

University of
Dubuque
Theological
Seminary

BI 670: Revelation

Greek Exegesis

Fall 2024

Online



Image: Anthony Falbo, *Revelation Chapter 4* (2011)

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Instructor Information

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Course Description

The artistic centerpiece for this course is Anthony Falbo's 2011 cubist work, *Revelation Chapter 4* (above). Like the book of Revelation itself, the elements of *Revelation Chapter 4* are both familiar and eccentric. Also like Revelation, the crucified, resurrected, and glorified Lord Jesus sits prominently at the work's center, bringing different figures into the concentric circles of worship.

This class is a study of the New Testament book of Revelation focusing on the content and theology of the book and in-depth exegesis of key passages in the Greek language. Students will practice and develop various exegetical skillsets related to the interpretation and translation of the New Testament in general and the book of Revelation in particular. By the end of the class, students will be able to analyze and translate passages from the Greek text of Revelation, paying particular attention to its grammatical features, historical context, literary features, and contemporary relevance.

Revelation is a puzzling text, especially to those not accustomed to reading apocalyptic literature. Historically, the book has been shied away from even by Christianity's most-eminent thinkers. By situating Revelation in its literary, historical, and cultural contexts, students will be better equipped to interpret,

Course Objectives

Everything in this course, from readings to assignments to lectures, is designed to help students accomplish the objectives below. Moreover, grades in the course are determined by students ability to complete these objectives and doing so throughout the course of the semester. Please note that objectives vary between the Greek and English Exegesis versions of the course.

Objectives

- #1:** Compose and elaborate insights into passages from Revelation, examining their historical background, literary features, and contemporary relevance.
- #2:** Demonstrate proficiency in advanced Greek grammar, elucidating its significance for the translation and interpretation of Revelation.
- #3:** Make use of a variety of Greek translation tools, including grammars, Bible software, lexica, concordances, and commentaries, in service of interpreting and translating passages from Revelation.
- #4:** Analyze ancient and modern social contexts in order to explain their influence on the interpretation of the book of Revelation.
- #5:** Evaluate contemporary scholarship on Revelation and assess how it is or is not compatible with personal theological frameworks and interpretations of Scripture.

Curricular Objectives

Be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the church (MDiv)

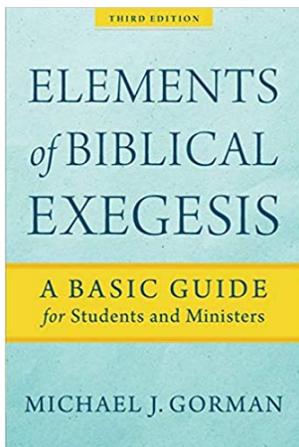
Interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful exegesis and in light of the Christian tradition (MDiv)

Preach the Word of God with faithfulness and clarity (MDiv)

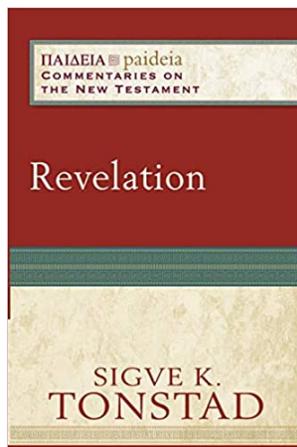
Articulate and reflect critically and constructively on the biblical and theological foundations of God's mission to the world (MAMD)

Articulate and interpret key themes from the Christian scriptures in conversation with contemporary and ecclesial contexts (MAM)

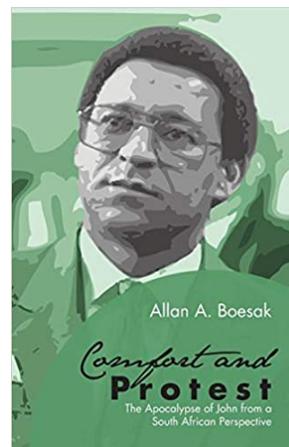
Required Texts



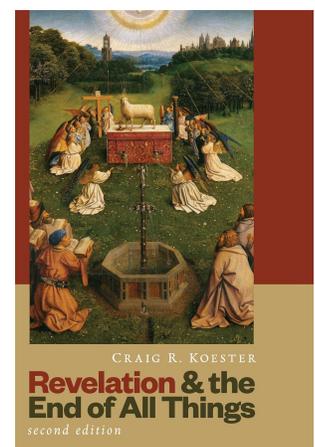
Michael J. Gorman,
***Elements of
Biblical Exegesis***
(3rd ed.), Grand
Rapids: Baker
Academic (2020).
ISBN: 1540960315.



Sigve K. Tonstad
Revelation
(Paideia), Grand
Rapids: Baker
Academic (2019).
ISBN: 0801049008.



Allan A. Boesak,
***Comfort and
Protest: The
Apocalypse of
John from a
South-African
Perspective***
Eugene, OR: Wipf
and Stock (2015,
reprint ed., 1987
original ed.).
ISBN:
1498226418.



