



The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature (Oxford Handbooks)

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The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature (Oxford Handbooks)

Apocalypticism arose in ancient Judaism in the last centuries BCE and played a crucial role in the rise of Christianity. It is not only of historical interest: there has been a growing awareness, especially since the 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, of the prevalence of apocalyptic beliefs in the contemporary world. To understand these beliefs, it is necessary to appreciate their complex roots in the ancient world, and the multi-faceted character of the phenomenon of apocalypticism.

The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature is a thematic and phenomenological exploration of apocalypticism in the Judaic and Christian traditions. Most of the volume is devoted to the apocalyptic literature of antiquity. Essays explore the relationship between apocalypticism and prophecy, wisdom and mysticism; the social function of apocalypticism and its role as resistance literature; apocalyptic rhetoric from both historical and postmodern perspectives; and apocalyptic theology, focusing on phenomena of determinism and dualism and exploring apocalyptic theology's role in ancient Judaism, early Christianity, and Gnosticism.

The final chapters of the volume are devoted to the appropriation of apocalypticism in the modern world, reviewing the role of apocalypticism in contemporary Judaism and Christianity, and more broadly in popular culture, addressing the increasingly studied relation between apocalypticism and violence, and discussing the relationship between apocalypticism and trauma, which speaks to the underlying causes of the popularity of apocalyptic beliefs. This volume will further the understanding of a vital religious phenomenon too often dismissed as alien and irrational by secular western society.

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