

ICS Calendar Title: Birthpangs of the New Creation: Judgment Unto Salvation in the Book of Revelation

ICS Course Code: ICS 120809/220809 W15

Instructor: Dr. Nik Ansell

Term and Year: Fridays, 9:30am-12:30 pm, Winter 2015

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1. Course Description

In our culture, “apocalypse” typically refers to a cataclysmic, catastrophic ending, real or imagined. Often this meaning, in which fear eclipses hope, is traced back to the biblical tradition. But what if the book from which we derive the term, i.e. the “Apocalypse”—or “Revelation”—of John, refers less to the *end* of the world than to a *transition* between the two Ages? What if that transition is characterized as double-edged: as both ‘the death throes of the old world order’ and ‘the birthpangs of the new creation’? Attentive to the nature of apocalyptic discourse, this course will seek to develop a key area of systematic theology by exploring the topics of death, judgment, heaven, and hell—the ‘four last things’ of traditional eschatology—as they are portrayed in the book of Revelation. In allowing intertextual and intratextual webs of meaning to emerge, we will pay special attention to the way in which Old Testament echoes, together with the book’s own symbolic coherence and narrative logic, can open up new avenues for exegesis, and for theological reflection. The topic of Final Judgment will be a special focus. How is this to be conceived in the light of the apocalyptic transition? If the first reference to Babylon in the biblical canon, the Babel narrative of Gen 11, refers to a judgment that does not bring history to an end but opens it up once again to the dissemination motif of Gen 1:28, is it possible to detect a parallel ‘judgment unto salvation’ theme in the final book of the New Testament? Our discussions will explore the interface between biblical studies, the “theological interpretation of Scripture,” and contemporary eschatology. Familiarity with New Testament Greek is an advantage but is not a prerequisite.

2. Proposed Reading Schedule

week 1: (Jan 16) Please read the book of Revelation in a language/translation of your choice first, followed by Aune, *Revelation 1–5* (WBC 5A), Introduction secs. 1–2 on authorship and date (pp. xlvii–lxx). [Aune, 5A (vol 1 of 3), is in the stacks and reference section at Knox college; also at Regis, St. Michael's, Emmanuel, Trinity. Know your “fair dealing” copyright rights! Also on order at ICS and on sale at Crux.]

week 2: Aune (as above); Ansell, *Annihilation of Hell*, 391–421.

week 3: Rev 1:1–3:22 {occasional supplementary readings TBD}

week 4: Rev 4:1–7:17

week 5: Rev 8:1–11:19

week 6: Rev 12:1–14:5

week 7: Rev 14:6–16:19

week 8: Rev 16:19–19:4

week 9: Rev 19:5–20:15

week 10: Rev 21:1–22:21

week 11: Student presentations of research projects in process

week 12: Student presentations of research projects in process

week 13: Conclusions

3. Course Aims

1. deepened knowledge of the book of Revelation, including its intertextual and intratextual meaning
2. increased facility in relating biblical interpretation to theological reflection and vice versa
3. expanded understanding of key issues in eschatology

4. Description and Weighting of Elements to be Evaluated

Class participation: 20% (TST: 25%)--including familiarity with one significant commentary on Rev (each participant will utilize a different commentary in this context), the strengths and weaknesses of which you can refer to in class discussion.

Seminar leadership: 20% (TST: 25%)--including at least two presentations on readings (i.e., a specific section of (i) Rev [read by everyone; see schedule above], *plus* the relevant sections from the commentaries of (ii) Aune and (iii) Beale/McDonough [see required readings below]) accompanied by a 2–3pp analysis and discussion-starter distributed to the class.

Paper: 60% (TST: 50%)--on any topic/motif/biblical passage that is related to the course; the paper should focus on the textual exegesis and/or “reception history” of Rev.

