

Course Profile

Course # and Title: RHS/RTH 601 Eschatology and Apocalyptic: GBS/NT, Advanced Exegesis, and GTS
Instructor: Barbara Rosing & Vitor Westhelle
Semester/Year: Fall 2016

Course Rationale and Description
(Why do we offer this course? Which of LSTC’s degree program learning outcomes does it address?):

What one thinks about what “end” means is formative for how one lives in the interim, or how one lives implies a posture toward one’s understanding of the “end.” This seminar will examine the biblical understanding of the eschaton and its use and abuse in the tradition, which has expressed it in a spectrum that goes from an eternal presence to evolutionary model of perpetuity, and all variations in between. Examined in particular will be the diversity of New Testament eschatologies and their implications, the role of apocalyptic representations of the end in several dimensions: personal/physical (question of the ends of the body and soul: racial and sexual identities, etc.), political and economic (question of the ends of the empire and the market: migration, exile, etc.), and cosmic (question of the ends of nature: ecology, limits of sustainable resources, etc.)

This course addresses all of the learning outcomes in the Th.M. and Ph.D. programs and outcomes 2 and 4 for those M.Div. students taking the course as Advanced Exegesis.

Course Learning Outcomes (Learners will be able to):
(What difference will this course make to students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practices?)

The focus will be on exploring the main themes of Christian eschatology; analyzing trajectories of interpretation in the history of New Testament eschatologies in Christian history; and developing theological criteria for analyzing and assessing implications of apocalyptic and eschatological options present in culture and used to buttress ideological agendas. Biblical students taking this seminar for GBS credit will develop their exegetical and Greek language skills in a close reading of New Testament texts each week. Theology students taking this seminar for GTS credit will hone skills to relate biblical eschatology with historically developed options and contemporary prospects.

Learners will be able to:
• articulate the importance of eschatology and apocalyptic to biblical thought and Christian history;
• consider the range of New Testament eschatologies in light of Jewish/Hebrew Bible traditions and Greco-Roman and Jewish eschatologies, and their competing claims and trajectories;
• critically evaluate the methodologies of several recent treatments of eschatology in New Testament theology (Schweitzer, Kasemann, Borg, Horsley, etc.) and systematic theology (Bultmann, Cullmann, Moltmann, Sauter, etc.), as well as eco-theology (Conradie) and develop criteria for formulating eschatological arguments;
• reflect theologically on the implications of eschatology for one’s personal life, one’s public existence, and their cosmic import for the care of creation.

Strategies for Learning (How shall we go about achieving these outcomes?):
Lectures by the instructor will serve as general introductions for the topics covered in each session, and in the readings. The remaining time will be spent in student’s presentations followed by seminar discussion. Presentations and written work will be required.

**Assessment** (How shall we know if we—students and instructors—have been successful in achieving the outcomes?):

- Regular attendance at seminars.
- Weekly reading of the assigned material and active class participation and peer engagement.
- At least one class session presentation and leading discussion of an assigned topic.

Because the course is a seminar focused on analysis by class members, preparation for class is essential. The value of the seminar to all will be directly dependent on the quality of the preparation which each of the class members brings to class. A set of readings in the biblical text and in secondary sources is assigned for each class session. (For New Testament GBS students each class will also include Greek translation, prepared in advance.)

**Writing Requirements:**
One longer, 15- to 20-page research paper, to be distributed in advance to all seminar members for class discussion in the second half of the semester (topic to be chosen in consultation with instructors). Two short papers:

- 1) A 2-3 page “comment paper” summarizing and responding to one or more readings for one day, to be distributed in advance for class discussion that day;
- 2) response paper to a colleague’s seminar paper;

Late Paper Policy: Given the seminar structure of the course, NO late papers permitted.

**Bibliography:** (Preliminary; list subject to change; please do not purchase books yet; we are still negotiating with publishers to try to lower the price for some texts; or the list will change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>ISBN# (Required)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Rapture Exposed: The Message of Hope in the Book of Revelation</em></td>
<td>Barbara Rossing</td>
<td>978-0-8133-9156-4</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>God Will Be All In All: The Eschatology of Jurgen Molmann</em></td>
<td>Richard Bauckham, ed.</td>
<td>978-08006-3296-6</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Oxford Handbook of Eschatology.</em></td>
<td>Jerry Walls, ed.</td>
<td>978-0195170498</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Hope for the Earth</em></td>
<td>Ernst Conrading</td>
<td>978-1597522090</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Prophet Jesus and the Renewal of Israel: Moving Beyond a Diversionary Debate</em></td>
<td>Richard Horsley</td>
<td>978-0-8028-6807-7</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>What Dare we Hope? Reconsidering Eschatology</em></td>
<td>Gerhard Sauter</td>
<td>1-56338-271-7</td>
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<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revelation as History*</td>
<td>Wolfhart Pannenberg, ed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipating God’s New Creation: Essays in Honor of Ted Peters*</td>
<td>Carol Jacobson &amp; Prior Adam, eds.</td>
<td>978-1-942304-12-8</td>
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* indicates that only selected pages of the work are assigned.

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