**Daniel E. Hofffman – November 18, 2012 – Pent 25/lect 33**

**Daniel 12: 1 - 3**

12“At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book.2Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.3Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

**Background/Dating**

 While the internal dating of the book seems to settle about 606 BC, most scholars place the final dating of the work at 167-164 BC during the reign of the tyrant King Antiochus IV Epiphanes who along with his supporters stands as the ultimate embodiment of unrighteousness because he Criminalized Judaism, desecrated the Jerusalem Temple and co-opted the Jewish leaders. This later dating makes all of Daniels Prophecies find their fulfillment (20/20 prophetic vision) in historical events AND speaks to the hearers in a moment of deep social and religious chaos with an authority that brings hope. The Apocalyptic nature of Daniel’s visions tie together Daniel the prophetic outliner of the future and Daniel the wise interpreter of dreams. This particular pericope forms the conclusion of Daniel’s Revelation given in Chapts. 10-11.

**Verse by Verse**

Vs 2 Many who sleep – awake, return/restored to life - this is not the later Christian Resurrection of ALL people with some heading to bliss and others to torment. PERHAPS it is those who have died under the reign of the Unjust King, thus making God’s word final, rather than the word of” A-IV-E”. The end of the world, is not a matter of destruction and devastation, it is a matter of God restoring justice and righteousness.

Vs 2 – Everlasting life – first occurrence of this term in the Bible.

Vs3 The WISE – Those who have sought the knowledge and discernment of God’s power at work in the cosmos, especially as that cosmos has become chaotic, deadly, hostile, and untrustworthy.

Vs 3 Brightness of the sky – BOTH an image of light in the darkness AND of wisdom. The stars were literally seen as Angelic counselors in God’s heavenly court. Wisdom sees God at work in the chaos, and follows in the way of peace despite the great evil that is all around. The apocalyptic events of the end have the capacity to make the present moment an opportunity for faithful living. Because God reigns, and in the end brings justice, and does not let righteousness be undone, whatever happens in the present moment is an event yet to experience its final judgment.

**THEOLOGY:** The worldwide economy is in shambles, terrorists have free reign, the Myan calendar is coming to an end, the churches are emptying, Whoever wins the Presidential election, some will proclaim doom while others see a rainbow on the horizon…(Lions and Tigers and Bears, OH MY!) so what is a person of faith to do? Seek the way of the Lord in the present moment, follow and let the wisdom of our faith shine in the darkness.

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Let us pray.

Lord God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that, always keeping in mind the end of all things and the day of judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of life here and may live with you forever in the world to come, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (106 LBW)

Amen

Almighty God, your sovereign purpose brings salvation to birth. Give us faith to be steadfast amid the tumults of this world, trusting that your kingdom comes and your will is done through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. (ELW)

Amen

Psalm 16

1Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

2I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.”

3As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight.

4Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.

5The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

6The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

7I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

8I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.

10For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.

11You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

**BACKGROUND:**

A Psalm of confidence addressing a time of sickness and separation from the sanctuary with a grounding in the source of true hope. The author does not take refuge in anything sacred, not even the Holy Word, but in God Alone!

Vs 4 Those who choose another god – represents the religious pluralism/syncretism of the exile, or that results from the exile experiences . Composition probably about 500 BC in the early post-exilic years.

Vs 5 “My portion and my cup” May reflect the Levites who held no property and were a symbol for All Israel of the proper relationship with God.

The rewards for confidence are restored health and eternal life in God’s presence, rather than life apart from God in the grace/Sheol

**Daniel E. Hoffman – November 15, 2015 – Pent 25/prop 28**

**Hebrews 10:11-18**

11And every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins.12But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, “he sat down at the right hand of God,”13and since then has been waiting “until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet.”14For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.15And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying,16“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds,”17he also adds, “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”18Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

**BACKGROUND:**

The letter to the Hebrews is not a letter and is not addressed to Hebrew audience. The form is more of an extended, edited homily/exhortation, with a letter like ending appended. There is no formal address or greeting presumed in the form of any letter. The dating of the book varies from an early date of 60 AD due to the mention of its grounding in second generation believers (2: 3-4) a later dating toward 95AD comes from the overall sense that there is a development of thought (Christology) not necessarily present in that early second generation. The earlier dating also presumes the continued existence and functioning of the Jerusalem Temple. The book does provide a concern with Jewish practices and traditions: If the work is addresses to Jews it may be read as an invitation to accept the Christian confession Jesus is Lord; If addressed to Jewish Christians it may be read as a exhortation to beware the dangers of slipping back into their ancestral religion. In any case these Jewish concerns may reflect more the background of the author than the concerns of the audience. The audience may be gentiles who have been CHRISTIAN FOR A SHORT TIME ( 5:12) EXPERIENCED PERSECUTION (10: 32-34) AND EXPECT THOSE PERSECUTIONS TO CONTINUE (12: 13, 13:3) The book then seeks to encourage faithfulness, and endurance.

