



**NT 645 Heaven, Hell, Angels and Demons (3)**

**May (Modular) 2010**

**Instructor: R. R. Remin**

**Contacting the Instructor**

**Office: L2081**

**Class Times: May 17-21**

**Monday-Friday**

**9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Email Address: [rremin@ambrose.edu](mailto:rremin@ambrose.edu)**

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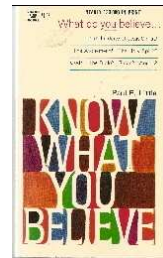
**Class Location: A2212**

**Pre-course Reading**

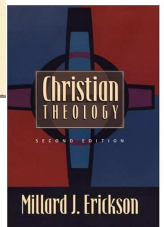
The following readings need to be completed before the beginning of the course. These readings all count towards the total required reading for this course. Read from each of the three groups.

Group One. Read one of these standard evangelical treatments of the subject matter. No substitutes allowed.

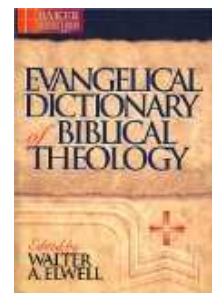
Paul E. Little, *Know What You Believe*, (1970). Read "Chapter 8 Angels, Satan, and Demons," pp. 137-153, and the section "Heaven" in "Chapter 10 Things to Come," pp. 188-189. Available free on line!



Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*<sup>2</sup> (1985) Read chapter 21 "God's Special Agents: Angels," pp. 457-475, "Powers," pp. 664-668, "Heaven," pp. 1233-44 and "Hell," pp. 1242-48, 791-94, *et passim*.



Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (1984). Read the relevant entries.

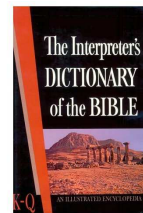


Group Two These dictionaries have a different perspective on the subject matter and you must read the articles on “Heaven,” “Hell,” “Angels,” and “Demons” from one of these three dictionaries. Related articles are “Hades,” “Sheol,” “Gehenna,” “Abraham’s bosom,” “Powers,” “Paradise,” “Purgatory,” etc. No substitutes allowed.

*Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 volumes), ed. David Noel Freedman (1992)



*Interpreter’s Diction of the Bible, An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (5 volumes), ed. George Buttrick (1964)



*The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* (5 volumes), ed. Katherine Doob Sakenfeld (2009).



Group Three Read both of these works which are available on line. If you don’t know who Homer, his *Iliad and Odyssey* and Odysseus the main character were, and/or if you don’t know who Virgil (Vergil), his *Aeneid* and Aeneas the main character, then read up on all of these in the *Wikipedia*.

Homer, *Odyssey, Book XI, Odysseus’ Descent into Underworld*.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0136%3Abook%3D11%3Acard%3D1>

Virgil, *Aeneid, Book VI, Aeneas’ Descent into the Underworld*.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0054%3Abook%3D6%3Acard%3D1>

For two more heroes who made journeys to the underworld check out Orpheus and Heracles on *Wikipedia*.

Group Four Be sure you come to the first class knowing in very general terms who these authors were. Again use *Wikipedia*.

Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy* which is Dante's journey through *Hell (Inferno)*, *Purgatory* and *Paradise*.

John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667)

Plato, and his works

Zoroastrianism

### **Deadline for all course related work.**

The absolute deadline for all course related work is August 15, 2010.

### **Course Description**

Heaven, Hell, Angels and Demons is an investigation of how Christians express their ideas about heaven, hell, angels and demons and what are the sources of these expressions. Just as ancient Israelites described their expectations for the future by using their experiences from the past (New Covenant, New Exodus, for example), so also Christians describe heaven, hell, angels and demons by using ideas, metaphors and literary genres which were borrowed from their literary, cultural and historical experience. These expressions are most often borrowed from Greek and Roman mythology and post-exilic Judaism as well as from our own creative imagination. Moreover Christians are often rather un-reflective about their use of language in their expressions of their ideas about heaven, hell, angels and demons or the sources of these images.

