I have been arguing that to understand the radically new view of the afterlife that emerged in ancient Judea in the horrible years leading up to the Maccabean revolt, it is important to know something about a new genre or literature that began to be produced at the time, the apocalypse. The first surviving writing of this kind is in the book of Daniel. Here is what I say about Daniel as an apocalypse in my book The Bible: A Historical and Literary Introduction.

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**Daniel as an Apocalypse**

Daniel provides the earliest full-blown apocalypse that we have from Jewish antiquity. There are other passages in the Hebrew Bible that scholars have suggested embody clear – or reasonably clear – apocalyptic perspectives. In every case, these are passages that appear to have been added at a later time on to a writing that was already in existence. This is the case, for example, with Isaiah 24-27, known as the “little apocalypse” of Isaiah, not written by Isaiah of Jerusalem in the 8th century BCE, but later interpolated into his work; so too Second Zechariah (chs. 9-14) contains apocalyptic elements.

But it is with Daniel 1-7 that we first see the genre come to full expression. Scholars have long recognized that ...

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