

**North Portland Bible College--Portland, Oregon**  
**NTS 208 The Apocalypse of John**  
**Fall 2017-2018**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

A historical and theological study of the Book of Revelation emphasizing the contextual message to the authors persecuted brothers in the faith, and the revealing of future events for God's coming Kingdom. We will explore the authors' use of Hebraic imagery from the prophets, the general tone of Jewish Apocalyptic literature, and the historical realities of their present situation. All these elements will communicate a real hope for the present and a vision for the future days and eternal rule of Messiah Jesus.

**By the end of the course the student will be able to:**

1. Identify the key themes of the book
2. Understand the importance of the Hebraic background informing the book,
3. Demonstrate a working knowledge of the outline and argument of the book
4. Give a basic overview of the 4 major theological approaches to the book

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**Reading:** All assigned reading is to be completed prior to the beginning of each class. Supplemental readings or handouts will be for information or research unless specified.

**Required Textbook:** Revelation: NIV Application Commentary by Craig Keener, Zondervan 1999. Any standard translation of the Holy Scripture.

**Major Assignments**

- 1) Completion of Bible reading of Revelation.
- 2) Complete assigned reading from textbook and supplemental readings by terms end.
- 3) Quiz/Final--Periodic quizzes to assess comprehension levels and a final exam on course material.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES:**

**Attendance Policy:**

All students are expected to attend a minimum of 8 of the 10 scheduled classes (Catalog pg. 13). Please inform the instructor of planned absences in a reasonable time frame. In crisis or emergent situations, call NPBC and/or instructor as soon as prudent. In the event of inclement weather, the learner is urged to first call the college and confirm if classes are still to be held. Personal judgment regarding your own situation must be considered. No penalty in attendance will be incurred for such decisions by the student.

## **EVALUATION AND GRADING POLICY:**

Letter grades will follow the “Academic Policies” section of the Catalog (pg. 13)

Grades will be weighed based upon the following percentage criteria:

1. Attendance and class participation 35%
2. Reading Assignments 35%
3. Quiz and final 30%

### **Late assignment policy**

A grace period of 2 (two) days will be given for incomplete assignments. That is each student has two days after normal class period of that week to complete the assignment.

Upon completion, students must e-mail or call the instructor **by** 3:00 PM of the 2<sup>nd</sup> day. A 5% grade reduction per day will be given for work turned in after the 3:00 pm cut off.

### **Expectations regarding writing/format style for papers:**

All papers should be typed. Font size should be at least 12 point in an easy to read font style. Spacing of one or one and a half between lines is fine. Bibliography and endnotes are to be placed on a separate sheet. Papers should reflect appropriate research, source citation and English grammar.

### **Academic Integrity in writing:**

All written material submitted must be the original work of the student. *Plagiarism* is a violation of academic integrity and constitutes a serious breach of scholarship standards at North Portland Bible College. When quoting the work of an author or an author’s ideas are used in your paper, document, document, and document.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### WEEKLY CLASS OUTLINE

Readings in Keener's commentary will be selective and are to be read prior to class

<b>Class</b>	<b>Course Topic</b>	<b>Reading Assignments</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
9/26	Introduction to class	*Introduction to the class requirements and assignments *Introducing the Book of Revelation and its Literary genre	
10/3	Seven Letters to seven churches	Read pages 104-66 of textbook Read Rev. 2-3	
10/10	God on the Throne	Read Rev. 4-5 Read pages 168-183	
10/17	First Cycle of Judgments	Read Rev. 6-8 Read pages 199-228	
10/24	Second Cycle of Judgments	Read Rev. 9-10 Read pages 265-278 of textbook	Quiz #1
10/31	Seven Mystical Figures, Part I	Read Rev. 11-12 Read pages 311-333 of textbook	
11/07	Seven Mystical Figures, Part II	Read Rev. pages 13-14 Read pages 334-349 of textbook	
11/14	Third Judgement Cycle	Read Rev. 15-16 Read pages 391-402 of textbook	Quiz #2
11/21	Babylon the Great	Red Rev. 17-18 Read pages 403-419	
11/28	The Wedding Supper & White Throne	Read Rev. 19-20 Read pages 463-482 of textbook	
12/05	The New Jerusalem	Read Rev. 21-22 Read pages 513-522 in textbook	Final Exam

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**  
**NTS 208 The Apocalypse of John**

