daniel is still alive, and on finding out that he is fine, rejoices, praises the true God of heaven, and casts into the pit those who had plotted Daniel's destruction

Textual Problems

Versions

The story of the Dragon is normally contiguous with Bel. That is, they are printed as one continuous story. Therefore, the same problems that occurred with Bel apply here as well.

Place in the Canon

Again these stories normally appear in sequence; thus wherever one would find Bel, the Dragon will be next.

See preceding section.

Character of Daniel as gleaned from the Dragon

Our story begins with Daniel in immediate opposition

to the King. The author assumes the reader is familiar with the list of characters, and no introductions are made. Both the LXX and the θ are in need of some sort of emmendation, for we enter in the middle of an arguement between Daniel and the King. One must assume that either through his actions, or some sort of discussion, Daniel has refused to pay homage to the serpent, saying that it cannot be a god.

However, if these two stories (i.e., Bel and Serpent) are always told as one unit, then the beginning makes sense. The King asks Daniel, "And I suppose you also believe that this snake is not a god either. True, you may have proven that Bel was not a god, but this snake is surely alive. It is not make up of brass, etc."

This time, Daniel is very forward. He does not want to engage in another test with the King, he does not laugh or smirk. He tells the King that he will kill this snake, without stick or rock, and then proceeds to do so. Daniel shows no fear in approaching the snake. The author gives us no sense of Daniel's inner thoughts. In fact, it is difficult to guess what Daniel might be feeling at this time.

The crowd's reaction is most unexpected. In both versions, the King is accused of becoming a Jew. This is a very strange charge. Are we to infer that Daniel is well known as a Jew within the kingdom, and also that he is well connected with the King? This seems to be a safe

conclusion; in the Bel story Daniel is able to laugh with the King, and to touch him with no apparent problem. Yet this time it is the King's behavior that is not in consonance with his prior behavior. He immediately turns Daniel over to the "mob." He shows no signs of remorse or anger.

Again, Daniel is very quiet about this entire episode. He does not assure the King, as he does in the lion's den, he shows no fear, no remorse.

We do not hear from Daniel again until Habakkuk brings his meal. For only the second time in the entire tale, Daniel speaks, "the Lord God, who does not desert those who love him, has remembered me (v. 38)." (The θ version is almost identical, "You have remembered me, God! You have not deserted those who love you (v. 36).") Taken out of context, we might assume that these are words not only of thanks, but of faith renewed. But we must remember that Daniel has been in the lion's pit for six days; surely he knows that God is with him, how else is he to explain that the lions have not harmed him.

It is hard to draw any general conclusions about Daniel's character based on this short story. Daniel only speaks twice, the entire story is less than thirty verses long. Still, some generalizations may be drawn.

1. We again see Daniel's resistance to temptation when he refuses to worship as the King wishes.
2. Gratitude is again displayed on Daniel's part. On receiving Habakkuk's visit he at once acknowledges God's

faithfulness, and addresses himself to God's immediacy, as the ever-watchful shaper of events. God is always present in Daniel's world.

It is also interesting to observe that Daniel's character is in contrast with that of everyone in the story except Habakkuk. In Habakkuk, as in Daniel, we see obedience to a divine command, apparently impossible of execution, for which the way is suddenly made clear.

Other Apocryphal References to Daniel

There remain five references to Daniel in the rest of the Apocrypha. All are to be found in the Book of Maccabees. They are:

1. I Macc. 2:60 "And Daniel for his innocence was delivered from the mouth of lions." This verse comes in the context of Mattathias's last words before his death. He has called his sons to his death bed, and exhorts them to have pride, be zealous for the law and, if necessary, be prepared to give their lives for the covenant of their fathers. He then recalls for his sons other acts of bravery that their ancestors performed; likewise should they do, "for ye will receive great honor and an everlasting name (v. 51)."

It seems rather obvious what Daniel represents to the dying Mattathias. Daniel is pure and innocent; the reference is to Daniel 6:22, where Daniel says to the King, "God saved me from the lions' den in as much as I was found innocent by Him..." Thus, Mattathias urges his sons that if they too will trust in God, as Daniel did, and be pious and righteous in their behavior, they too will be spared by God, though they too may have to endure many tests.

2. III Macc. 6:7 "Thou, when Daniel was cast through

the slanders of envy to the lions beneath the ground as food for wild beasts, didst bring him up to the light unhurt."

Eleazar, a man of note among the priests of the country, represents the typical old man of faith and piety. He gathers the elders around him, and includes this verse in his prayer. He asks God, who has saved His people before, to again redeem them from their oppression. (This is during the time of Ptolemey IV.) Daniel is included in a list of personages that God saved in the past, including Jonah, the Jews in Egypt, the time of the Babylonian Exile. Once again, Daniel represents the man of faith and virtue who would not forsake his God, and therefore God saved him.