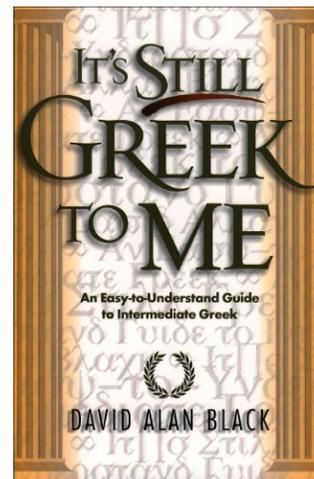
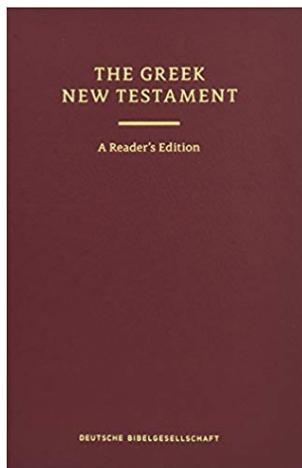
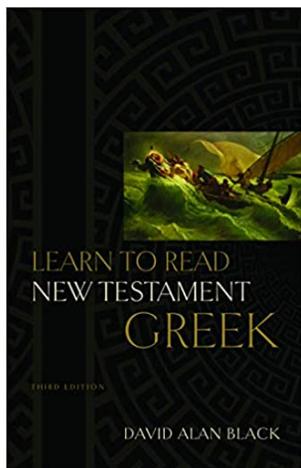
Craig R. Koester.
***Revelation and
the End of All
Things (2nd
ed.)*** Grand
Rapids:
Eerdmans, 2018.
ISBN:
0802875785.



Additional Texts

Some of these texts are required, some are recommended, and some were likely acquired for the introductory Greek course.

Required Texts:



David Allan Black, *Learn to Read New Testament Greek*, Nashville: B&H Publishing (2009). ISBN: 0805444939 (May be substituted with another

UBS 5th Revised Greek New Testament Reader's Edition
German Bible Society, 2015
ISBN: 1619706180

David Alan Black, *It's Still Greek to Me: An Easy-to-Understand Guide to Intermediate Greek* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998) ISBN: 0801021812

Recommended Texts:

The following are not strictly necessary to pass or to get an "A" in the class, but will be very helpful in completing the objectives for the course and for any students who will be taking the PCUSA Ordination Exam.

Walter Bauer and Frederick W. Danker et al. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

Commonly referred to as BDAG, this is the best lexicon for New Testament Greek. It is the "full version" of the required lexicon for the course. The price is steep, but serious Greek students will need to own this eventually. It is one to keep an eye out for at used book stores.

Metzger, Bruce Manning. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (Fourth Revised Edition)*. 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1994.

This book explains many of the "textual variants" that appear in the Greek New Testament. It is particularly helpful for the "establishing the text" portion of the PCUSA Ordination Exam.

Köstenberger, Andreas J., Benjamin L. Merkle, and Robert L. Plummer. *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek: An Intermediate Study of the Grammar and Syntax of the New Testament*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016.

This is a more expansive Greek grammar than the required grammar for the course. It goes deeper into and gives more explanation to many of the grammatical concepts introduced in Black's *It's Still Greek to Me*.



Commentaries (Choose One or More)

Each student will choose one of the following commentaries on Revelation. Reading from this commentary will inform their forum posts and classroom contributions. The intention is that several different interpretive perspectives will be brought into the discussion on a given portion of Revelation. Of course students may purchase more than one of these commentaries (and this is recommended for the purpose of future preaching, teaching, and research), but students will only be responsible to read and report on one of these commentaries for the purposes of the course.

Aune, David E. *Revelation, Volumes 52A–C*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1997.

Beale, G. K. *The Book of Revelation*. The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Blount, Brian K. *Revelation*. The New Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.

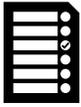
Fanning, Buist M. *Revelation*. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020.

Koester, Craig R. *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Yale Bible 38A. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.

Lupieri, Edmondo F. *A Commentary on the Apocalypse of John*. Translation edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.

Mounce, Robert H. *The Book of Revelation*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

Osborne, Grant R. *Revelation*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.



Specifications Grading

This class uses what is called specifications or "specs" grading. Final grades are **not** determined by the collective score of weighted items. Rather, they are determined by the number of grade items that you successfully complete. All assignments are graded on a pass/fail basis. The instructions for each assignment will have detailed specs (read: requirements) for how to pass the assignment. If a submission does not initially pass the requirements, a student can revise their work on the basis of the feedback provided, and re-submit it.

I use this grading system because it removes much of the subjectivity of grading, it is learning-outcome oriented, and it focuses the assessment of assignments on improving student work, rather than on quantitatively ranking work.

The following kinds of assignments will be required for the class:

- Greek Grammar Quizzes
- Greek Grammar Exams
- Greek Grammar Assignments
- Exegesis Quizzes
- Exegesis Assignments
- Translations
- Forum Posts