5. Required Readings

(in addition to: the book of Revelation, in Greek or in a translation of your choice)

Nicholas Ansell, “Birthpangs of the New Creation,” in *The Annihilation of Hell: Universal Salvation and the Redemption of Time in the Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2013), 391–421 [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT821.3 .A67 2013]

———, “Hell: The Nemesis of Hope?” In *Her Gates Will Never Be Shut: Hope, Hell, and the New Jerusalem*, by Bradley Jersak (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009), 191–210 [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT836.3 .J47 2009]

David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5*. Word Biblical Commentary 52A (Dallas, TX: Word, 1997) [selections] [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: ON ORDER ; Knox Library: BS491.2 .W67 v.52A]

———, *Revelation 6–16*. Word Biblical Commentary 52B (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998) [selections] [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 2825.3 .A93 1998 ; Knox Library: BS491.2 .W67 v.52B]

———, *Revelation 17–22*. Word Biblical Commentary 52C (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998) [selections] [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 2825.3 .A95 1998 ; SMC Kelly Library: BS2825.3 .A95 1998]

Richard Bauckham, “Nero and the Beast,” in *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation*, by Richard Bauckham (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1993), 384–452 [Robarts Library: BS2825.2 .B385 1993]

G.K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999) [selections] [Knox College Library: BS2825.3 .B39 1999]

——— and Sean M. McDonough, “Revelation,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007), 1081–161 [selections] [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 511.3 .C653 2007 ; Robarts Library: BS511.3 .C653 2007X]

Richard S. Briggs, "The Book of Genesis," in *A Theological Introduction to the Pentateuch: Interpreting the Torah as Christian Scripture*, ed. Richard S. Briggs and Joel N. Lohr (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012), 19–50 [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: ON ORDER ; Knox Library: BS1225.52 .T54 2012]

John J. Collins, "Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre," in *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre*, ed. John J. Collins. *Semeia* 14 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979), 1–20 [UofT Libraries e-resource: <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/7753713>]

Martinus C. de Boer, "Paul, Theologian of God's Apocalypse," *Interpretation* 56, no. 1 (2002): 21–33 [UofT Libraries e-resource: <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/7720485>]

Austin Farrer, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* (Oxford University Press, 1964) [selections]
[Robarts Library: BS2825.3 .F3]

Edmondo F. Lupieri, *A Commentary on the Apocalypse of John*, trans. Maria Poggi Johnson and Adam Kamesar (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006) [selections] [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 2825.53 .A6613 2006 ; Knox Library: BS2825.53 .A6613 2006]

Stephen E. Fowl, *Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009) [ICS Library: ON ORDER]

David Smith, "What Hope After Babel? Diversity and Community in Gen 11:1–9, Exod 1:1–14, Zeph 3:1–13 and Acts 2:1–13," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 18:2 (1996): 169–91 [Knox Library: PER]

Arthur W. Wainwright, *Mysterious Apocalypse: Interpreting the Book of Revelation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2825.2 .W27 1993 ; Robarts Library: BS2825.2 .W27 1993]

N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*. Vol. 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (London: SPCK; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1992), 280–338 [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2398 .W75 N4 v.1]

6. Some Recommended Readings

Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 2000) [Robarts Library: BS2825.2 .B37 2000]

- Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) [Robarts Library: BS2825.2 .B387 1993]
- Alan James Beagley, *The 'Sitz im Leben' of the Apocalypse with Particular Reference to the Role of the Church's Enemies* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1987) [Knox Library: BS410 .Z7 v.50]
- G.K. Beale, *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 166 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998) [Knox Library: BS2825.2 .B424 1998]
- G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*. The New Century Bible Commentary, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978) [Kelly Library: BS2825.3 .B24 1981]
- John J. Collins, *Daniel: With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 1555.3 .C64 1984 ; Knox Library: BS1555.3 .C64 1984]
- , *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*. 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 646 .C65 1998 ; Knox Library: BS646 .C65 1998]
- Eugenio Corsini, *The Apocalypse: The Perennial Revelation of Jesus Christ*, ed. and trans. Francis J. Maloney. Good News Studies 5 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983) [Knox Library: BS2825.2 .C6613 1983]
- E. Earle Ellis, *The Making of the New Testament Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 208–37; [Robarts Library: BX2325 .E65 1999X]
- Jan Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and their Development*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 93 (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1994) [Knox Library: BS2825.6 .P72 F45 1994]
- Crispin H.T. Fletcher-Louis, "The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant: Mark 13:31 and Matthew 5:18," in *'The Reader Must Understand': Eschatology in Bible and Theology*, edited by K.E. Brower and M.W. Elliott (Leicester, UK: Apollos, 1997), 145–69
- J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 38 (New York: Doubleday, 1975) [Trinity Library: BS192.2 .A1 1964 G3 v.38]
- Kenneth L. Gentry, *Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1989) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 2825.2 .G46 1998]