**Verse by Verse:**

11-EVERY Priest – not just the high priest as on the day of Atonement, but ordinary priests engaged in the daily OT ritual sacrifices.

11- priest STANDS – The Aaronic priests never sit in the conduct of their duties. Their work is never done, and it accomplishes nothing of value.

12 – sat down – Christ is seated (enthroned) as God's son, whose work on cross in complete! Christ's sacrifice accomplishes once for all, and for all generations what the Levitical sacrifices can never accomplish. CF Jesus seated with DAVID seated in prayer before God (2 Sam. 7:18)

13- Cf Psalm 110: 1b – The tie between Jesus enthronement and pasrousia is here described. Unlike Paul this author does not define who the enemies are that still to become subject to Christ.

14- single offering – The ongoing offerings of the Levitical Priesthood have continued for generations yet their effect is negligible, and the ongoing work shows a less than assuring result.

perfected for all time – The effect of Christ's sacrifice is the complete forgiveness of sins, it is an assurance of the right relationship with God brought about through the Cross.

15 – Holy Spirit testifies – cf Jeremiah 31: 31-34 as a testimony from scripture confirming the new covenant established in Jesus Cross.

17 - Remember no longer – No further sacrifice is needed. It is finished in Christ. The completeness of the removal of sin is reflective of Jeremiah's prophecy of the new covenant. (8: 8-12) The Temple now has a large sign “Out of Business” on the wall. The Temple's destruction in 70 AD is thus catastrophe for Jews, and a loss for Christians, but not the end of the world.

11-18 – is a CONCLUDING FLOURISH to the preceding several chapters

V 18 – the concluding tag reinforces the end of the old cultic order, as unnecessary and even ineffective.

THEOLOGY: The Faith of God's people is grounded in Jesus Christ and the covenant relationship that he himself establishes with his Church in and through the Cross. The church in every generation is called out to trust the sufficiency of His sacrifice and to live in this world in the hopeful expectation that his exultation is surety for our own eventual exultation.

**Daniel E. Hoffman – November 15, 2015 – Pent 25/prop 28**

**Mark 13:1-8**

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!”2Then Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.”

3When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately,4“Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?”

5Then Jesus began to say to them, “Beware that no one leads you astray.6Many will come in my name and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will lead many astray.7When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come.8For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birthpangs.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Gospel of Mark written in the early days of the formation of the Christian Church (c 70AD) has been called a passion narrative with a lengthy introduction. The pericope for this day is the transitional point between Jesus teaching ministry, and the Passion. Jesus and his disciples will leave the Temple for the last time, set up their “headquarters” on the Mount of Olives and wage war with the Religious/Political leaders/institutions within Israel, in order to reveal the true Glory of god, and to enable the full inbreaking of the Kingdom of God. Apart from a coherent connection Jesus teaching ministry and the Cross become hopelessly compartmentalized and distorted.

**VERSE BY VERSE:**

Vs 1 – The Temple – Center and sole site of Israel’s cultic life, the Temple was an impressive building set upon the peak of the Mountain Gleaming with its Bright stone & gold façade, its design lifted the eyes and heart heavenward. It was built to be impressive to worshippers, pilgrims, visitors and strangers regardless of one’s belief in God or living of the Covenant.

Here Jesus and his followers depart the Temple after an extensive time of teaching in the Temple area. What is interesting is that the unnamed disciple who takes note of the Temple’s grandeur does so as they depart after being there for a long time. The timing serves to set up Jesus response and move the hearer from an encounter with God in a religious site, to the encounter with God in a secular site where there is no grandeur, only suffering, death and destruction.

Vs2 No stone will be left upon another …. Jesus prediction of the Temple’s total destruction is an affront to the piety and pride of the Jews, and it points toward the Temple’s actual destruction in 70 AD when it was burned and then raised by Caesar’s army. This should not be read as any indication of the books dating either pre or post AD 70, but as a literary device intended to shock hearers in a way that sets them up for the passion and cross.