The reality of heaven, hell, angels and demons is accepted and is the starting point in this course. Students, however, will be challenged to reflect on how Christians describe these realities, the sources of these descriptions and the need to be circumspect in our use of Scripture in our descriptions of our ideas about these matters. Moreover the relevance of the subject matter of this course in the life and ministry of the Christian church will only increase as our society becomes more and more accepting of an increasingly diverse variety of expressions about heaven, hell, angels and demons.

This course is intended to expose the student to the sources of those expressions as well as challenging student to reflect on how language works in these expressions. For example, just as the John the Divine in the *Book of Revelation* qualifies his expression of what he saw by terms akin to "I saw something that looked as if it might be something like," so also Christians need to learn to distinguish between the spiritual realities, our expectations and our attempts to give expression to those expectations. Students will be challenged to distinguish what is explicit and what is implicit in

Scripture and how we supplement the biblical expressions with material from our own traditions and imagination.

Moreover students will be challenged to reflect on the relevance, effectiveness and past and present use of these concepts in the Christian ministry of the gospel. Specifically how effective is the use of these concepts in evangelism, discipleship and pastoral care. Students will also be asked to evaluate previous generations' expressions of heaven, hell, angels and demons and their effectiveness and relevance to people in the twenty-first century.

The relevance of this course in the life and ministry of the Christian church will only increase as our society becomes more and more accepting of a wide variety of expressions about heaven, hell, angels and demons. At the present time our society is "obsessed" with angels, spirits and various manifestations of evil. At the present time the Christian church is offering little if any direct positive instruction on these matters because there is a tendency to avoid places which are often characterized as "where angels fear to tread" to use a figure of speech. The lack of reflection on the nature of our knowledge and expression of our ideas has resulted in the church's reluctance if not inability to give instruction. On the other hand, when the church does offer instruction the biblical is confounded with the speculative and imaginative and then the amalgam is presented as dogma. The technical theological categories here are epistemology, dogma and doctrine.

## **The Professor**

Rod is the professor of biblical languages at Ambrose Seminary since 1980. In the years he has taught at the seminary and college he regularly teaches Greek and Hebrew and their respective exegesis courses. He also regularly teaches the literature of the inter-testamental period and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Over the years he has also taught all of the courses in Old Testament and most of the New as well as hermeneutics and even expository preaching.

He has also taught Greek and Roman mythology and Latin for the University of Regina and has spent much of his academic life studying Greek and Roman literature and how these traditions have influenced the expression of Christian belief and values.

## **Course Objectives**

### Methodological and Reflective Objectives

1. The student will study a very vivid illustration of theology in context (contextual theology) and how it works itself out. This in turn will focus the

student on epistemology which is the “study of how we know what we know.” The former is summarized by a line attributed to I.H. Marshall, “There is no gospel without a context.” The latter addresses the very nature of the gospel.

2. The student will learn a methodology for reflecting on and evaluating expressions of ideas about heaven, hell, angels and demons.
3. The student will learn to distinguish what is explicit and what is implicit in the Christian scriptures and this as opposed to what is Christian speculation.
4. The student will reflect on the relevance and effectiveness (short and long term) of the concepts for ministry in the church today
5. The student will reflect and evaluate their own beliefs on heaven, hell, angels and demons in light of the class discussions.
6. The student will create or find an expression of their own belief of heaven, hell, angel or demon.

#### Content Related Objectives

1. Learn how ancient Israelites expressed their expectations for the future. (New Exodus, New Covenant, Paradise, the afterlife (particularly Psalms and Proverbs), and Gehenna, etc.)
2. Learn the key biblical texts and concepts and their interpretations and what is explicit and what is implicit. (Sheol, Gehenna, *'olam*, death, life, eternal life, Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 26-28, etc.)
3. Learn details of Greek mythology which have influenced Christian expression of heaven and hell. (Hades, Tartarus, Elysian Fields, etc.) Learn the distinction between eternal life and life without end in Greek mythology. View Greek vases and plastic arts which illustrate these stories.
4. Learn the details of Plato’s views of the afterlife and how these have affected Christian expressions of life after death. Plato also has a story of a “near death experience.” These same Platonic ideas about the body and soul are at the basis of Paul’s message about resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15.
5. Learn details of genres of Greek and Roman mythological literature which were borrowed by Christian writers. (Greek and Roman tours of the underworld and Dante’s *Inferno*, for example. Heracles, Orpheus and others who enter the underworld in order to rescue someone.)
6. Learn how human communication uses symbols/icons and figures of speech (metaphor and simile) to express ideas and values. Examine how ancient Greek and Roman cultures and then the eastern and western church has used icons to communicate. Discuss how the expression of an idea in symbol/icon and /or metaphor differs from the reality.
7. Learn details of Zoroastrian beliefs about angels and demons and how and when these ideas may have influenced Christians.