3. Our remaining references are all from IV Maccabees. Though most scholars do not include IV Maccabees in the Apocrypha, but rather as part of the Psuedopigrapha, for the sake of completeness we will include these references here:

- i) 16:3
- ii) 16:21
- iii) 18:13

"The book of Fourth Maccabees is couched on the form of a discourse or treatise, taking for its subject the power of Inspired Reason, to control the passions."³⁴ In chapter 16, the author begins to give us his conclusions of his work. "Inspired reason must confessedly be the supreme ruler of the passions (16:2." ... "Even women have

triumphed over their sufferings (16:3)." The author recalls for us the suffering of Hannah, when she was forced to watch the torture of her seven sons. However, he tells us, she was able to endure, for "Reason quenched her passions, many and strong as they were (16:5)." Daniel is mentioned in the following connection, "Not so fierce were the lions around Daniel... as burned in her the instinct of motherhood at the sight of her seven sons being tortured (16:3)."

Thus, we learn that for this author, Daniel represents one who is able to survive for he has control of his passion. However, his test was not nearly as arduous as that of Hannah, who has to watch the torture of her sons. This is a curious use of Daniel - for the author of IV Maccabees does not believe that his test is as horrible or painful as that of Hannah.

A few verses later, our author again invokes the image of Daniel and the lions' den. "Remember that for the sake of God ye have come into the world, and have enjoyed life, and therefore ye owe it to your God to endure all pain for his sake, as did your fathers... Daniel, the just man, (who) was cast to the lions... and (he) endured for God's sake (16:18-21)."

Again, the image of Daniel is evoked as a comparison-- if Daniel is able to survive, it is because he realizes the power of his God; Hannah should remember Daniel, and then she too will be able to survive this pain. Daniel

is used to bring comfort to a struggling woman.

The last mention of Daniel in IV Maccabees is in 18:13. These are Hannah's last words. She bids her sons to remember their father, who read to them the story of Daniel. If they will remember that Inspired Reason is the lord over passions and pains, then they will be able to survive, as did Daniel.

In summary, the author of IV Maccabees uses the image of Daniel as a righteous individual who masters his reason, and is thereby able to survive much pain and suffering. If the Jews in his time, who are also suffering, will remember how Daniel survived, they too will be able to endure. Daniel is the survivor.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Character of Daniel in the New Testament

Were we forced to rely only on the New Testament as a source of information about Daniel, we would know very little. The name "Daniel" appears only one time in the New Testament.

"So when you see the abominable sacrilege, of which Daniel the prophet spoke, standing in the holy place" (let the reader take note), "then those in in Judea must go to the mountains,..." (underling for emphasis ours)

This passage occurs in Matthew 24:15-16. In the parallel texts, Mark 13:14-23 and Luke 21:20-24, the name "Daniel" is not found. "This section is composed of sayings which have a direct bearing on the impending fate of Jerusalem. Matthew's tradition here makes explicit what is only hinted at in Mark, who does not mention the prophetic oracle."¹ What the "abominable sacrilege" refers to specifically is not known, though most scholars suggest that it either refers to actual idolatry, or to the entrance of the Roman imperial-eagle standards in the Temple area.

From this passage, we learn that this New Testament author considered Daniel to be a prophet, who predicted events that were then occurring. The quotation is from Daniel 9:27. What kind of a person Daniel was, when, or even where he lived is not provided us by the author.

In contrast to the almost complete absence of references to the character of Daniel in the New Testament, the imagery of Daniel is extremely important in New Testament writings. Large parts of the book of Revelations, the apocalypses that occur in Mark and the other Gospels, and the references to Jesus as "son of man" all owe a debt to the book of Daniel.

What is surprising is the fact that the imagery and prophecy of Daniel play such an important role in New Testament literature, and yet we find such a sparcity of direct information on the character of Daniel in the New Testament. Why this is so, we are not in a position, as yet, to say.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Character of Daniel as Gleaned from Josephus.

Josephus bases his account of the story of Daniel in large part on the Canonical book. As we have already analyzed the character of Daniel as found in the Canonical book we will try not to duplicate our results and analysis here. Rather, we shall attempt to show the significance of the materials Josephus adds or omits from the Biblical narrative in understanding the character of Daniel.

Josephus provides us with information about Daniel's ancestry. In the Josephan account, Daniel is of "noblest birth and the relatives of their King Sacchias (X. 186)." Josephus continues with a description of their noble birth; again, this is the standard literary convention of the ancient author - a noble character would have to be "remarkable for the virour of their bodies and the comeliness of their features (X. 186)." All Josephus has done is to make explicit what the biblical author and his audience understood implicitly.

