

简论《圣经》的犹太民族主义与世界主义

Brief Comment on Jewish Nationalism
and Cosmopolitanism in the Bible

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[英文提要]

Jewish nationalism and cosmopolitanism are two main motifs running through the Bible. It can be said that all the topics, theses, and concepts of the Bible are closely interrelated with them in some way. Jewish nationalism and cosmopolitanism are mutually opposing and conflicting and yet interdependent. Together they show the deep intensity and great vitality of the Hebrew culture.

Jewish nationalism is the collective spirit and group consciousness of the Jews as a people. It expresses the ardent loyalty of the Jews to their nation. Meanwhile, it offers a basic program and common principle for Jewish national identity and their relationship with other nations. In the Old Testament, Jewish nationalism generates a strong patriotism that calls for the defense and preservation of its traditions and culture. As a result, though small and weak in number, the Jewish nation was able not only to escape assimilation by foreign powers that ruled their land, but emerge, full of vigor and vitality, despite long periods of slavery and oppression. Other times, however, Jewish nationalism manifests itself as a narrow, xenophobic conservatism. The Jews became an antagonistic or estranged people pitted against the Gentile world.

In the New Testament, early Christianity resisted Jewish nationalism. The spiritual weapon of the early Church in its effort to reform and sublimate the narrow, exclusive tendencies of Jewish nationalism is cosmopolitanism. Christian cosmopolitanism advocates the demolition of all barriers between nations, and between people of noble and humble birth, for all have become “world citizens”, enjoying equal status as they share the same mind and submit to the same creed. In fact, there had been a longstanding undercurrent of cosmopolitanism in the Old Testament. In the later writings of Scripture, Jewish prophets had sounded the clarion call to God’s people throughout the world. Meantime, Greek philosophers, especially the Stoics, also advocated cosmopolitanism in the wake of Alexander the Great’s conquests in the East. They presented a splendid and inspirational vision for the world. Into this cultural milieu, Christianity was born. From its inception, Christianity made every effort to promote cosmopolitanism. The cosmopolitanism of the New Testament is an organic synthesis and innovation with its roots in Jewish cosmopolitan theology and Greek cosmopolitan philosophy.

《旧约》的犹太民族主义

所有民族的文化中都有维护本族利益、弘扬本族传统的民族主义,只是犹太民族主义在犹太人的文化体系中占有特别重要的位置。犹太民族主义的核心是一神论、选民说和以犹太民族为中心的神学历史观。纵贯《旧约》始终,犹太作家反反复复地宣称:世间