

(3) No single classification of the Megilloth is possible. These books were individually read at Hebrew feasts and emphasize spiritual values in the direction of God's dealings. Ecclesiastes stresses the important fact of taking God into account first (all else being meaningless) and the Song emphasizes the purity of the relations after the pattern of the creative order (male and female).

2. The Message of the Hagiographa

Basically the message of the hagiographa may be summarized on the following lines in spite of the great divergency of the material.

- a. The importance of life experience in fellowship and communion with God.
- b. The necessity of translating that life experience into the more practical events of the daily life.
- c. The failure of any other life-system to sustain or give an enduring meaning to life. This is seen often in the Psalter as well as in the other books.
- d. The practical value of the Lord's control to and in the life of those who trust Him.

3. Critical Problems in the Hagiographa

- a. Authorship: books where the author is assigned but critically minded persons think the book must be later than the supposed (or stated) author's time.
- b. Date of Texts: as in the case of Ecclesiastes, for which no date is assigned but for which tradition has assumed a Solomonic authorship and date.
- c. Critical omissions: As in Esther and the missing name of God. Although not so pronounced this is also a concern in the Song.
- d. Canonical Questions: When did the books finally seem to be received as Scripture.

The critics are rather severe with the Hagiographa, not allowing its completion until well after the inception of the Christian era. Conservatives feel the whole was complete before or about 400 BC and we think this is what Jesus refers to with the expressions "psalms" and "writings".