The rest of the first paragraph is very similar to the Biblical text. It is interesting to note, however, that in

the Biblical text, God gave Daniel and his companions "intelligence and proficiency in all writings and wisdom (1:17)" while in the Josephan account these youths seem to gain this ability on their own. This downplaying of the supernatural, and diverting of attention from Daniel, is typical of the Josephan account.

We also learn from Josephus that the King gave immediate attention to these young youths. This is not so in the Biblical account. In Josephus it is the King who changes their names and gives them Babylonian surnames; in Scripture it is the chief of eunuchs. Had we only Josephus for our source, we would know the following about Daniel, based only on the first paragraph:

1. His noble origins
2. Daniel is immediately found at the King's table, educated and taught the language and customs of the Chaldeans
3. Daniel becomes proficient in the wisdom which he studied, and possessed surpassing natural gifts. Because of this, the King held him in high esteem.

In paragraph two, we learn of Daniel's first "test of character", when he demonstrates his desire to live austere-ly, and observe the dietary laws. It is interesting to notice again that Josephus included Daniel's friends in this encounter, while in the Biblical narrative, the focus is on Daniel alone.

In his account of the story of the dietary laws, Josephus amplifies scripture. He gives us a reason why Daniel

refused to eat the king's food, "because he felt distaste for any other (X. 190)." It is interesting that Daniel does not say he will not eat the food because it violates his religious beliefs or practices. In any case, as in the Biblical narrative, Daniel and his friends are successful, and survive well on their "kosher diet".

The end of the second paragraph is most interesting. In the Josephan account, the "Deity manifested Himself to him (X. 194)". This would seem to indicate that Josephus considered Daniel to be a prophet, or at least one who merited the revelation of the Deity. In the Biblical narrative, it is not till the second part of the book that Daniel has any visions or revelations.

In paragraph three, Josephus relates the story of Nebuchadnezzar's first dream. In the Josephan account, there are several variations from the Biblical narrative. In the Josephan account, Daniel takes the initiative, and goes directly to the chief of the eunuchs to ask what the problem is. One would think that the tendency of Josephus is to try to make Daniel an even greater hero. He gives him the initiative. Yet, in the next sentence, Daniel does not go directly to the King, as he does in the Biblical account, but instructs the chief of the eunuchs to appear before the King.

In Josephus, we get a new side to Daniel's personality. He encourages his friends not to despair, "arous(ing) within them to cheerfulness and to hope of life (X. 202)."

Josephus gives us the reason why God revealed to Daniel the meaning of the dream. It was not because Daniel was such a wise or pious individual, though God did admire Daniel's wisdom, but because God took pity on those who were in charge.

When Daniel appears before the King in the Josephan account, he immediately shows his modesty, "he begged that he might not be thought wiser than the other (X. 203)." Continuing his speech before the King, Daniel again reminds the King that he is not alone. When he tells the King that it is God who has given him the ability, he says, "God took pity on us when we were in danger of death and, in answer to my prayer for my own life and the lives of my countrymen, has made clear to me both the dream and its interpretation (X. 203-24)." This is basically an amplification of the Biblical narrative, but Josephus almost exaggerates Daniel's modesty and concern for his fellowmen.

In the Josephan account, Daniel's telling of the dream and its meaning is more straightforward and less poetic. Most interesting is how Josephus refuses to give Daniel's interpretation of the stone. The rabbis took the meaning of the stone which destroyed the kingdom of iron to be a symbol of the Messiah or Messianic Age which would make an end of the Roman empire. Because Josephus was writing for a Roman audience, he could not very easily say that it would soon be destroyed. Thus, Josephus writes, "who wishes to learn about hidden things that are to come, let him take the trouble to read the Book of Daniel, which he will find

among the sacred writings (N. 210)." This is more a comment on Josephus and his concerns than on the character of Daniel.

Josephus also writes that Daniel and his friends were greatly rewarded by Nebuchadnezzar; however, in the Biblical text, Daniel asks that his friends be included in the reward, and also be elevated to positions of power. As mentioned in our previous analysis, this shows Daniel's concern for his fellow Jews, and exhibits his modesty. In the Josephan account, no mention is made of Daniel's request; instead, the King apparently rewards them on his own.

Josephus also includes the account of the three compatriots, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael being thrown into the fiery furnace. He considerably abridges the account in scripture, and it is noteworthy that he does not refer to the Prayer of the Three Youths found in the Greek versions and included in the Apocrypha.

