The Theology and the Function of the Prayers in the Book of Daniel

Paul Birch Petersen, Andrews University

Date of Award
1998

Document Type
Dissertation

Degree Name
Doctor of Philosophy

School
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Program
Religion, Old Testament Studies PhD

First Advisor
Jacques B. Doukhan

Second Advisor
Richard M. Davidson

Third Advisor
J. Bjornar Storfjell

Abstract
This dissertation investigates the theology and the function of the prayers in the Book of Daniel. The introduction reviews the scholarly literature in regard to the prayers of the Old Testament in general and the prayers in the Book of Daniel in particular. Recent studies of prayers in the Old Testament have focused on their theological function in their final literary setting. They have also turned their attention to prayer as part of a process of communication, of a divine-human dialogue, and consequently this study is structured from the aspect of interpersonal relationships.

Chapter 1 deals with Daniel and his friends. First, prayers, references to prayers, and allusions to prayers are identified in Dan 2, 3, 6, 9, and 10. Next, the prayers are situated in the structure and in the plot of each of these chapters. Exegesis is performed on the thanksgiving by Daniel in 2:20-23 and his confession in 9:4b-19, the only two recorded prayers, and their semantic and thematical links with their respective context are described.

Centering on the gentile kings, chapter 2 follows a similar outline, identifying situations of prayer in Dan 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and performing exegesis on the royal doxologies of Dan...
Chapter 3 presents a synopsis of prayers in the book. The various references to prayer are compared, and they are positioned in the structure of the book as a whole and viewed in relation to the progression of its events. The function of the prayers is described in three areas: the thematic relationship between the prayers and the various sections of the book, the contribution of the prayers to the depiction of its characters, and the theological implications of the prayer-events as part of a divine-human dialogue.

The dissertation is completed by a summary of the results of the study.

Subject Area
Bible. Daniel -- Prayers, Daniel (Biblical figure)--Prayers

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations/128