1. Rose Book of Bible Charts vol.3 Rose Publication Society 2014, Torrance, CA.90503.
2. Dictionary of the Later New Testament, ed. By Ralph Martin and Peter Davids, IVP Downers Grove, IL 60515 1997 ISBN 978-0-8308-1779-5.
3. Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament by G.K. Beale and D.A Carson. Baker Academic Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI 49516, 2007. ISBN 978—0-8010-2693-5.
4. The Expositors Bible Commentary, Frank Gaebelin, General Editor, volume 12 Zondervan Publishing Grand Rapids, MI, 49530, 1981. ISBN 0-310-36540-6.
5. Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, Clinton Arnold General Editor, volume 4, Zondervan Publishing Grand Rapids, MI 49530, 2002. ISBN 978-0-310-61321-3.
6. The Theology of John by W. Robert Cook, Moody Press 1979. ISBN 0-8024-8629-0.
7. Revelation by Ben Worthington III. Cambridge University Press, 2003. ISBN 0-521-00068-8.
8. The Book of Revelation by G.K. Beale. New International Greek Testament Commentary Series. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999. ISBN 0-8028-2174
9. Future Hope—A Jewish Christian Look at the End of the World by David Brickner. Purple Pomegranate Productions, San Francisco, CA. 1999, ISBN 1-881022-412
10. Apocalyptic Literature—A Reader by Mitchell Reddish. Henderson Pub. 2008. ISBN 1-56563-210-3.
11. The Revelation of John by Robert Bratcher and Howard Hatton. United Bible Society, 1993. ISBN 0-8267-0174-4.
12. Revelation by Jurgen Roloff. Fortress Press, 1993. ISBN 0-8006-9560-6.

**INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES**  
**Chapter by Chapter Summary of Revelation**  
**"Yes, I am coming quickly..." (22:20)**

**I. Revelation to the 7 Churches: Chapters 1-3**

**Chapter 1**--Introduction and greeting of John. The vision to write what he has seen to the seven churches. Jesus appears in the middle of the 7 lamp stands.

**Chapter 2**--Message to Ephesus: Left your first love. Message to Smyrna: Be faithful  
Message to Pergamum: Repent or I come to make war. Message to Thyatira: Hold fast.

**Chapter 3**--Message to Sardis: Wake up! Message to Philadelphia: I will keep you from the hour of testing. Message to Laodicea: You are lukewarm, I will spit you out

**II. Tribulation of the Times: Chapters 4-18**

**Chapter 4**--John is taken into the heavenly worship. 24 thrones and 24 elders clothed in white garments and having golden crowns. Four living creatures cry out HOLY. The 24 elders fall down and worship and cry out "Worthy art thou..."

**Chapter 5**--Book with seven seals. The Lion of Judah is worthy to open the book and the seals. Angelic hosts sing "Worthy is the Lamb..."

**Chapter 6--Judgment Cycle #1: Seven Seals.** Breaking of first 6 seals. Seals 1-4 are horses, seal 5 are martyrs, seal 6 are heavenly signs.

**Chapter 7--Interlude #1** four angels hold back the winds. Another angel seals God's servants. The Lamb is the Shepherd of the multitude from every tribe, tongue, nation.

**Chapter 8**--Seventh Seal broken, silence in heaven preparing for the trumpets.

**Judgment Cycle #2: Seven Trumpets.** Blowing of trumpets one through four.

**Chapter 9**--Blowing of trumpets five and six. Trumpet #6 releases the "4 angels" to destroy 1/3 of mankind by three plagues, fire, smoke, brimstone.

**Chapter 10**--Seven peals of thunder. *Interlude #2* angel with the scroll seals the message of the thunder. Little angel opens a book, tells John to "eat it"

**Chapter 11**--Measuring the Temple of God by 2 witnesses. Witnesses are killed but in 3 ½ days rise again by God's breath. Seventh Trumpet blown. Dead are judged, righteous are given rewards. Temple of heaven opens and ark of covenant appears.

**Chapter 12**--Seven mystic figures. (1) Woman with a child, (2) a dragon, (3) a male child, (4) angel Michael. Michael wages war with the dragon and throws him down.

**Chapter 13**--Continuation of seven figures. (5) Beast from the sea, (6) beast from the earth. Mark of the earthly beast is 666, he performs miracle signs.

