



## Course Syllabus - DRAFT

# KNB 2362HF – You, Your Congregation, & the End of the World: Reclaiming Biblical Apocalyptic for the Church

Knox College, Toronto School of Theology, Fall 2017

For an online description of this course, click [here](#).

## Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Brian P. Irwin, Associate Professor of Old Testament/Hebrew Scripture  
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## Course Identification

Course Number: KNB2362HF  
Course Format: In-class  
Course Name: You, Your Congregation, & the End of the World: Reclaiming Biblical Apocalyptic for the Church  
Course Location: Knox College, Room TBA  
Class Times: Class: Mondays, 11:00 am–1:00 pm  
Prerequisites: None

## A. Course Description and Student Learning Goals

This course will examine popular understandings of end time events and the dispensationalist interpretation that underlies them. It will also provide an overview of biblical apocalyptic texts such as Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation to provide an understanding of what they meant in their original context, how they have been received since, and how they might be applied to the life of the church today.

The Learning Goals listed below relate to the following areas:

- a) Understanding of Area Content (**UAC**)
- b) General Academic Skills (**GAS**)
- c) Ministerial and Public Leadership (**MPL**)
- d) Personal and Spiritual Formation (**PSF**)

Upon successfully completing this course, the student will:

- have a basic understanding of the dispensationalist movement and the way in which it interprets biblical apocalyptic literature (**UAC, PSF**)
- have a thorough knowledge of the content and message of the books of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation as well as the historical background necessary for understanding each book (**UAC**)
- be able to exercise the exegetical skills necessary for interpreting biblical apocalyptic effectively and faithfully for today (**MPL**)
- be able to demonstrate the research and writing skills necessary for graduate-level Old Testament study (**GAS**)

## B. Required Textbooks

Required texts are available at Crux Theological Books located at Wycliffe College.

- A modern translation of the Bible (e.g. NRSV, RSV, TNIV, NIV, NJPS, NET, or NASB). The NET Bible offers extensive textual notes and is available for use online or as a free download from [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org). The NJPS (Tanakh) is a translation of the Hebrew Bible by the best in Jewish Biblical scholarship. As such, it provides a helpful complement to any of the standard Christian translations.
- Cook, Stephen L. *The Apocalyptic Literature*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003.
- Lindsey, Hal, and C.C. Carlson. *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1973.
- LaHaye, Tim, and Jerry B. Jenkins. *Left Behind: A Novel of the Earth's Last Days*, Left Behind. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1989.
- Wald, Oletta. *The New Joy of Discovery in Bible Study*. Revised ed. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2002.
- Some course material may be distributed online in PDF format. Students should, therefore, download Adobe Acrobat Reader, a utility that enables PCs to read PDF files. Adobe Acrobat Reader is available as a free download from the Adobe web-site ([www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)).

## C. Course Requirements and Assignments

The class consists of one two-hour lecture per week. The assignments and their weights are as follows:

- **Prophecy Preacher review (3–5 pages)(20%)**. View one of the designated episodes of the TV programme *Jack van Impe Presents* (available free for viewing online at: [www.jvim.org](http://www.jvim.org)) and carefully note the scripture passages used. Examine the original literary and historical context of at least three passages and discuss whether Van Impe uses and applies them appropriately or inappropriately. Evaluation will be based on written clarity, degree of insight, and ability to follow assignment instructions. Due session 4.
- **Inductive Study (10–12 pages)(35%)**. Students shall complete a study of the book of Revelation that focuses on structure, theme, and meaning in the book. Evaluation will be based on written clarity, degree of insight, literary awareness and understanding of the text, and ability to follow assignment instructions. A completed Assignment Checklist (see Syllabus Supplement) must accompany your final paper. *Your paper must be submitted both in paper and electronic form*. Due session 7. *This study revolves around your direct interaction with the text. Students are therefore required to avoid consulting secondary literature in the preparation of this assignment. If you have questions as to what is allowed, please consult the instructor*. This assignment must be submitted to Turnitin.com. Details to follow in class.
- **Final Paper (12–15 pages)(35%)**. Choose *one* of the following assignments.
  - 1) Focusing on a specific passage chosen in consultation with the instructor, discuss how the Book of Revelation appropriates material from the Old Testament and the ancient world. How does the author of Revelation use this material and to what end? How would the final result have been received by the original audience of Revelation?
  - 2) Examine biblical evidence for and against the Rapture and discuss the ramifications of each for the work of the church in the world.
  - 3) Beginning with your own exegesis, examine Jesus' message in Matthew 24, discuss its meaning, and suggest options for preaching and teaching.
  - 4) Choose one interpreter each from the periods of, 1) the early church or medieval eras, 2) the period of the reformation, and 3) the period from 1800 to 1946 and examine their understanding of the identity of the Antichrist. How has the context of selected interpreters affected how they have understood this figure?