In his account of this story, Josephus has the King far more removed, and therefore less culpable of any offense. By this we mean that in the Biblical account, it is Nebuchadnezzar who orders the three to be cast into the furnace; in Josephus, no one specific is mentioned. In the Biblical account, the King clearly learns a lesson, whereas in Josephus it is the reader who is taught an important message, for Josephus speculates as to the reason why these three were saved:

"It was, I believe, in consideration of their being thrown into it without having done any wrong that it did not touch them, and it was powerless to burn the youths when it held them, for God made their bodies too strong to be consumed by fire. This proved to the King that they were righteous and dear to God, and so they continued thereafter to be held worthy by him of the highest honor (X. 215)."

In paragraph 5 of chapter 10, we see Josephus as apologist true to form. He considerably shortens the Biblical account (chapter 4); he changes the order of the Biblical account, downplays the role of Daniel in interpreting the vision, and refuses to give us the meaning of the dream.

"Let no one reproach me for recording in my work each of these events as I have found them in the ancient books, for at the very beginning of my History I safeguarded myself against those who might find something wanting in my narrative or find fault with it, and said that I was only translating the books of the Hebrews into the Greek tongue, promising to report their contents without adding anything of my own to the narrative or omitting anything therefrom (X. 218)."

Josephus gives little credit to Daniel, and his ability to interpret dreams. He does not include the King's gratitude or reward towards Daniel. He merely records, "None of the others could discover the import of the dream or make it known to the King, but Daniel alone interpreted it, and as he foretold it to him so it came to pass (X. 217)."

This tendency to limit the role and personality of Daniel is typical in the Josephan account.

Chapter XI.1 begins with an account from the history of Berossus History of Chaldaea, and provides a brief chronology of the rise of King Belshazzar. Josephus then

includes the story of the writing on the walls. (Chapter five of M. T.) In general, Josephus follows the Biblical account very closely, but uses a certain literary license to make the story even more dramatic. A few non-Scriptural details are included by Josephus, and a few changes are made, but the general effect leaves us with the same story.

(Examples of this include, in Josephus, the grandmother of the King remembers Daniel; in the M. T. it is the queen who remembers Daniel; in Josephus, Belshazzar has used the Temple vessels in his own temple, this is not found in our M. T.; Josephus eliminates the dittography of verse 25 of the M. T.; Josephus tells us in advance that "a dark outlook might be indicated by God as to the meaning of the dream (X 1.278).")

In the Josephan account, Daniel's refusal of the King's reward and gifts is much more pointed. Here, Daniel appears almost arrogant, his words have a biting sting. "Keep your gifts, for that which was wise and divine could not be bought with gifts but freely benefitted those who asked for help (X 1.241)." Without apparent fear, Daniel tells the King that:

"His life would come to an end because not even from the punishment which his ancestor had suffered for his insolence to God had he learned to be pious and not to attempt things beyond the natural power of man; on the contrary, through (your) living you have blasphemed the Deity... (X 1.241-242)."

Josephus' Daniel shows no fear, and no reason to play up to this King.

Josephus may have been aware of his readers' response

to this Daniel. Why did the King not react or have Daniel killed? Here, Josephus departs from the Biblical text, and 'provides' us with the King's reasoning.

"Nevertheless he did not, on the ground that Daniel was a prophet (emphasis added) of evil to him, withhold from him the gifts he had promised, but gave them all, reasoning, in the first place that the things for the prophesying of which they were to be given were peculiar to himself and his destiny and in no way attributable to the one who prophesied them, and judging, in the second place, that they had been promised to a man who was good and just, (emphasis added) even though the future should turn out to be dark for himself (XI.246-247)."

Thus, we learn that for Josephus, the character of Daniel was good and just, beyond reproach. Furthermore, Daniel is to be counted among the prophets. At the end of XI.249, this point is again emphasized.

"He (Darius) took the prophet (emphasis added) Daniel to his own palace in Media and kept him by his side, bestowing every honor on him. (emphasis added) For Daniel was one of the three satraps whom he appointed over the three hundred and sixty satrapies (XI.249)."

Josephus tells us that Daniel was the "only one associated with him in all matters because he was believed to have the divine spirit in him (XI.250)." This detail also differs from the Biblical text which tells us that "the King considered setting him over the whole kingdom (6:4)." Josephus further elaborates the position of Daniel and his character; he was "superior to considerations of money and scorning any kind of gain and thinking it most disgraceful to accept anything even if it were given for a proper cause (XI.251)." In Josephus, there can be no doubt that

Daniel was a most pious and righteous man. Therefore, those resentful of Daniel had to devise some way to trap Daniel. When they see that Daniel prays three times a day, they realize that they have a pretext for causing his downfall, and write the edict for the King to sign. Josephus again makes explicit what the Biblical text implies implicitly. Daniel did not intentionally disobey the king, rather, those envious of him sought means to destroy Daniel. Josephus also makes the King an unaware by-stander in this whole episode: In fact, the King appears almost foolish. The King did not realize that this edict would hurt his friend Daniel, and was then forced to throw Daniel into the lion's den.

