



School of Theology & Christian Ministry

BIB 3065 Apocalyptic Literature: Daniel, Revelation, and their Interpretation

3 Units

Fall 2023

Meeting days/times: MW 1:30 pm – 2:45 pm

Meeting location: Rohr Hall (RH) 112

Final Exam: Monday, 12/11, 1:30 – 4:00 pm

Instructor title and name:	Dr Stephanie Smith Matthews
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PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description

A study that focuses on the two apocalyptic texts within the Christian canon, Daniel and Revelation, with reference to the cultural environment and noncanonical apocalypses that facilitate responsible interpretation. This complex collection of Jewish and Christian literature utilizes rich, multi-layered imagery to convey the mysterious ways of God in times of trial.

Course Learning Outcomes

The student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

1. Describe the themes and content of Daniel and Revelation in their historical and canonical context
2. Analyze and engage the historical, symbolic, and theological world of the focal biblical texts
3. Articulate historic interpretations and applications of apocalyptic literature within Jewish and Christian traditions, and
4. Interpret key messages for a contemporary audience, particularly church communities.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

1. Gorman, Michael J. *Reading Revelation Responsibly: uncivil worship and witness: following the Lamb into the New Creation*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011.
2. A study Bible of the student's choice to bring to class.
3. Additional reading and online materials provided on Canvas.

Assessment and Grading

Grade categories will be weighted as follows:

Weekly Homework (35%)

Group Unit Assignments (15%)

Biblical Exegesis (20%). This category includes the Scholarly Articles Summary and Exegesis First Draft.

Final Project (30%). The final project will consist of a portfolio of several parts:

Exegesis First Draft

Exegesis Final (Revised) Paper

Free-Format component of exegesis

In-class Presentation

Descriptions of each assignment group may be found under “Assignments at a Glance” at the end of this syllabus and in Canvas.

Grades will be based on the following:

Sample Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In [class name], all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include discussions of the afterlife, methods of biblical interpretation, and violent imagery as it appears in the Bible. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of biblical studies, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In Apocalyptic Literature, we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include violent imagery and threats of violence. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of biblical studies and their interpretation, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any

change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski) is not permitted, and use of these tools will be treated as plagiarism.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the school urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings. Thus, terms like “man” or “mankind” or the pronoun “he,” should not be used to refer to all humans. Instead “people,” “humanity,” “humans,” and “he or she” better acknowledge women as full persons.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

Assignments At-A-Glance

Weekly Homework (35%). The Bible is a primary text for this course. *Please have your Bible at hand for our class sessions.* All readings are required. *A significant part of the student's grade comes from **weekly** homework and/or quizzes over the assigned reading material.* These will be due once a week, usually on **Mondays**. Students completing 11 assignments may drop their lowest score; students completing 12 may drop the two lowest scores. Class preparation for Wednesdays is required and will inform our class discussions. (CLO #

Group Unit Assignments (15%). Students will regularly engage in small groups to facilitate discussion and processing of course material. At the end of each Module, you will be asked to submit a short assignment which you will begin in class. These assignments will require summation and creative application of the learning material from that Module. (CLO #)

Biblical Exegesis (20%). The major project for this course will be for each student to write a biblical exegesis paper focused on a particular passage (approximately 10 verses) of apocalyptic literature from either the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament or the New Testament. Students will complete assignments throughout the semester, culminating in a final project portfolio (see below). For the Scholarly Articles Summary the student will identify and read 8-10 scholarly articles, commentary sections, or book chapters that pertain to their chosen biblical passage. For each source, the student will provide properly-formatted bibliographic information (MLA, Chicago, or SBL) and a paragraph explanation of the source's coverage, argument(s), and potential usefulness for the project. The Exegesis First Draft is a completed 8-10 page paper (double spaced, 1-inch margins, based on 12-point Times New Roman font) with appropriate citations. Full instruction sheet and rubric may be found in Cavnas.

Final Project (30%). The final project will consist of a portfolio of several parts:

Exegesis First Draft

Exegesis Final (Revised) Paper

Free-Format component of exegesis

In-class Presentation. An in-class presentation of learning outcomes from the student's work on the exegesis project and final portfolio. Will be presented **during** the final exam period.

Full instruction sheets and rubrics for each component may be found in Canvas.

Note: Assignments are posted in full and updated in Canvas on the "Modules" Tab.