8. Learn what is explicit in the Bible (Old and New Testaments) and how these ideas developed and expanded in the Judaism of the inter-testamental period and how these may have influenced Christians.
9. Learn the details and possible sources of the Johannine descriptions of heaven and hell and the roll of angels and demons in the same. Primarily the *Book of Revelation*.
10. Learn the world view (angels, the Logos) of Hellenistic Judaism (Philo of Alexandria is the primary source) and how this world view is reflected in Colossians, Ephesians, Hebrews and John's Revelation.
11. Examine some eighteenth and nineteenth century hymnody and gospel song which give expression believer's expectations about heaven and hell.
12. Learn the essential points of the genres of gothic novel, science fiction, and apocalyptic literature for the purpose of discussing their similarity with the content of this course.
13. View and discuss some recent movies and novels about heaven and/or hell and how they demonstrate an attempt to description the realities of heaven and hell. A recent movie about heaven is quite excellent; clips from the the recent remake of Dracula would illustrate the gothic genre; Frank Peretti's novels serve as a good illustration of the confusion of the symbolic expressions of an idea and the reality itself; recent books by Tim LaHaye and his co-author may serve as a modern illustration of popular expression of ideas.
14. Other rather fun subjects to be considered: the novel which presents the Apostle Paul ministering to Christians today as an angel; a comparison of the popular expression of the role of angels in the Christian life and the tradition expression of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life ("An angel a day, keeps the Holy Spirit away."); the speculative nature of sermons in which preachers attempt to describe the scene of the Son taking leave of the Father to become incarnate.

### **Course's Textbook and Required Reading**

No one specific textbook which covers the content of this course because none exists. There is one required text.

#### Required Text

Stephen F. Noll, *Angels of Light, Powers of Darkness, Thinking Biblically about Angels, Satan & Principalities* (InterVarsity, 1998).

### Highly Recommended Text

Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, Pieter W. van der Horst, eds., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. extensively revised, Brill, 1999). REF BS680.C57 D53 1999

### Articles in Reference works

Students must read articles in theological and bible dictionaries as listed in the prereading -- *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary*, and *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*.

There are numerous other dictionaries of theology, doctrine, tradition, etc. and these contain many relevant articles.

The relevant entries in these dictionaries are entries such as

<i>Angels,</i>	<i>Angel of the Lord,</i>	<i>Demon,</i>	<i>Michael,</i>	<i>Raphael,</i>
<i>Satan,</i>	<i>Devil,</i>	<i>Lilith,</i>	<i>Leviathan,</i>	<i>Ti'amat,</i>
<i>Logos,</i>	<i>Ishmael,</i>	<i>Abram,</i>	<i>Strong Drink,</i>	<i>Giants,</i>
<i>Sophia</i>	<i>Book of Tobit,</i>	<i>etc.</i>	<i>etc.</i>	

If you know Greek and/or Hebrew read the relevant articles in the lexica and various theological dictionaries, such as, *TDNT*, *TDOT*, *DOTT*, *BDB*, *BAGD*, etc.

### Select bibliography

This list will be supplemented as the course progresses.