Josephus greatly changes the end of the story. The miraculous is removed; Daniel is saved not because he is worthy, but as a demonstration of God's providence. Josephus writes:

"Daniel's enemies, however, on seeing that he had suffered no harm, did not choose to believe that it was through the Deity and His providence that he had been saved, but held that the lions had been stuffed with food and therefore had not touched Daniel nor come near him, and so they told the king. But he, in his detestation of their wickedness, ordered a large quantity of meat to be thrown to the lions and, when they had eaten their fill, commanded Daniel's enemies to be cast into the den in order that he might discover whether the lions would refuse to come near them because of satiety. When the satraps were thrown to the beasts, it became evident to Darius that it was the Deity who had saved Daniel, for the lions spared no one of them but tore them all to pieces as though they were terribly famished and in need of food... And it was not, I think the beasts' hunger that aroused

them, for they had been satisfied a little while before with an abundance of meat, but the wickedness of the men- for this would be apparent even to irrational animals- which resulted in their being punished, as was the intention of God (XI. 260-262)."

Josephus again amplifies the rewards mentioned in the Biblical text. Daniel was showed "extraordinary high honor by designating (being designated) him the first of his Friends (XI. 263)." Daniel furthermore was "renowned and distinguished because of his reputation as a man dear to God," and had a fortress built at Ecbatana, where they now bury the kings of Media, Persia, and Parthia (XI. 263-264).

As we would expect, Josephus is practically silent about the second part of Daniel, chapters seven through twelve, for they are eschatological in nature, and Josephus was sensitive to offering the current interpretation of these dreams in his day, namely, that they referred ultimately to the destruction of Rome. However, Josephus does tell us a great deal about the fame of the personage of Daniel:

"All things happened to him in a wonderful and marvelously fortunate way as to one of the greatest prophets, (emphasis added) and during his lifetime he received honor and esteem from kings and people, (emphasis added) and since his death, his memory lives on eternally. For the books which he wrote are still read by us even now, and we are convinced by them that Daniel spoke with God, (emphasis added) for he was not only wont to prophesy future things, as did other prophets, but he also fixed the time at which these things would come to pass. And whereas the other prophets foretold disasters and were for that reason in disfavor with kings and peoples, Daniel was a prophet of good tidings (emphasis added) to them, so that through the auspiciousness of his predictions he attracted the goodwill of all, (emphasis added) while from their realization he gained credit among the multitude for his truthfulness (emphasis added) and at the same time won their esteem for his divine power (XI. 266-268)."

The character of Daniel was one of truth, justice, goodness; he was popular with both royalty and the masses.

Is there a message that Josephus wants his reader to learn from the writings of Daniel? Josephus himself tells us the importance of Daniel in his final paragraph:

"Learn from these facts how mistaken are the Epicureans, who exclude Providence from human life and refuse to believe that God governs

its affairs or that the universe is directed by a blessed and immortal Being... they are very far from holding a true opinion who declare that God takes no thought for human affairs. For if it were the case that the world goes on by some automatism we should not have seen all these things happen in accordance with his prophecy (XI. 278-280)."

In Josephus, we learn that the character of Daniel was not nearly as important as his teachings. Daniel, the wonderful prophet, teaches us that there is Divine providence. This providence is exemplified not only in the predictions of the future coming to pass, but in the life episodes of Daniel as well (e. g., the lion's den, the fiery furnace, interpreting dreams).

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

Literary study of the Bible represents a significant recent trend in literary criticism. Ultimately, any practice of criticism will be determined by the theory underlying it. "Although definitions of literature vary from critic to critic, there should be general agreement on criteria (for analysis). The first is that literature is a presentation of human experience. Its content is human experience, not primarily abstract thought, and its formulation is presentational. Instead of developing abstract principles or accumulating factual information, the writer of literature presents characters in action or concrete images and sensory descriptions."¹

"The biblical scholar asks, What is the date of the work? What are the layers of accretion, and how many redactors worked on the text as it evolved into its present form? What is the historical value of the work? What is the theological import: What religious or moral truth does this text teach, and how can a person apply it in his life?"² However, biblical scholars tend not to ask the questions that a literary critic asks. Their tendency is to fragmentize the text and to move away from the text to the process of composition behind it. Verse by verse

commentary is the staple.