- John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*. Word Biblical Commentary 30 (Dallas, TX: Word, 1989) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS1555.53 .G65]
- Phillip A. Harland, "Emperor Worship," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. Katherine Doob Sakenfeld (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2007), 2:255–57 [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS440 .N445 2006X v.2]
- Edith McEwan Humphrey, *The Ladies and the Cities: Transformation and Apocalyptic Identity in Joseph and Aseneth, 4 Ezra, the Apocalypse and the Shepherd of Hermas*. Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Series 17 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) [Robarts Library: BS2851 .H96 1995]
- Christopher Kelly, *The Roman Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) [UofT Libraries e-resources: <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/8717323>]
- Michael Lieb, Emma Mason, and Jonathan Roberts, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception History of the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS500 .O94 2011]
- Joseph L. Mangina, *Revelation*. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2010) [Trinity Library: BS2825.53 .M36 2010]
- John W. Marshall, *Parables of War: Reading John's Jewish Apocalypse*. Studies in Christianity and Judaism 10 (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001) [UofT Libraries e-resources: <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/8023013>]
- J. Webb Mealy, *After the Thousand Years: Resurrection and Judgment in Revelation 20*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 70 (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1992), [Knox Library: BS2825.2 .M43 1992]
- John A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1976) [Knox Library: BS2315.5 .R67 1976b]
- Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1982) [Knox Library: BS646 .R58 1982]
- , *Revelation* (London: Epworth, 1993) [Robarts Library: BS2824.3 .R68 1993]
- J. Stuart Russell, *The Parousia: The New Testament Doctrine of Our Lord's Second Coming* (1887; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999) [Robarts Library: BT885 .R87 1999]

Stephen S. Smalley, *The Revelation to John: A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Apocalypse* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 2825.53 .S63 2005 ; Regis Library: BS2825.53 .S63 2012]

———, *Thunder and Love: John's Revelation and John's Community* (Milton Keynes, UK: Nelson Word, 1994) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: ON ORDER ; Robarts Library: BS2825.3 .S58 1994]

Stone, Michael Edward. *Fourth Ezra: A Commentary on the Book of Fourth Ezra*. Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990) [Robarts Library: BS1715.3 .S76 1990]

Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalypics: A Study of the Most Notable Revelations of God and of Christ* (1898; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1988) [Emmanuel Library (Storage): DX40 .T279b 1898 edition]

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Book of Revelation: Justice and Judgment*. 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998) [Robarts Library: BS2825.2 .F52 1998]

Leonard L. Thompson, *The Book of Revelation: Apocalypse and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) [UofT Libraries e-resource: <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/8112196>]

Cornelis Vanderwaal, *Hal Lindsey and Biblical Prophecy*, trans. Theodore Plantinga (St. Catharines, ON: Paideia Press, 1978) [Knox Library: BS647 .V36]

Louis A. Vos, *The Synoptic Traditions in the Apocalypse* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1965) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS2825.2 .V6]

N.T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone* (London: SPCK, 2011) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS 2825.53 .W75 2011 ; Knox Library: BS2825.53 .W75 2011]

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Student Services as soon as possible.