**Chapter 14**--Seventh mystical figure, (7) The Lamb on Mt. Zion. *Interlude #3* angelic messages and the "gathering of the vines from the earth" (vs. 18)

**Chapter 15**--Seven angels with 7 plagues to be released.

**Chapter 16--Judgment Cycle #3: Seven Bowls.** Pouring out of the 7 bowls.

**Chapter 17**--Judgment upon the great harlot Babylon

**Chapter 18**--Call to come out of Babylon. Lament over Babylon by the world. Rejoicing of Heaven over Babylon's fall.

**III. Triumph of the Lamb: Chapters 19-22**

**Chapter 19**--Multitude shout "Hallelujah" and the 24 elders and living creatures worship God. Invitation to the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. Defeat of the Beast and False Prophet by Him

who sits upon a white horse--the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

**Chapter 20**--The angel binds Satan in the abyss. Vision of the martyred who reign with Jesus for 1000 years. The Satan is loosed to cause war. Gog and Magog gather for war.

Vision of the Great White Throne. The death of “death and Hades”

**Chapter 21**--New heaven and earth, all things new. Heavenly Jerusalem is described and measured. Its light is The Lamb, no unclean thing is there.

**Chapter 22**--River of the waters of Life, the tree of life which bears 12 kinds of fruit every month. Jesus calls to heed the words of the book for He comes quickly. Invitation to all who wish to come.

## SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES

The book of Revelation seems so mysterious, in part because the average person is unfamiliar with the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible, and the writings of the period, and the historical setting, which often dictates content.

It is common to think of prophecy as predictions, but to an Israelite mind prophecy is primarily a proclamation of previously known truth, a call to return and not to forget the important matters. Thus, the Book of Revelation can be called an apocalyptic letter containing prophecy, combining at least three genres in one document (apocalyptic, epistolary and prophetic). All seven churches mentioned in the letter are located within the system of Ancient Roman roads. It was therefore actually possible for the letter to make a full circle of all the locations after it was originally delivered and be read in the individual congregations.

The apocalypse is always revelatory; it informs as it unveils otherworldly experiences and visualized cosmic reality. There is a story, a narrative that can be followed. These big picture descriptions of the events of the heavenly realm act as a backdrop to the events experienced by the audience of the apocalyptic writer. This is a parallel and analogical thinking, typical of the Middle East. The earthly events are presented in light of heavenly, unveiling the greater reality. (2) C. 165 CE; Eusebius, H.E. 4.26.2. (3) C. 180 CE; Adv. Haer. 3.11.1, 4.20.11, 4.35.2)

The Book of Revelation is the only work of its kind in the NT, however in the broader scope of Jewish and Christian literature, it is part of the genre called “Apocalyptic”, that meaning to unveil, uncover or disclose. Characteristically it was designed to keep faith alive during dark times and to remind the faithful there is a Day of the Lord coming. In fact most prophetic literature has as its core God’s intervention to save His people and establish His Kingdom. The audience of the letter hears the heavenly judgment of the wicked, the prayers of the saints and the testimony of the faithful. These serve to remind them that the courts and judgments of men are of no effect—God will reign and be victorious, hence their labors for Him are not in vain. Until then they are to be steadfast and faithful. To do this the author often employs images and pictures from the Middle East and the general writings of the prophets.

One of the other obstacles to understanding is the fact that approximately one out of eight words used in Revelation is used only in Revelation once. The grammar also is much more complex and at times tedious so as to make understanding more a challenge.

### Setting:

While there is much debate, evidence for an increasing persecution under Emperor Domitian (81-96 AD) tends to be the favored position. It appears that early Jewish believers

were caught in a struggle between submitting to the Emperors demand to Worship him as deity, or face persecution. Since Judaism was an officially sanctioned religion, believers could easily hide behind the mask of the synagogue to escape persecution, and Gentile Christians could choose to compromise with the trade guild cults and escape persecution as well. This may well be reflected in the address to the seven churches. Domitian himself, according to Sertonius (The 12 Caesars) “With equal arrogance, when he dictated the form of a letter to be used by his procurators, he began it thus: “*Our lord and god commands so and so;*” whence it became a rule that no one should style him otherwise either in writing or speaking. He suffered no statues to be erected for him in the Capitol, unless they were of gold and silver, and of a certain weight.”

Toward Jews it was noted: “The poll-tax on the Jews was levied with extreme rigor, both on those who lived after the manner of Jews in the city, without publicly professing themselves to be such, and on those who, by concealing their origin, avoided paying the tribute imposed upon that people. I remember, when I was a youth, to have been present, when an old man, ninety years of age, had his person exposed to view in a very crowded court, in order that, on inspection, the procurator might satisfy himself whether he was circumcised. Roman writer Cassius Dio noted: In order to pay for his extravagances, he tightened the Jewish tax enacted by his father and seized the fortunes of senators and wealthy Romans. The emperor saw himself as an absolute ruler and took pride in being called master or god: “*dominus et deus.*” He even renamed two of the months after himself - Germanicus (September) and Domitianus (October).