In this thesis, we have attempted to move beyond the normal confines of biblical scholarship, and to look not only at the details, but to also ask, What are the unifying narrative principles by which the story teller has selected his material? How do the individual episodes relate to these overlying narrative principles? How does the story unfold sequentially, and what is important about the ordering of the events? What are the plot conflicts, and how are they resolved? How does the protagonist develop as the story unfolds? What archetypal plot motifs are important in the story?³ It is these narrative questions that we have attempted to answer in our analysis of the character of Daniel.

In our introductory chapter, we put forth a model of character analysis which we then followed in the rest of our work. We noted the subtle techniques by which the biblical author makes us aware of character. We also took note of the importance of literary convention, and pointed out its use by the biblical narrator in our analysis of Daniel.

What generalities, what general unifying principles do all the literatures share concerning the character of Daniel? All of the literatures portray Daniel as an individual of wisdom, piety, and judgement. These qualities are found from the extra-biblical tale of Aqhat, to the canonical book, and in all the subsequent literatures. Daniel interprets

dreams, cares for his fellow man, is a man of conviction, integrity, and honesty. Only in the Apocryphal literature, which attempts to show the young Daniel, do we find Daniel acting rashly, or as a revolutionary, challenging the status-quo. While we can never hope to know the motivations behind an author's portrayal of a character, we guess that the Apocryphal author supplied us with information concerning the young Daniel. That is why the story of Susanna is often found preceding the canonical book in terms of its place in the Canon.

Since the New Testament has only one reference to the character of Daniel, it is impossible to draw any conclusions as to how or why Daniel is portrayed in the manner he is. However, we recognize the importance of the imagery of Daniel in the New Testament, and of the apocalyptic motif contained in the later chapters of Daniel.

Rabbinic Literature, on the other hand, concentrates its comments on Daniel almost exclusively on the first six chapters of the canonical book. It is remarkable that within Rabbinic Literature, scant attention is paid to the apocalyptic and messianic motifs of the book. Is it possible that the rabbis were reacting to the New Testament's use of Daniel, and were afraid to engage in this type of use? Equally possible is that the rabbis, in light of the Bar Kochba revolt's failure, were afraid to engage in messianic speculation in general, and were therefore much more concerned with life on this earth. Thus, they characterize

Daniel as a man who exemplifies their ideal of the pious, righteous individual. He prays three times a day, cares for his companions, and is willing to serve in a pagan court only if it does not compromise his ritual practices. The portraying of Daniel in a negative light, that he is thrown into the lions' den as punishment for helping foreign rulers, must be seen as a minority view.

Josephus is most conservative in his portrayal of the character of Daniel. Josephus, possibly reacting to his own needs to act as an apologist to the Roman audience he writes for, almost eliminates all reference to the apocalyptic motif of Daniel. Daniel is portrayed as an obedient servant to his kings, who readily offers to help in any way he can be of service. Josephus downplays the miraculous; this is especially evident in the story of Daniel and the lions' den. Daniel is viewed as a prophet of good tidings, righteous and pious, who attracts the goodwill of all. Whenever Josephus encounters a passage in Daniel which can in any way be viewed as revolutionary, he advised his reader to consult the canonical book for the details.

This study is only a beginning in the evergrowing field of the Bible as literature. It is our hope that we will have, in some small way, contributed to this exciting area.

Table of Abbreviations

Biblical Books

Gen.	Genesis	Jer.	Jeremiah
Ex.	Exodus	Ezk.	Ezekiel
Lev.	Leviticus	Prov.	Proverbs
Num.	Numbers	S. of S.	Song of Songs
Deut.	Deuteronomy	Lam.	Lamentations
Josh.	Joshuah	Eccl.	Ecclesiastes
Jud.	Judges	Dan.	Daniel
Sam.	Samuel	Neh.	Nehemiah
Is.	Isaiah	Chrn.	Chronicles

Other Abbreviations

Albeck	Bereschit Rabba
A. Z.	Abodah Zarah
B. B.	Baba Bathra
Ber.	Berakoth
Charles	<u>Apocrypha and Pesudepigrapha of The Old Testament</u>
Daubney	<u>Three Additions to Daniel</u>
EJ	Encyclopedia Judaica
Hartman	<u>Daniel</u>
Hastings	<u>Hastings Dictionary of the Bible</u>
LXX	Septuagint
Mechilta	translation of Lauterbach

Meg.	Megillah
Moore	<u>Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah: The Additions</u>
P. K.	Pesikta de Rav Kahanah
Porteous	<u>Daniel</u>
P. R.	Pesikta Rabbatai
P. R. E.	Pirke Rabbi Eliezer
Pussey	<u>Daniel the Prophet</u>
Sanh.	Sanhedrin
θ	Theodotian
Tan.	Tanhuma

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

¹Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 10-11.

²Northrop Frye, The Great Code: The Bible and Literature (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982), p. xvii.