Vs 3 DESOLATION (of the Temple) Literally the abandonment of the Temple by worshippers because it has become profaned….Is the Temple emptied because it has been destroyed, burned, raised, or is it abandoned and falls into ruin because it fails to accomplish its purpose……For Christians Jesus death and resurrection make the Temple with its sacrifices unnecessary at best…AND YET Acts 2 speaks of the Apostles attending worship in the Temple, supplementing it with Table fellowship/Eucharist? This is an interesting tie to the Hebrews text!

Vs 3Mount of Olives – This is the best view of the Temple, picture post card images, nothing in the way to hide the Temple’s immensity

OPPOSITE the Temple – The Mount of Olives is not just opposite in that it stands on the opposite side of a small valley, but opposite in the sense that this is now Jesus Headquarters. He has set his path against that of the Temple leaders, and the religious system of the Law enshrined in those greats stones and impressive buildings. This is an image of Generals and their troops preparing for battle in the days before they take to the battlefield.

Peter, James and John – Jesus here speaks to his inner circle, but in vs 37 at the close of this discourse he makes it clear that this teaching to the inner circle is intended for all to hear, including the reader/hearer.

Vs 4 When will this happen – Jesus predictions have been clear as to What will happen, but the disciples seek the specificity of a timeline. Again they are like soldiers preparing for battle, knowing the enemy, and the task at hand, but WHEN is the kind of question that both stirs and calms the heart.

ALL THESE THINGS – the complex of MANY events which come together to form the passion narrative. It parallels the language of Daniel 12:6-7 When…… will all these things…………. come to an end.

The relationship between the Temple’s destruction and Jesus death and Resurrect ion are a key faith issue for the first century church.

THIS APOLYPTIC DISCOURSE is the only place where Jesus predicts the future, and connects that prediction to the historic events of the readers/hearers own time. Some of the events predicted by Jesus have already occurred(temple destroyed ), and some are in process (faithless disciples becoming faithful new Temple being built up in the churches etc) making this a FUTURE ORIENTED discourse, and yet how often do we focus on the destruction alone and get stuck in the present moment of chaos.

Vs 5 Beware/Watch out/Look – A punctuation (5x) used throughout this discourse. To SEE is used in conjunction to LISTEN, Seeing and Hearing come together in discernment of the truth, and of true and false claims re. salvation.

Lead astray – a technical term for the workings of false prophets, what they say is not nearly as harmful as where they lead people (away from God and the way of life/peace)

Vs 6 Many deceivers – Not merely that they claim to work/serve in Jesus name (recall They are healing in your name a we don’t know who they are 9:38-41) The deceit is that these claim to BE JESUS “I AM HE” ego aeimi thus causing disciples to abandon faith in Jesus and place it in another. This is the downside of the Ascension and promised second coming, and will not diminish until Jesus returns. Hence the beware is addressed to the church in every age.

 Implied here is the first answer to the disciples question when/what is the sign….NOT YET and the SIGNS you experience in history are not THE END< but merely the beginning of the birth pangs that will bring in the new age.

Vs 7 Wars and rumors of war – War/earthquakes/famines are standard signs that the end is drawing near, and they continue to occur throughout human history….Jesus points to these signs and heightening our anticipation of the immediacy of the new ages coming. This may be more a problem for the church of the 21st century than that of the first century…are we too comfortable with the structures of the institutional church apart from the passionate expectation of the coming new creation? As our modern day Temple of the denominational church crumbles around us, what do we do, how do we act, where do we look for guidance, perspective and a TRUTH worthy of giving our lives to?

Mark’s church is warned not to confuse their historical experiences with concrete signs of the coming kingdom but to live within that particular history with an eschatological hope…hence they experience tribulations and persecutions not total destruction. Can we hear the same warning as a call to hope filled faith\ today?

Vs 8 Labor pains - concrete realization that the anticipated birth is about to happen. What was promised and anticipated is about to become reality, with the transition being truly painful for the mother, and yet life giving in the long term. Again what is our perspective toward the labor pains we now experience fear or hope, dread or anticipation, doom & gloom, or light and peace….

Beginning of the labor pains – places the reader/hearer on the threshold in a “luminal place” between two worlds, two ways, two kingdoms with a foot, arm, ear and eye in EACH of the two realms….It can lead us to schizophrenia or provide a unique perspective that engenders faith in Christ.

**THEOLOGY:**

 Calamity and Christ are with us until the time line of History finds its fulfillment in God who created it. In the meantime we live in anticipation of Christ the Alpha and the Omega being all that he has promised to be for us and for the world. Living that expectant faith is not about knowing the when, but the WHO!

MARANATHA – VENI JESU – COME LORD JESUS