

From Prophecy to the Apocalypse

Religion 226

Classroom: 105 Comenius Hall

Class Times: TTh 10:20-11:30am

E-mail: radine@moravian.edu

Professor: Jason Radine

Office: 108 Comenius Hall, ext. 1314

Office Hours: M-Th 2:30-3:30

and by appointment

Course Description

This course will explore the phenomenon of prophecy as a social institution as known in the ancient Near East as well as prophetic literature in biblical texts. The development of apocalyptic thought in Judaism and Christianity will be studied, up to and past the book of Revelation.

Course Goals

Prophetic and apocalyptic thought form a significant and influential part of western religion, and this course will examine them as both religious and literary phenomena. A taxonomy of different types of predictive beliefs will be developed, that will allow for a clearer understanding of the interaction of these types. Assumptions about prophecy and apocalyptic thought will be questioned, and the relationship between performed and literary prophecy will be given particular attention.

Assignments and Grading

Grading will be based on an average of three essay examinations and three 7 page research papers (due dates TBA). Plagiarized papers will result in a one-letter course grade reduction at least and a failing grade for the course overall at most. Attendance will be taken in each class day, and more than two unexcused absences will result in a 1/3 of a letter course grade reduction.

Assigned readings should be done before the class for which they are assigned. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling 610-861-1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

Required Reading

- 1) The New Revised Standard Version translation of the Bible, with Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books (Oxford University Press).
- 2) *A History of Prophecy in Israel, Revised and Enlarged*, by Joseph Blenkinsopp, Westminster John Knox Press.

- 3) *Apocalyptic Literature: A Reader*, edited by Mitchell G. Reddish, Hendrickson Publishers.
- 4) *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2nd ed., by John J. Collins, Eerdmans/Dove Publishers.
- 5) *Early Christian Apocalypticism: Genre and Social Setting*, Semeia 36, edited by Adela Yarbro Collins, Society of Biblical Literature.

Class Schedule

Ancient Near Eastern Background

Introduction, Magic and Divination August 28th

Ancient Near Eastern Background August 30th
Readings: Handouts, Blenkinsopp 3, 4, 5.

Biblical Prophecy

Prophecy in Biblical Narrative September 4th-6th
Readings: Blenkinsopp 5, 6, 1, 2, biblical passages TBA

Eighth-Century Prophecy September 11-20th
Readings: Blenkinsopp ch. 8-12; Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah 1-39.

No class on September 13th for Fall Convocation

Late-Monarchic Prophecy September 25th-27th
Readings: Blenkinsopp 13-15, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah

Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophecy October 2nd-11th
Readings: Blenkinsopp 16-24, Ezekiel, Isaiah 40-66, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Jonah

Prophecy Exam

Jewish Apocalypticism

Background and Genre October 16th-18th
Readings: J.J. Collins 1

Early Enochic Literature October 23rd-25th
Readings: J.J. Collins 2, Enoch readings from Reddish

Daniel October 30th-Nov 1st
Readings: J.J. Collins 3, Daniel

Related Genres and Qumran November 6th-8th
Readings: J.J. Collins 4, 5, Reddish: 2nd half of 2, all of 3.

Similitudes of Enoch and Other Works November 13th-15th
Readings: J.J. Collins 6-8; Reddish readings TBA

No class on November 20th due to Society of Biblical Literature conference

Jewish Apocalypticism Exam

Christian Apocalypticism

Jesus and Paul November 27th
Readings: J.J. Collins 9

Revelation, Apocalypse of John November 29th
Readings: J.J. Collins 9, Revelation, A.Y. Collins, Hellholm, Aune, Thompson.

Other Christian Apocalypses December 4th-6th
Readings: Reddish Part 3, Himmelfarb, Osiek, Schüssler-Fiorenza

Final Exam (Christian Apocalypticism) 1:30pm December 14th