³Robert Alter, The Art of the Biblical Narrative (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 16.

⁴Ibid., p. 15.

⁵Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 365.

⁶Ibid., pp. 158-160.

⁷Robert Alter, The Art of the Biblical Narrative (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 47.

⁸Ibid., pp. 20-21. See also pp. 114-130, "Characterization and the Art of Reticence."

⁹Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 116-117.

¹¹Hartman, p. 7.

¹²Hartman, p. 8.

¹³Jacob Mann, The Bible as Read and Preached in the Synagogue (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1940), p. 151.

¹⁴S. Fisch, Ezekiel (London: Soncino Press, 1951), p. 79.

¹⁵EJ, p. 1274.

¹⁶IDB, p. 762.

¹⁷see Eichrodt, Hartman, Speigel, and others.

¹⁸ANET, pp. 149-155.

¹⁹We are basing our statement that Daniel was not a prophet on the "strict" definition of a prophet as found in

McFarland, pp. 155 f., "one who speaks for or on behalf of, being inspired to declare His will, and hence the phrase, 'Thus says the Lord'." A seer is one who interpreted signs or discerned meanings in words or explained difficult dreams. See also Soulen, pp. 129 f., "The book of Daniel... marks the ascendancy of a new world view and a new literary mode divergent from that of classical prophecy and know as Apocalyptic."

²⁰Porteous, p. 19.

²¹E. B. Pusey, Daniel the Prophet (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1885), p. 86.

²²Hartman, p. 139.

²³Ibid., p. 130.

²⁴Ibid., p. 142.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 144-145.

²⁶Porteous, p. 44.

²⁷Ibid., p. 51. See also Montgomery, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel, v. 22 of The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927), pp. 180f.

²⁸Hartman, p. 145.

²⁹Montgomery, Hartman and others note that this was probably not the queen herself, but rather the queen mother.

³⁰Hartman, p. 189.

³¹Ibid., pp. 196-197.

³²Porteous, p. 88.

³³Hartman, p. 211.

³⁴Ibid., p. 245.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

¹Our attempt to cast these rabbinic sayings in the form of a story is not unique. We wish to acknowledge other such models on which our attempt is based. These include Eugene Mihaly, A Song to Creation, and Milton Steinberg, As a Driven Leaf, to name two.

²Avot de Rabbi Nathan 20a.

³Gen. R. 34:10.

⁴Yoma 77a.

⁵Meg. 15a.

⁶Gen. R. 97:8. = Albeck p. 1211

⁷Ruth R. 7:2.

⁸Num. R. 2:17.

⁹Pesikta Rabbati 6 - Friedman p. 23b.

¹⁰Gen. R. 97. = Albeck p. 1213.

¹¹Num. R. 13:11.

¹²S. of S. R. 7:8,1.

¹³Sifre Deut. 27.

¹⁴S. of S. R. 1:1.5.

¹⁵Yoma 76b.

¹⁶A. Z. 35b-36a.

¹⁷Sanh. 93b.

¹⁸Sanh. 98b.

¹⁹

"חכם עדיף מנביא", שהנביא צריך אות ומופת לדבריו, אבל חכם אינו צריך אות ומופת שהקב"ה נתן לו ממשלה לגזירותיו ולדבריו שנאמר "על פי התורה אשר יורן". ואמרו בזוהר שחכם שורה עליו רוח הקודש בכל זמן והנביא לפעמים כן ולפעמים לא. מאנציקלופדיה תלמודית (15) ע' בג.

- ²⁰Gen. R. 27:1.
- ²¹Mechilta, p. 6.
- ²²Meg. 15a.
- ²³P. K., 4:36b Buber = Mandelbaum p. 65 Parah Adumah 4.4.
- ²⁴Seder Olam Rabba, end chapter 20.
- ²⁵P. R., 31.6, p. 60.
- ²⁶Meg. 12a.
- ²⁷Lev. R. 27:4.
- ²⁸Ex. R. 2:5.
- ²⁹Meg. 3a.
- ³⁰Sanh. 94a.
- ³¹Meg. 15a.
- ³²Ex. R. 43:3.
- ³³Gen. R. 98:3.
- ³⁴Ber. 7b.
- ³⁵B. B., 4a.
- ³⁶Deut R. 2:1.
- ³⁷Ber. 31a.
- ³⁸Midrash on Psalms, 66:1.
- ³⁹A. Z., 3a.
- ⁴⁰Yoma 69b.
- ⁴¹Yoma 36b.
- ⁴²Midrash on Psalms, 22:15.
- ⁴³Sifre Deut. 306 = Finkelstein p. 343.
- ⁴⁴B. B., 4a.
- ⁴⁵Midrash on Psalms, 55:4.
- ⁴⁶Deut. R. 2:26-27.
- ⁴⁷Gen. R. 97 = Albeck p. 1208.

