

ANALYTICAL OUTLINE #2 ASSIGNMENT PAPER

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Title of Document: Baruch

Hypothesized Dating of the Document, the Author, the Audience, and the Original

Context:

A. Dating of Document:

- **Approximate Date:** 164 B.C., when the Second Temple was desecrated by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, according to Heyler's book.¹

A.Author(s)/Editor(s) of Document: A few anonymous authors since the document can be divided into a few parts based on Heyler's book.²

B.Major events in the Jewish world and the locality: The document was written during the time of the Maccabean revolt.³

C.Intended Audience: According to Baruch 1:2-3, the setting of this document took place when Jerusalem was taken and burned. This document described the situation where the Jews were in exile. Therefore, the Jews that were in exile were the intended audience of this document.

D.The document is prescriptive since it is a poem that could be used to encourage the Jews that were in exile. As described in the document, the Jews were in exile because they had sinned against the lord and aroused his anger by disobeying him and following their own hearts. The Jews were encouraged to hold out hopes that the Lord would watch over them under the rule of king Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon and finally deliver them at last.

Structural Divisions

1 Larry R. Helyer, *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period: A Guide for New Testament Students* (Downers Grove, IL:IVP Academic, 2002), 175.

2 Helyer, *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period*, 174.

3 Helyer, *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period*, 175.

1. Baruch 1:1-14 - An introduction of the narrator about the setting of the document - Jews mourned and prayed to God when the Chaldeans took and burned Jerusalem.
2. Baruch 1:15- 3:7- Corporate prayer of the Jews to confess what they had done to sin against God; the Jews's petition for God to forgive and deliver them.
3. Baruch 3:8- 4:3 - Wisdom poem that described what wisdom, the book of the commandments of God, was all about.
4. Baruch 4:4- 5:9 - Zion poem that described how Zion became like a widow who was left desolate because of the sins of her children (the Jews). Zion the mother then encouraged the Jews to take off the garment of sorrow and put on the beauty of the glory from God for God would deliver the Jews.

Key Theological Themes/Topics

Here are some powerful theological viewpoints found in the document: What God spoke through Moses came to pass: God told his people that he would bring on calamities upon the Jews because they would sin against God by following their own hearts and disobey God. The Jews would then turn from their deeds while they were in exile and God would forgive and deliver them and make an everlasting covenant with them. Through what happened to the Jews, we learned that God is still the same today: when we confess our sins and believe in God, he forgives our sins and makes an everlasting covenant with us through the blood of Jesus Christ. However, one might ask, do all sufferings occur because people sin? Today, would God choose a specific group of people that he decides to save like how he chose the Jews? Would the Jews be saved even if they did not turn from their wicked ways?

I did not expect that the author would write the Zion poem using the identity of Zion. This style emphasized the sorrow deeply felt by the Jews and also the hope and glory that were to come from God.

Analytical skills

Through this document, the author(s) revealed to the Jews that what God told Moses about the Israelites would come to pass. Additionally, the Jews were reminded that they were exiled because of their sins, but they were also comforted that God would make them turn from their sinful ways and make a covenant with them and deliver them. This document also confirms that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He forgives and delivers those he made covenant with (the Israelites in the old testament period and all those who believe in him thereafter).

Summary Statement

People arose God's wrath when we sin, however, God is kind and merciful to those he made covenant with, even when we are still stiff-necked and sinful, God hears our prayer and delivers us when we confess our sins.

Questions for further investigation:

1. Who was Baruch? Did he write anything else?
2. Do the theological viewpoints from this document align with the rest of the bible? What are some similarities and differences?
3. Why was this document not part of the Canon?