

Maccabean Revolt: Religious Persecution and Resurrection of the Dead

1. Chronology, continued

606-535 BCE - Approximate era of the literary setting of the Book of Daniel

586 BCE - BABYLONIAN EXILE

538 BCE – Cyrus the Persian conquers Babylon. The Persians allow Jews to return to their land and grant them funds to rebuild the Jerusalem Temple; beginning of **Second Temple period**

333 BCE - Persian Empire is among the lands conquered by **Alexander the Great**; the Land of Israel comes under Hellenistic rule (first Ptolemaic and then Seleucid).

305 BCE – Israel comes under Ptolemaic (Hellenistic Egyptian) rule

ca. 250 BCE – Pentateuch first translated into Greek (= **Septuagint** [LXX])

200 BCE – Israel comes under Seleucidic (Hellenistic Syrian) rule

168-167 BCE – Persecutions of Jews under the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes = Current scholarly consensus for the composition of the latest portions of the Book of Daniel (i.e., the apocalyptic material in Dan 7-12) and their compilation together with earlier narrative material about Daniel (i.e., the stories in Dan 1-6)

167-164 BCE - MACCABEAN REVOLT: under the leadership of Judas Maccabeus and other members of his family, Jews respond to the persecution by means of a successful military revolt against the Seleucids and gained the freedom of self-rule in their own land for the first time since the Babylonian Exile.

164 BCE – Rededication of the Second Temple (now commemorated by Hanukah)

140-63 BCE – The Hasmonean Dynasty – Israel under native (but non-Davidic) rule

63 BCE – The Roman general Pompey invades Jerusalem, Israel becomes Roman vassal state

40 BCE-39 BCE – The rule of King Herod and his sons

6 CE – Birth of Jesus of Nazareth

6-66 CE – Israel mostly under the direct rule of Roman procurators

66-70 CE – JEWISH REVOLT AGAINST ROME

70 CE – Jerusalem and the Second Temple destroyed by Romans

2. Book of Daniel

- Daniel is the only apocalypse in the Hebrew Bible and is an example of an historical apocalypse, concerned not with the structure of the cosmos (like ascent apocalypses) but with history and its end.
- The second part of the book consists of a series of apocalyptic visions, which Daniel sees and which are interpreted for him by angels. These visions tell the history of Israel, with a focus on its

conquests by a series of Empires, ending with the Seleucid Empire and the persecutions under Antiochus IV (during which the book was written). It culminates in what the authors see as the impending end of all history as we know it.

Structure of the Book of Daniel	
1:1-2:4a Hebrew	1-6, Six Diaspora Stories about Daniel and his friends in the courts of a series of foreign kings
2:4b-7:28 Aramaic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Daniel and his friends at the Babylonian court of Nebuchadnezzar 2. Daniel interprets the statue dream of Nebuchadnezzar 3. The three friends are placed in the furnace 4. Daniel interprets the tree dream of Nebuchadnezzar 5. Daniel interprets the handwriting on the wall of Belshazzar 6. Daniel is placed in the lion's pit of Darius
8:1-12:13 Hebrew	7-12, Daniel's Apocalyptic Visions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The four beasts and the Son of Man 8: The ram and the goat 9: Gabriel interprets Jeremiah's prophecy of the seventy weeks 10-12: Vision of future history

- Daniel 12 contains the first explicit reference to resurrection in Jewish literature:

¹ There will be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation until that time. But at that time your people will be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book. ² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will wake up, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness (will shine) like the stars for ever and ever. (12:1-3)

Apocalyptic Visions of the End: Example from the Book of Daniel			
	Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation (Dan 2)	Daniel's vision (Dan 7)	The angel's interpretation of Daniel's vision (Dan 7)
"Four Kingdoms"	2:31-35 "You were looking, O king, and lo! there was a great statue.. The head of that statue was of fine gold , its chest and arms of silver , its middle and thighs of bronze , its legs of iron , its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.	7:2-3 Daniel said, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.	7:17-18 "As for these four great beasts , four kings shall arise out of the earth. But the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever-forever and ever."
Babylonian Empire (597-538 bce)	2:37-38 You, O king, the king of kings--to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory... you are the head of gold .	7:4 The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings... its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human mind was given to it.	
Persian Empire & "Median" kingdom (538 - 333 bce)	2:39a After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours,	7:5 Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear . It was raised up on one side, had three tusks in its mouth among its teeth and was told, "Arise, devour many bodies!"	
	2:29b and yet a third kingdom of bronze , which shall rule over the whole earth.	7:6 After this, as I watched, another appeared, like a leopard . The beast had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads; and dominion was given to it.	
Hellenistic kingdoms (Ptolemaic 333-200 bce; Seleucidic: 200-167 bce)	2:40-43 And there shall be a fourth kingdom , strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and shatter all these...	7:7 After this I saw in the visions by night a fourth beast It was different from all the beasts that preceded it, and it had ten horns.	7:19-25 Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast , which was different from all the rest...
	Antiochus Epiphanes (175-167 bce)	7:8 I was considering the horns, when another horn appeared, a little one coming up among them... speaking arrogantly.	As I looked, this horn made war with the holy ones and was prevailing over them, until the Ancient One came...
Messianic age	2:44 And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever	7:9-12 As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne... I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven... To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.	7:26-27 Then the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and totally destroyed. The kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High ; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them."

3. 2 Maccabees

- Composed around 124 BCE, 2 Maccabees tells the history of the Maccabean Revolt. Significant for our purposes are chapters 6-7, which represent our first Jewish example of an interest in martyrdom, on the one hand, and which include references to resurrection of the body, on the other.