⁴⁸Deut. R. 2:26-27.

⁴⁹Num. R. 14:1.

⁵⁰Num. R. 14:3.

⁵¹Ex. R. 18:12.

⁵²Gen. R. 5:5.

⁵³Num. R. 13:4.

⁵⁴Midrash on Psalms, 64.

⁵⁵Midrash on Psalms, 31:1.

⁵⁶S. of S. R. 7:8. 1-9.1.

⁵⁷Gen. R. 68:13.

⁵⁸p. R. E. 33.

⁵⁹It is interesting that Rabbinic Literature is almost silent on the interpretation of Daniel's dreams, especially the apocalyptic dreams and visions that form chapters seven through twelve of the book of Daniel. Perhaps the rabbis were aware of the importance these visions in the contemporary Christian writings of the time, as these chapters form the basis for the book of Revelations, and other Apocalyptic writings. Therefore, they did not offer their own interpretations of these visions, fearing that they could be used by Christian writers.

⁶⁰Gen. R. 98:2.

⁶¹Lev. R. 8:5.

⁶²Ex. R. 30:24.

⁶³Tan. Buber 213.

⁶⁴Midrash on Psalms, 137:7.

⁶⁵Ex. R. 43:3.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

¹Moore, p. 78. The most complete MS of Susanna is Codex Chisianus 88, a 9th century cursive MS which also contains Hippolytus' Commentary on Daniel, and a θ text of Daniel. The LXX text is preserved also in the Syrohexapla (which is almost identical to the Chigi MS) and fragmentarily in Kolner Papyrus 967.

²W. O. E. Osterley, An Introduction to the Books of the Apocrypha (New York: MacMillan, 1935), p. 283.

³Moore, p. 78.

⁴Bruce M. Metzger, An Introduction to the Apocrypha (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 107.

⁵C. J. Ball, "Daniel" in The Holy Bible with Commentary: The Apocrypha, Henry Wace, general editor (London: John Murray, 1888), p. 330.

⁶Moore, p. 78.

⁷Ibid., p. 79.

⁸Ibid., p. 8.

⁹Daubney, p. 123.

¹⁰E. C. Bissell, The Apocrypha of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1880), p. 446.

¹¹Hastings, v. 4, p. 631b.

¹²Daubney, p. 143.

¹³Daubney, p. 170.

¹⁴Charles, vol. 1., p. 642.

¹⁵C. J. Ball, "Daniel" in The Holy Bible with Commentary: The Apocrypha, Henry Wace, general Editor (London: John Murray, 1888), p. 323.

¹⁶Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction translated by P. R. Ackroyd (Oxford: Basil and Blackwell, 1965), p. 590.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 590.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 590.

¹⁹Moore, p. 109.

²⁰Ball, p. 343.

²¹We reject Moore's interpretation. He is engaged in the same type of polemic and argument as those scholars who try to prove that the Jews did not kill Jesus, for the trial described in the New Testament does not correspond to the Mishnaic rules of justice and courtroom procedure, as if the rules of justice described in the Mishnah were practiced in the days of Jesus, or ever practiced for that matter.

²²Moore, p. 117.

²³Daubney, p. 197.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 242-246.

²⁵Charles, vol. 1, p. 654.

²⁶Moore, p. 129.

²⁷Moore, p. 139.

²⁸For further remarks on this question, see Moore, Comment II, pp. 147-149.

²⁹Charles, vol. 1, p. 658.

³⁰Moore, p. 133.

³¹The New English Bible takes the pronoun to refer to the king's friends, and so renders the phrase, "the most honored of all the king's friends."

³²Moore. p. 132.

³³Ibid., p. 135.

³⁴Charles, vol. 2, p. 653.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

¹W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, Matthew (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1971), p. 295.

²See for example John J. Collins, The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel (Montana: Scholars Press, 1977). Collins includes an excellent bibliography and review of the literature. See also Norman Perrin, The New Testament: An Introduction (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974).

³See for example Hans Conzelmann, Jesus (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973). See also Eduard Schweizer, "The Son of Man," JBL 70 (1960) pp. 119-129, "The Son of Man Again," New Testament Studies 9 (1962-1963), pp. 256-261, and R. D. Wilson, Studies in Daniel (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1917), and D. S. Russell, The Meaning and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (London: SCM Press, 1964).

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

¹Leland Ryken, "Literary Criticism of the Bible: Some Fallacies" in Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives, Kenneth R. R. Gross Louis, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1974), p. 25.

²Ibid., p. 27.

³Ibid., p. 28.

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