Evaluation will be based on written clarity, degree of insight, literary awareness and understanding of the text, effective use of secondary sources, and ability to follow assignment instructions. A completed Assignment Checklist (see Syllabus Supplement) must accompany your final paper. *Your paper must be submitted both in paper and electronic form*. Due session 12. This assignment must be submitted to Turnitin.com. Details to follow in class.

- **Reading and Participation (10%).** Students shall be required to submit a form indicating what portion of the required readings they have completed. This element will also take into account factors such as attendance and participation in class discussions. Due session 12.

#### D. Course Policies

Policies for courses are contained in the *TST Basic Degree Handbook* and the *Knox Student Handbook*. See further, the *Syllabus Supplement* available from the class Blackboard page. In particular, please note the following:

1. **E-mail:** Email correspondence related to the course will be sent to *UTmail addresses only*. All students are required to have a University of Toronto email address and to check their UTmail account regularly for messages relating to class. Students should not attempt to forward UTmail messages to gmail.com, yahoo.com, or similar accounts as such messages can be rejected as spam. All college-related correspondence should be sent from a UTmail address. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses. Students must set up their utoronto email address as it is entered in the ACORN system. Information regarding UTORid and UTmail is available at <http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca/>. For help with these and other technological issues the following options are available: email [help.desk@utoronto.ca](mailto:help.desk@utoronto.ca); phone 416-978-HELP; or visit the Help Desk at the Information Commons at Robarts Library.
2. **Attendance:** 80% attendance at a lecture course is required for credit.
3. **Completion of Course work:** students are expected to submit assignments by the date given in the course outline. The penalty for late work is 4% deducted per week late (2% off per half week). All course work (including any late work) must be completed by the end of term, the last day of exams. Students who experience exceptional circumstances (e.g., ongoing or debilitating medical issues, bereavement, personal calamity etc.) should inform the instructor as soon as possible and should consult with their faculty advisor or the Director of Academic Programmes to request an extension beyond the end of term (i.e., "Standing Deferred" or "SDF" status). The SDF, if approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. Such a request must be made as soon as possible, since an SDF must be authorised by the Knox Basic Degree Advisory Committee and the Faculty, which meet according to a fixed schedule. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.
4. **Style Guidelines for Papers:** see Knox "Style Manual" booklet and *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian.
5. **Email assignments:** Papers and assignments are not accepted by fax or e-mail, except in rare cases by prior permission of the instructor.
6. **Plagiarism Policy:** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to the Knox Director of Academic Programmes. For details, see the *TST Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks>) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* ([http://www.adfg.utoronto.ca/Assets/ADFG+Digital+Assets/Code+of+Behaviour+on+Academic+Matters+\\$!5bAugust+18\\$!2c+1995\\$!5d+Updated+July+1\\$!2c+2016.pdf](http://www.adfg.utoronto.ca/Assets/ADFG+Digital+Assets/Code+of+Behaviour+on+Academic+Matters+$!5bAugust+18$!2c+1995$!5d+Updated+July+1$!2c+2016.pdf)). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges [http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).
7. **Use of Turnitin.com.** Where specified in the syllabus, students will be required to submit their course essays or other major written assignments to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site. Students who have *principled objections* to the use of this service

should see the course instructor during the *first two weeks of the course* to arrange an alternative. Typically, this will involve submitting drafts of the assignment at regular intervals throughout the semester. If one is using the Turnitin service, then during the first week of the course, students should look at the “Set Up” and “Originality Check” instructions found at the following link: [www.turnitin.com/en\\_us/training/student-training](http://www.turnitin.com/en_us/training/student-training), and follow the instructions to create a user profile. The course ID and password will be distributed to students via Blackboard during the first week of the course.

