

종교문학에서의 재앙 신탁에 관한 연구

A Study on Disaster Oracles in Religious Literature

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ABSTRACT

Religious literature are full of disasters and human suffering, which are generally human destinies in this lives. This article deals with some lists of disasters in the Old Testament and in the discourses of Jesus on the Mt. Olives in the New Testament and writings of Ellen G. White, an American Christian writer in the 20th century.

I. Introduction

Disasters are something catastrophic, calamitous and tragic beyond human responses through natural hazards, technological or accidents, human-related conflict causes.¹⁾ Religious literature are full of disasters and human suffering, which are generally human destinies in this lives.

This paper sketches some basic lists of disasters in the Old Testament which are roots of similar oracles in the discourses of Jesus on the Mt. Olives in the New Testament. It also deals with disaster oracles in the writings of Ellen. G. White, an American Christian writer in the 20th century, culminating in the scopes and messages of disasters. (Biblical quotations are from New King James Version [NKJV]).

II. Disasters in the Bible

The Old Testament lists flood and earthquakes as divine punishment against God. First Noah, hero of pre-Noachian flood warned flood for 120 years from God, and there was flood in the earth. It destroyed all living animals and humanity except Noah's family (Gen 6-9).

Moses, the author of Pentateuch jots down disasters in three groups in graphic details (Deut 28:15-44, 45-57, 58-68). They include curses on human body, industry, and animals; invasion and oppression by enemies. They would be forced to poverty, drought, defeat, frustration, fear, cannibalism and exile.²⁾

In the New Testament, Jesus lists disasters in terms of last day events before his coming:

But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately. Then He said to them, Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.
(Luke 21:9-11).

Here earthquakes, plagues, terrors and wars are signs of His coming to the earth. They are universal and global in the eschatological terms. Great signs from heaven are symbols of apocalyptic literature. It includes darkening of the sun and moon, falling of stars (Math 24:29-30; Isa 13:10; 13:34; Eze 32:7-8; Amos 8:9).

III. Disasters in the writings of Ellen G. White

Ellen G. White, a woman of spiritual gifts and prolific writer of religious literature in the nineteenth century (1827-1915), elaborate disaster more fully in the end time perspectives.

In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the

ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. "The earth mourneth and fadeth away," "the haughty people . . . do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." Isa 24:4- 5.³⁾

Various calamities in the sea and land are listed as disasters on the earth: accidents and calamities, big fire, tornadoes, hailstorms, floods, hurricanes and earthquakes. She enlarges them even to deadly taints in the air and pestilence by Satan, the devil in the Bible. The earth is sorrowing and wasting away, the world is full of grief and wasting away. They are caused by superhuman and invisible agency, which may be based on human causes, and humans are to suffer and at a loss to cope with disasters in various forms.

IV. Implications and Conclusion

Disaster oracles in religious literature encompass various forms of calamities. They can be threat and warning to cope with them in human wisdom and technologies. Meanwhile in the Bible times, disaster oracles echoes messages of divine care and hope for humanity in spite of human helplessness, hopelessness and powerlessness. Both the Old Testament and the discourses of Jesus, and the writings of Ellen G. White touch the lists of disaster oracles, which can be invaluable terms of reference in dealing with awareness, preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation due to disasters,⁴⁾ though they have been for warning and call for repentance of humanity in religious perspectives. Discussion on disaster oracles can be medium of help and expectancy to cope with human wisdom and technology beyond myth.⁵⁾

■ 참고 문헌 ■

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