

## Apocalyptic Literature A Reader

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approvingly (The Shepherd of Hermas being a prime example).

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### Apocalyptic Literature A Reader

Apocalyptic literature is a genre of prophetic writing that developed in post-Exilic Jewish culture and was popular among millennialist early Christians. Apocalypse (ἀποκάλυψις, apokálypsis) is a Greek word meaning "revelation", "an unveiling or unfolding of

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things not previously known and which could not be known apart from the unveiling".. As a genre, apocalyptic literature ...

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Originally published: Nashville: Abington Press, c1990.

Biblical texts create worlds of meaning and invite readers to enter them. When readers enter such textual worlds, which are strange and complex, they are confronted with theological claims. With this in mind, the purpose of the IBT series is to help serious readers in their experience of reading and interpreting by providing guides for their journeys into textual worlds. The focus of the series is not so much on the world behind the text as on the worlds created by the texts in their engagement with readers. Nowhere is the world of the biblical text stranger than in the apocalyptic literature of both the Old and New Testaments. In this volume, Stephen Cook makes the puzzling visions and symbols of the biblical apocalyptic literature intelligible to modern readers. He begins with definitions of apocalypticism and apocalyptic literature and introduces the various scholarly approaches to and issues for our understanding of the text. Cook introduces the reader to the social and historical worlds of the

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apocalyptic groups that gave rise to such literature and leads the reader into a better appreciation and understanding of the theological import of biblical apocalyptic literature. In the second major section of the book, Cook guides the reader through specific examples of the Bible's apocalyptic literature. He addresses both the best-known examples (the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation) and other important but lesser known examples (Zechariah and some words of Jesus and Paul).

Carey presents an introduction to the elements of apocalyptic discourse in the Hebrew Bible, the intertestamental texts of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and the Jewish and Christian apocalyptic texts. He seeks to help modern readers perplexed by the rampant and somewhat outrageous depiction and interpretation of apocalyptic literature to see apocalyptic discourse as a flexible set of resources that early Jews and Christians could employ for a variety of persuasive tasks. Carey examines each of the literary works that exhibit apocalyptic discourse. He briefly introduces the date and language of each text and shows its basic contents. Then he examines the particular topics and purposes of the work. Carey concludes by showing a way to read the particular example of apocalyptic discourse as a whole in its own setting with its own

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purposes. Carey invokes discourse as a category of study in an attempt to bring together the literary, ideological, and social dimensions of apocalyptic language. He sees the genius of apocalyptic discourse in its ability to bring its audience into otherwise inaccessible mysteries concerning the future and the heavenly realms. As theology, apocalyptic discourse engages life's greatest questions—the nature of God, the desire for justice, and the frustrations of human finitude. As poetry, it expresses the theological imagination in vivid symbols and conventional literary forms.

The book of Revelation seems to provoke two responses; obsession or terror. For some, the book is a playground they can never leave, as they find speculative theories about the end of the world and Christ's second coming. At the other extreme are those so afraid of Revelation's signs and symbols that they decide to avoid the book entirely. *Understanding Apocalyptic Literature: A Guide to the Book of Revelation* charts a different course. While Revelation is an unusual book for today's reader, it was not that different from other apocalyptic works circulating in the New Testament times. An understanding of such material is foundational to approaching Revelation as its first readers did. Insight into the apocalyptic genre helps us realize why books like Revelation were written, what



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they were (and were not) meant to do, and what such works hoped to accomplish. That is this book's goal: to help you read Revelation as the first century disciples did. Long ago, the inspired message of Revelation fueled its original readers' commitment, zeal and perseverance. A better understanding of how apocalyptic literature works can help Revelation do the very same for you today.

The Apocalyptic Imagination by John Collins is one of the most widely praised studies of Jewish apocalyptic literature ever written. This second edition represents a complete rewriting and a new chapter on the Dead Sea Scrolls.h

One of the most widely praised studies of Jewish apocalyptic literature ever written, The Apocalyptic Imagination by John J. Collins has served for over thirty years as a helpful, relevant, comprehensive survey of the apocalyptic literary genre. After an initial overview of things apocalyptic, Collins proceeds to deal with individual apocalyptic texts – the early Enoch literature, the book of Daniel, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and others – concluding with an examination of apocalypticism in early Christianity. Collins has updated this third edition throughout to account for the recent profusion of studies germane to ancient Jewish apocalypticism, and he

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has also substantially revised and updated the bibliography.

A thematic and phenomenological exploration of apocalypticism in the Judaic and Christian traditions.

"An appreciation for the rich diversity of literary genres in Scripture is one of the positive features of evangelical scholarship in recent decades." –David M. Howard Jr., series editor At one time, Old Testament apocalyptic literature was relegated to the more obscure reaches of biblical scholarship, acceptable to occasionally refer to, but too thorny to delve into deeply. However, in recent decades it has moved to the forefront of research. The rich veins of insight to be mined in the book of Daniel and other apocalyptic texts are being rediscovered. Richard A. Taylor has crafted a handbook to explore those riches and uncover a way to understand apocalyptic literature more fully. Taylor begins with a helpful introduction to the genre; surveys the purpose, message, and primary themes of Old Testament apocalyptic literature; and then discusses critical questions and key works for further study. He also provides guidelines for interpreting apocalyptic texts, followed by Old Testament passages that serve to illustrate those guidelines. While primarily written for pastors and graduate students, *Interpreting*

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Apocalyptic Literature is nonetheless accessible to those who simply want to study the texts more deeply than previously possible.

Examines the varied, enormously sophisticated contents of the Bible and sees how certain Western authors were inspired by them.

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