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 5 page papers. 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.

Required Reading


**Class Schedule**

**Ancient Near Eastern Background**

Introduction, Magic and Divination

January 19th

Ancient Near Eastern Background

January 21st

*Readings*: Handouts, Blenkinsopp 3, 4, 5.

**Biblical Prophecy**

Prophecy in Biblical Narrative

January 26th – 28th

*Readings*: Blenkinsopp 5, 6, 1, 2, biblical passages TBA

Eighth-Century Prophecy

February 2nd – 4th

*Readings*: Blenkinsopp ch. 8-12; Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah 1–39.

Late-Monarchic Prophecy

February 9th – 11th

*Readings*: Blenkinsopp 13–15, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah

Exilic Prophecy

February 16th – 18th


Post-Exilic Prophecy

February 23rd – 25th

*Readings*: Blenkinsopp 20–24, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Jonah

**Jewish Apocalypticism**

Background and Genre

March 2nd – 4th

*Readings*: J.J. Collins 1

Early Enochic Literature

March 16th – 18th

*Readings*: J.J. Collins 2, Enoch readings from Reddish

Daniel

March 23rd – 25th

*Readings*: J.J. Collins 3, Daniel

Related Genres and Qumran

March 30th – April 1st

*Readings*: J.J. Collins 4, 5, Reddish: 2nd half of 2, all of 3.

Similitudes of Enoch and Other Works

April 6 – 8th

*Readings*: J.J. Collins 6–8; Reddish readings TBA
Christian Apocalypticism

Jesus and Paul

Readings: J.J. Collins 9

Revelation, Apocalypse of John


Other Christian Apocalypses

Readings: Reddish Part 3, Himmelfarb, Osiek, Schüssler-Fiorenza

Final Exam

1:30pm

May 7th