This is the Revelation OF Christ, His Glory and Kingdom and the ultimate consummation of God’s very own Meta-Narrative of redemption which began at Genesis.

**Grace and peace to you from “he who is,” and who was, and who is still to come,** ...The passage is an allusion to [Ex. 3:14](#) according to the Greek language Septuagint version where God refers to himself as “he who is” (ὁ ὢν). The Greek is translated from the divine self-description in Hebrew אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה (I am who I am). John uses the same wording only in this place in Greek (6). God’s unpronounceable name YHWH is believed to be connected to the verb “to be” in Hebrew. It is a composite of past, present and future aspects all present in one word, “who is and the one who was, and who will be.” The hint is deliberate.

**“Sevens” in the Book of Revelation**—the word 7 is used 48 x’s

- Seven Churches--1:4, 11, 20
- Seven Spirits-- 1:4, 20
- Seven golden lampstands--1:12, 20
- Seven stars—1:16, 20

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Churches	1:4; 2:1-3:22
Letters	2:1- 3:22
Spirits	1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6

Golden lampstands	1:12, 20; 2:1; 4:5
Stars	1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1
Seals	5:1; 5:5; 6:1
Horns	5:6
Eyes	5:6
Angels	8:2, 6; 15:1, 6, 7; 15:8; 16:1; 17:1; 21:9
Trumpets	8:2, 6
Thunders	10:3, 4
Thousand people	11:13
Heads	12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 9
Crowns	12:3
Plagues	15:1, 6, 8; 21:9
Golden bowls	15:7; 16:1; 17:1; 21:9
Hills	17:9
Kings	17:10, 11
Last 7 visions	Chapters 20-21

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**There are 55 sevens, and 5 sevenths**, 5x7 (35) phrases of sevens in the Book of Revelation. The number 5 is also significant. In the symbolism of numbers in Scripture 5 is the number of grace.

Implicit sevens	References
God's prophets	<a href="#">10:7</a> ; <a href="#">11:18</a> ; <a href="#">16:6</a> ; <a href="#">18:20</a> ; <a href="#">18:24</a> ; <a href="#">22:6</a> ; <a href="#">22:9</a>
"earthquake"	<a href="#">6:12</a> ; <a href="#">8:5</a> ; <a href="#">11:13</a> (2); <a href="#">11:19</a> ; <a href="#">16:18</a> (2)
"blessed"	<a href="#">1:3</a> ; <a href="#">14:13</a> ; <a href="#">16:15</a> ; <a href="#">19:9</a> ; <a href="#">20:6</a> ; <a href="#">22:7</a> ; <a href="#">22:14</a>