- 8. **Use of Technology in Class.** Laptops and other computing devices may be used in the classroom for note-taking purposes only. The use of the internet is not permitted while class is in session unless it is part of a specific class activity. Students wishing to text message, search for images, fact check etc. should do so during the break or outside of class.

Much of the learning that goes on in the classroom is founded upon mutual disclosure that takes place between the instructor and the student and between students. Parties outside of that learning community have not committed themselves to this relationship of trust. For this and other reasons, permission to record lectures in audio format is granted for use by registered students only. Video recording is not permitted without the written permission of the instructor. *Recordings and notes of class lectures may not be electronically reproduced, posted, or distributed without the written permission of the instructor.*

- 9. **Logging onto your Blackboard Course.** For information on how to access this course on Blackboard, and how to perform basic Blackboard tasks do the following:
  - a) Go to <http://portal.utoronto.ca/> and click on the Log-in to the Portal button.
  - b) Enter your UTORid and password
  - c) You should see this course listed on this page.

Should you encounter difficulties accessing Blackboard, please visit: <http://help.ic.utoronto.ca/category/5/blackboard-portal.html>

Note also the other links for help with “Using the Discussion Board,” “Handing in an Assignment,” “Joining a Group,” FAQ’s, etc.

- 10. **Consultation:** Please do not hesitate to consult with the instructor about any questions you may have.

**E. Weekly Schedule of Classes, Readings & Assignments**

Session 1    Sept. 11    COURSE INTRODUCTION ☞ A SHORT HISTORY OF FAILED END TIMES SPECULATION

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 Session 2    Sept. 18    WHO’S WHO IN AMERICAN TV PROPHECY ☞ LEFT BEHIND: A POPULAR VIEW OF THE LAST DAYS



Syllabus and Syllabus Supplement  
*The Late Great Planet Earth* (complete by session 4)  
*Left Behind* (read at your own pace; complete by session 12)

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 Session 3    Sept. 25    DISPENSATIONALISM: BELIEF & BEHAVIOUR, PART 1

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 Session 4    Oct. 2    DISPENSATIONALISM: BELIEF & BEHAVIOUR, PART 2  
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**Prophecy Preacher Review due**



Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature*, chapter 1

**Oct. 9      THANKSGIVING MONDAY ≠ NO CLASS MEETING**

Session 5    Oct. 16    INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL APOCALYPTIC



Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature*, chapter 2

**Oct. 23      BASIC DEGREE READING WEEK ≠ NO CLASS MEETING**

Session 6    Oct. 30    EZEKIEL, PART 1



Ezekiel 1–10, 36–48  
Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature*, chapter 3

Session 7    Nov. 6    EZEKIEL, PART 2



**Revelation Inductive Study due**



Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature*, chapter 5

Session 8    Nov. 13    DANIEL, PART 1



Daniel 1–12  
Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature*, chapter 6

Session 9    Nov. 20    DANIEL, PART 2



Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature*, chapter 7

Session 10   Nov. 27    REVELATION, PART 1



Revelation 1–22  
Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature*, chapter 8

**Additional Resources**

DeSilva, David A. *Unholy Allegiances: Heeding Revelation's Warning*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013.

Keener, Craig S. *Revelation*. The NIV Application Commentary, Edited by Terry Muck. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.

Session 11    Dec. 4    REVELATION, PART 2



Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature*, chapter 9

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 Session 12 Dec. 11 REVELATION, PART 3 ☞ INTERPRETING & APPLYING APOCALYPTIC FOR TODAY



**Final Paper and Readings Completed List due**

## F. Select Bibliography

Abu-Akel, Fahed. "The Danger of Christian Zionism in the US." *Journal for Preachers* 29, no. 1 (2005): 41-43.

Baxter, M. *Louis Napoleon, the Destined Monarch of the World and Personal Antichrist: Foreshown in Prophecy to Confirm a Seven Years' Covenant with the Jews About, or Soon after 1863, and Then ... Subsequently to Become Completely Supreme over England and Most of America and All Christendom, and Fiercely to Persecute Christians During the Latter Half of the Seven Years until He Finally Perishes at the Descent of Christ at the Battle of Armageddon, About or Soon after 1870.* 3rd ed. Philadelphia, PA: W.S. & A. Martien, 1863. (<http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/193469>)

Beale, G. K. *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John.* Lanham, MD; New York, NY; London: University Press of America, 1984.

