

**Fall Term 2022 Course Syllabus**

**Sacred Texts 210**

**“Write to the Churches”:**

**An Introduction to Christian Apocalyptic Literature**

**Huron University College Land Acknowledgment**

Huron is situated on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Attawandaron, and Lenape peoples, whose sharing and stewardship of the land has been governed by the Dish with One Spoon treaty since time immemorial. We are guided by this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect. Huron University College acknowledges its past role in perpetuating colonial and exclusionary relations. Because religious and ecclesial institutions were instrumental in such relations, we consider it our particular responsibility as a Faculty of Theology to work towards justice and reconciliation.

**Course Dates:** From September 13th – November 1st

**Time:** Tuesdays from 7 – 9 P.M. (CT), 8 – 10 P.M. (ET)

**Delivery:** Hosted via Zoom

**Instructor:** The Rev. Dr. Justin Comber, PhD

**Contact:** jcomber@thorneloe.ca (519) 809-9452

**Course Description**

This course will examine the Later New Testament considering Jewish apocalyptic theology (including the letter to the Hebrews, the first and second letters of Peter, the letter of Jude, and John’s Apocalypse) in light of its history, function, and theology, focusing mainly on the interpretation and application of these five books.

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify many of the dangers encountered by the early Christian church.
2. Define “Apocalypse” as a type of ancient prophetic literature, and “apocalyptic” as a pattern of ideas and responses to power that permeate the later New Testament.
3. Interpret the conflicts, signs, and teachings of the later New Testament through its exhortations to faithfulness in spite of cost or sufferings because of the eschatological victory of Christ.
4. Embrace the hope, promise, and call to faithfulness of the Later New Testament and discuss these themes with others through preaching and teaching at home and in ministry.

**Required Texts**

The Principal Texts/Documents for this course will be:

Martin, Ralph P., and Peter H. Davids (eds). *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and its Developments*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1997.

English Bible. At least one modern text and translation of the Bible including the Apocrypha (excluding KJV, NKJV, ASV, or other derivatives) to be used for all in class reading and assignments. The NRSV is an excellent choice.

Readings will be taken from:

*First Enoch* *https://www.ccel.org/c/charles/otpseudepig/enoch/ENOCH\_1.HTM*

*Letter of Pliny to Trajan* *http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/pliny.html*

*1 Maccabees 1—2* (freely available online, or in the middle of many bibles).

Murphy, Frederick J. “Definitions and Origins,” In *Apocalypticism in the Bible and its World.*

**Course Outline/Plan**

**Week 1**

1. Introduction to Apocalyptic Theology and the literature of late second temple Judaism.
2. Apocalyptic thought and its influence on the Christian New Testament.
3. Please read Daniel 1-4, 6-7, 1 Maccabees 1–2, the Letter of Pliny to Trajan, “Definitions and Origins,” In *Apocalypticism,* and the article “Apocalyptic” 55–68 in Martin and Davids.

**Week 2**

1. Apocalyptic thought and the book of Hebrews.
2. Please read the books of Hebrews and James, and the articles “Hebrews” 587–99, “Roman Empire” 1059–63, “Social Setting” 1102–11, and “Apocalyptic” 55–68 in Martin and Davids.

**Week 3**

1. Apocalyptic thought and the book of James.
2. Please read the letter of James, and the articles “James” 545–61, “Jewish Christianity” 579–87, “Emperor Cult” 321–36, and “Persecution” 907–14 in Martin and Davids.

**Week 4**

1. Apocalyptic thought and the books of 1 and 2 Peter.
2. Please read 1 and 2 Peter, 1 Enoch 1–36, and the articles “1&2 Peter” 915–27, “Household Codes” 513–20, and “Apocryphal/Pseudepigraphal” 68–73 in Martin and Davids.

**Week 5**

1. Apocalyptic thought in the book of Jude and Revelation
2. Please read The letter of Jude, Revelation 1--8, and the articles “Jude” 611–21, and “Revelation” 1025–38, “ in Martin and Davids.

**Week 6**

1. Apocalyptic thought in the book of Revelation cont.
2. Please read Revelation 9—14 and the articles Tribulation/Messianic Woes” 1179–82, and “Heaven, New Heaven” 439–43 in Martin and Davids.

**Week 7**

1. Apocalyptic thought in the book of Revelation cont.
2. Please read Revelation 15--22

**Week 8**

1. Recap and Summary.

**Method of Evaluation and Criteria for Grading** (only for students choosing to be evaluated for full course credit)

Two document studies (500 words each) and a Final Essay (1000 words) will be completed by each student seeking evaluation for full LTh credit.

1. Class Engagement/Participation – 20%

2. Document Study – 20%

3. Document Study – 20%

4. Final Essay – 40%

**Huron Grade Descriptors**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  A+   |  90-100    |  One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level |
|  A |  80-89   |  Superior work which is clearly above average |
|  B |  70-79 |  Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory |
|  C |  60-69 |  Competent work, meeting requirements |
|  D   |  50-59 |  Fair work, minimally acceptable |
|  F |  below 50 |  Fail |

**Student Code of Conduct**

Membership in the community of Huron University College and Western University implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work, and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. While in the physical or online classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Please review the Student Code of Conduct at: https://huronatwestern.ca/sites/default/files/Res%20Life/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Revised%20September%202019.pdf.

**Statement on the Recording of Class Activities**

Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student’s own private use.

Online courses within the Licentiate in Theology Program are recorded for student engagement purposes. These recording are only used by the registered students of the class and made available through a restricted video hosting site to respect both privacy and intellectual property. Should a student be uncomfortable with this practice, they can contact the course instructor or the LTh Program Director, Dr. Grayhame Bowcott at grayhame.bowcott@huron.uwo.ca

**Support Services**

For advice on course selections, degree requirements, and for assistance with requests for medical accommodation, students should contact the LTh Program Director, Dr. Grayhame Bowcott at grayhame.bowcott@huron.uwo.ca.



THIS COURSE HAS BEEN [NOT YET BEEN] APPROVED BY HURON’S FACULTY OF THEOLOGY COMMITTEE

FOR THE SPRING TERM OF THE LTH PROGRAM, 2022.