Christ's sword	<a href="#">1:16</a> ; <a href="#">2:12</a> ; <a href="#">2:16</a> ; <a href="#">13:10</a> ; <a href="#">19:15</a> ; <a href="#">19:21</a> (2)
“sharp”	<a href="#">1:16</a> ; <a href="#">2:12</a> ; <a href="#">14:14</a> ; <a href="#">14:17</a> ; <a href="#">14:18</a> (2); <a href="#">19:15</a>
candlestick	<a href="#">1:12</a> ; <a href="#">1:13</a> ; <a href="#">1:20</a> (2); <a href="#">2:1</a> ; <a href="#">2:5</a> ; <a href="#">11:4</a>
Christ's blood	<a href="#">1:5</a> ; <a href="#">5:6</a> ; <a href="#">5:9</a> ; <a href="#">5:12</a> ; <a href="#">7:14</a> ; <a href="#">12:11</a> ; <a href="#">13:8</a>
Christ's name	<a href="#">2:13</a> ; <a href="#">3:8</a> ; <a href="#">3:12</a> ; <a href="#">13:6</a> ; <a href="#">15:4</a> ; <a href="#">16:9</a> ; <a href="#">19:12</a>
the book of life	<a href="#">3:5</a> ; <a href="#">13:8</a> ; <a href="#">17:8</a> ; <a href="#">20:12</a> ; <a href="#">20:15</a> ; <a href="#">21:27</a> ; <a href="#">22:19</a>
prophecy	<a href="#">1:3</a> ; <a href="#">11:6</a> ; <a href="#">19:10</a> ; <a href="#">22:7</a> ; <a href="#">22:10</a> ; <a href="#">22:18</a> ; <a href="#">22:19</a>
“this book”	<a href="#">22:7</a> ; <a href="#">22:9</a> ; <a href="#">22:10</a> ; <a href="#">22:18</a> (2); <a href="#">22:19</a> (2)
judgment	<a href="#">14:7</a> ; <a href="#">15:4</a> ; <a href="#">16:7</a> ; <a href="#">17:1</a> ; <a href="#">18:10</a> ; <a href="#">19:2</a> ; <a href="#">20:4</a>
kingdom	<a href="#">1:9</a> ; <a href="#">11:15</a> (2); <a href="#">12:10</a> ; <a href="#">16:10</a> ; <a href="#">17:12</a> ; <a href="#">17:17</a>
“right hand”	<a href="#">1:16</a> ; <a href="#">1:17</a> ; <a href="#">1:20</a> ; <a href="#">2:1</a> ; <a href="#">5:1</a> ; <a href="#">5:7</a> ; <a href="#">13:16</a>
the saints	<a href="#">8:4</a> ; <a href="#">11:18</a> ; <a href="#">13:7</a> ; <a href="#">13:10</a> ; <a href="#">14:12</a> ; <a href="#">17:6</a> ; <a href="#">20:9</a>
God Almighty	<a href="#">4:8</a> ; <a href="#">11:17</a> ; <a href="#">15:3</a> ; <a href="#">16:7</a> ; <a href="#">16:14</a> ; <a href="#">19:15</a> ; <a href="#">21:22</a>
day, night	<a href="#">4:8</a> ; <a href="#">7:15</a> ; <a href="#">8:12</a> ; <a href="#">12:10</a> ; <a href="#">14:11</a> ; <a href="#">20:10</a> ; <a href="#">21:25</a>
voices	<a href="#">14:2</a> (2); <a href="#">14:6</a> ; <a href="#">14:7</a> ; <a href="#">14:8</a> ; <a href="#">14:13</a> ; <a href="#">14:18</a>
the bottomless pit	<a href="#">9:1</a> ; <a href="#">9:2</a> ; <a href="#">9:11</a> ; <a href="#">11:7</a> ; <a href="#">17:8</a> ; <a href="#">20:1</a> ; <a href="#">20:3</a>
come quickly	<a href="#">2:5</a> ; <a href="#">2:16</a> ; <a href="#">3:11</a> ; <a href="#">11:14</a> ; <a href="#">22:7</a> ; <a href="#">22:12</a> ; <a href="#">22:20</a>
Jesus lives	<a href="#">1:18</a> (2); <a href="#">4:9</a> ; <a href="#">4:10</a> ; <a href="#">5:14</a> ; <a href="#">10:6</a> ; <a href="#">15:7</a>

G.K Beal observes: “Indeed, the reader unfamiliar with the OT is hard pressed to make any sense of Revelation...progressive revelation is crucial in understanding the OT...on the other hand such progressive revelation must not be separated from prior revelation, since it builds on and develops the earlier revelation with hermeneutical integrity” (NT use of the Old pg. 1088). This is not a case of Old Over New, or New Over Old, but Old into New.

### **On the number 666 in Rev 13:18**

#### **Suggested Outline #1 Adapted from GK Beale**

- I. Prologue 1
- II. Letters to the Seven Churches 2-3
- III. God and The Messiah Glorified—Sovereign to Judge, Mighty to Redeem 4-5
- IV. Seven seals—Punishment and Purification 6-8
- V. Seven Trumpets—God responds to His saints’ prayer 8-11
- VI. God’s Protection over the wrath of the Evil One 12-15:4

- VII. Seven Bowl Judgments—God’s judgments on the ungodly 15:5-16:21
- VIII. Final Judgment on Babylon and the Beast 17-19
- IX. The Messianic Millennium and Final Judgment 20
- X. God’s New Creation 21-22:5
- XI. Four Concluding Exhortations and a Blessing 22:6-21

**Suggested Outline #2 Adapted from David Levy**

- I. Christ—Things Past Ch. 1
- II. Churches—Things Present Ch. 2-3
- III. Consummation—Things to Come Ch. 4-22
  - A. Events before the Great Tribulation Ch. 4-5
  - B. Events within the Great Tribulation Ch. 6-19
    - 1. Corruption Ch. 17
    - 2. Ruin Ch. 18
    - 3. Return Ch. 19
  - C. Events after the Great Tribulation Ch. 20-22