Brettler, Marc Z. *How to Read the Bible.* Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2005.

Charlesworth, James H. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.* 2 vols. Vol. 1: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983.

Christman, Angela Russell. "'What Did Ezekiel See?': Patristic Exegesis of Ezekiel 1 and Debates About God's Incomprehensibility." *Pro Ecclesia* 8 (1999): 338–63.

Collins, John J. *Daniel: With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature.* Edited by Rolf Knierim and Gene M Tucker, The Forms of Old Testament Literature. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984.

Collins, John J. *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998.

Cook, Stephen L. *The Apocalyptic Literature.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003

Darby, John Nelson. *Writings.* (<http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/darby/index.html>)

Davies, Philip R. "Eschatology in the Book of Daniel." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 17 (1980): 33–53.

Dimant, Devorah. "The Apocalyptic Interpretation of Ezekiel at Qumran." In *Messiah and Christos*, 31–51. Tübingen: Mohr, 1992.

Emmerson, Richard K., and Ronald B. Herzman. *The Apocalyptic Imagination in Medieval Literature.* Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992.

Green, Joel B. *How to Read Prophecy.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1984.

Hanson, Paul D. *Old Testament Apocalyptic.* Edited by Lloyd R Bailey and Victor P Furnish, Interpreting Biblical Texts. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1987.

Hengstenberg, E. W. *The Prophecies of the Prophet Ezekiel Elucidated.* Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1869.

- Irwin, Brian P. "Molek Imagery and the Slaughter of Gog in Ezekiel 38 and 39." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 65 (1995): 93–112.
- Irwin, Brian P. "The Book of Daniel and the Roots of New Testament Mission." In *Christian Mission: Old Testament Foundations and New Testament Developments*, edited by Stanley E. Porter and Cynthia Long Westfall, 42–63. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010.
- Jastrow, M. "Notes on Meshech and Tubal." *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 13 (1896): 217.
- Jeffrey, Grant R. *Russia's Secret Agenda*. Toronto, ON: Frontier Research.
- Jonaitis, Dorothy. *Unmasking Apocalyptic Texts: A Guide to Preaching and Teaching*. New York, NY: Paulist, 2005.
- Jones, Larry Paul, and Jerry L. Sumney. *Preaching Apocalyptic Texts*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 1999.
- Lindsey, Hal, and C.C. Carlson. *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1973.
- Martens, Elmer A. "Ezekiel's Contribution to a Biblical Theology of Mission." *Direction* 28, no. 1 (1999): 75–87.
- Reddish, Mitchell G., ed. *Apocalyptic Literature: A Reader*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995.
- Rennie, Ian S. "Nineteenth-Century Roots of Contemporary Prophetic Interpretation." In *Dreams, Visions and Oracles*, 41–59. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977.
- Roberts, J. J. M. "A Christian Perspective on Prophetic Prediction." *Interpretation* 33 (1979): 240–53.
- Schoeni, Marc. "The Roots of Christian Zionism." *Theological Review* 26, no. 1 (2005): 3–38.
- Seitz, Christopher R. "Old Testament Apocalyptic." *Evangel* 17, no. 3 (1999): 74–76.
- Seitz, Christopher R. "Ezekiel 37:1–14." *Interpretation* 46, no. 1 (1992): 53–56.
- Sheppard, Gerald T., and Larry Jones. "On Reagan, Prophecy and Nuclear War." *Old Westbury Review* 2 (1986): 9–22.
- Sheppard, Gerald T. "Prophecy: An Overview." In *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Lindsay Jones, 7423–29. Farmington Hills, MI: Thomson Gale, 2005.
- Tanner, J. Paul. "Rethinking Ezekiel's Invasion by Gog." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 39 (1996): 29–45.
- Walters, Stanley D. "The End (of What) Is at Hand?" *Toronto Journal of Theology* 2, no. 1 (1986): 23–46.
- Walters, Stanley D. "The World Will End in 1919: Daniel among the Victorians." *Asbury Theological Journal* 44 (1989): 29–50.
- Walvoord, John F. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: A Commentary*. Chicago, IL: Moody, 1966.
- Walvoord, John F. *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*. Chicago, IL: Moody, 1971.
- Yamauchi, Edwin M. "Meshech, Tubal, and Company." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 19 (1976): 239–47.