

Apocalypticism

REL 3294.073B / JST 3930.07H0 (5420), Fall 2013
M 8 (3:00-3:50) / W 8-9 (3:00-3:50, 4:05-4:55), AND 134

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Course Description:

Apocalypticism refers in the first instance to a development within Second Temple Judaism. As such, it constituted the religious matrix out of which Christianity was eventually born. This development entailed both a new literary form, namely, the apocalypse (literally “revelation”), and also a new way of viewing reality, what we might refer to as the apocalyptic “worldview.” This course will focus in particular on Jewish and Christian apocalypticism through a survey of apocalyptic texts from the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple Jewish literature (including the Dead Sea Scrolls), and the New Testament. While surveying this literature and its historical context, we will, in the course of the semester, consider various aspects of apocalyptic writing and thinking: the nature of the cosmos, the nature of history, and the literary forms used to convey this religious vision.

Required Texts:

John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*
Mitchell G. Reddish, editor, *Apocalyptic Literature: A Reader*
HarperCollins Study Bible — or other approved translation

additional secondary readings, course materials, and information will be made available through **Sakai** at e-Learning Support Services: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. Occasionally students may need to make photocopies from masters available in the department office. Note: a few scholarly articles may be added to the assignments listed below.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Course Requirements:

Attendance is mandatory

Participation – (10%)

2 Written Exercises (3 pages) – (30%)

2 Exams – (60%)

Make-up exams must be approved by instructor beforehand, or justified afterward by providing appropriate documentation (medical, etc.).

Grade scale:

87–89 = B+ 77–79 = C+ 67–69 = D+ below 60 = E
93–100 = A 83–86 = B 73–76 = C 63–66 = D
90–92 = A- 80–82 = B- 70–72 = C- 60–62 = D-

Schedule:

Week 1

8/21 **Introduction:** syllabus; general background

Genre: Myth and History; Prophecy

Collins: chapter 1

Bible: Ezekiel 1-2; Zechariah 9-14

Other: Baal; Eliade, “Sacred Time and Myths”; Coogan, pp 436-43

Week 2

8/26

8/28

Enoch and the Otherworldly Journey

Collins: chapter 2 (pp 43-62)

Reddish: “The Book of Watchers”

Bible: Genesis 1-11

Other: “The Astronomical Book”; Epic of Gilgamesh, excerpts

Week 3

9/2 **Labor Day (no class)**

9/4

Week 4

9/9

Enoch and Pseudonymity; Jubilees

Collins: chapter 2 (pp 62-84)

Reddish: “The Animal Apocalypse”; “The Apocalypse of Weeks”

Bible: Leviticus 25; Deuteronomy 6-7, 29-30; 2 Kings 22-23

Other: “Jubilees”

9/11

Week 5

9/16

Daniel: the Periodization of History; the Eschaton

Collins: chapter 3

Bible: Daniel; Genesis 1, 6-9, 17; Exodus 6, 12; 2 Kings 24-25; Isaiah 11, 24-27

Other: Hesiod, excerpts

9/18

Week 6

9/23 **WRITTEN EXERCISE 1** due in class

Oracles and Testaments: Determinism

Collins: chapter 4

Reddish: "Testament of Levi"; "The Testament of Moses"

Bible: Genesis 49; Deuteronomy 33-34

Other: Hesiod, excerpts; "Sibylline Oracle 3"; "Testament of Judah"; "Psalms of Solomon"

9/25

Week 7

9/30

10/2 **EXAM 1**

Dead Sea Scrolls: the Apocalyptic Community at Qumran

Collins: chapter 5

Reddish: "The Community Rule"

Other: "The Damascus Document"; Frank Moore Cross, "The Historical Context of the Scrolls"

Week 8

10/7

10/9

Dead Sea Scrolls: Biblical Interpretation at Qumran; Dualism

Collins: chapter 6

Reddish: "The War Scroll"; "The New Jerusalem"; "The Similitudes of Enoch"

Other: "Florilegium"; "Commentary on Habakkuk"; "Thanksgiving Hymns 11, 19"

Week 9

10/14

10/16

After the Fall of Jerusalem to Rome: Typology in History

Collins: chapter 7

Reddish: "4 Ezra"; "2 Baruch"

Bible: Nehemiah 8-9; Jeremiah 32, 36, 43, 45

Other: "Apocalypse of Abraham"

Week 10

10/21

10/23

Jewish Apocalypticism in the Roman Period

Collins: chapter 8

Reddish: "Sibylline Oracle 2"; "Testament of Abraham"

Bible: Genesis 12:1-25:11

Other: "Sibylline Oracles 1, 4, 5"; "2 Enoch"; "3 Baruch"

Week 11

10/28

10/30

Early Christianity: Jesus and Paul as Apocalyptic Thinkers

Collins: chapter 9 (pp 256-68)

Bible: Mark; Matthew 13, 17-18, 27-28; 1-2 Corinthians; 1-2 Thessalonians; Jude

Week 12

11/4

11/6

Week 13

11/11 **Veterans Day (no class)**

11/13 **Class canceled (due to conference)**

Early Christianity: New Testament Apocalypses

Collins: chapter 9 (pp 269-79), Epilogue

Reddish: "The Apocalypse of Peter"; "The Ascension of Isaiah"

Bible: Mark 13; Book of Revelation

Week 14

11/18

11/20 **WRITTEN EXERCISE 2** due in class

Week 15

11/25 **Class canceled (due to conference)**

11/27 **Thanksgiving (no class)**

Week 16

12/2

12/4 **EXAM 2**