1. M. Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell* (1981).
2. Arnold, Clinton E. *Ephesians: Power and Magic. The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of Its Historical Setting* (Baker, 1992).
3. Wesley Carr, *Angels and Principalities, The Background, Meaning and Development of the Pauline Phrase hai archai kai hai exousiai* (SNTSMS 42, Cambridge, 1981).
4. Frederick Kruziger, *Apocalypse and Science Fiction* (1982).
5. Any of D.S. Russel's works on apocalyptic literature. Use the index to find the relevant sections in his books. Some of his books are *Prohecy and the Apocalyptic Dream, Protest and Promise* (1994), *Divine Discourse, An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic* (1992) specifically chapter 5, and *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (1964).
6. Greg Carey and L. Gregory Bloomquist, eds., *Vision and Persuasion, Rhetorical Dimensions of Apocalyptic Discourse* (1999).
7. Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven, A study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (1982).
8. Jame Clark-Soles, *Death and the Afterlife in NT* (2006).

9. Robert J. Priest, Thomas Campbell and Bradford A. Mullen, "Missiological Syncretism: The New Animistic Paradigm," *Spiritual Power and Missions, Raising the Issues* (Evangelical Missiological Society Series, Number 3, 1995) 9-87. Read also the response of Charles H. Kraft, "Christian Animism" or God-given Authority?" *op. cit.*, 88-136.
10. Neil T. Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness: Realizing the Power of Your Identity in Christ* (1990) and *The Bondage Breaker* (1990) and the critique of Freedom in Christ Ministries as found in *The Christian Research Journal* 21.1 (1998) or at <http://www.equip.org/free/DA080.htm> When this is no longer available on line another form of electronic copy is available.
11. Amy Derogatis, "'Born Again is a Sexual Term": Demons, STDs, and God's Healing Sperm," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 27 (2009) 275-302.
12. Margaret George, *Mary Called Magdalene* (Penguin, 2002), especially *Part One, The Demons*, pages 1-206, in which the author incorporates much of ancient Jewish beliefs about demon possession is a very well researched and written example of historical fiction.
13. Crawford Gribben, *Writing the Rapture: Prophecy Fiction in Evangelical America* (Oxford, 2009).
14. Irving Hexam, "The Evangelical Response to the New Age," source unidentified.

### Popular Fiction

If a student has never read any current popular Christian literature, a limited amount (no more than 25% of the total required reading) may be included in their reading but the reading report must include a critique of this genre. Examples of this genre include:

Frank E. Peretti, *This Present Darkness* (1986) or *Piercing the Darkness*(1988).

Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, *Left Behind* (series) (1995).

Sydney Watson, *Scarlet and Purple* (1913), *The Mark of the Beast* (1915) and *In the Twinkling of an Eye*.

C.S. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters* is a far better written which I highly recommend as an example of Christian imagination (fiction).

Older and better examples of this kind of literature include

Dante Alighieri's (1265-1321) *Divine Comedy* which describes Dante's journey through Hell (*Inferno*), Purgatory (*Purgatorio*), and Paradise (*Paradiso*).

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* is another example

Dante and Milton are not subject to the 25% limitations.



## Course Schedule and Due Dates

**Class Times: May 17-21**  
**Monday-Friday**  
**9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

### **August 15, 2010 is the deadline!**

The absolute deadline for all course related work is August 15, 2010.

Any extensions beyond this date must be applied for through Registrar's office.

## Course Requirements

1. Attend all class sessions during the week and participate in class discussions. This requirement includes staying awake during slide presentations and viewing a movie.
2. Read all handouts texts assigned assign in class.
3. Read a minimum of 1500 pages of reading as directed above and submit a concise reading report.
4. Major research project on a subject relating to the topic of this course -- heaven, hell, angels, or demons. The length will be approximately 15 pages and in an acceptable format for an academic research paper. *nota bene*: Obviously heaven, hell, angels or demons are four very broad topics and you will need to limit the topic for your paper to something which is manageable. Papers critiquing modern use of these categories in popular Christian literature are also appropriate. Please discuss your paper's topic with the professor before you go too far into your research.

This project will include these components:

- a. Research and summary of the sources of the ideas and expressions
- b. Research and summary of the biblical expressions of the ideas.
- c. Evaluations of a in light of b.
- d. Evaluation of the effectiveness and relevance of the subject and it's various expressions in ministry.
- e. Statement of the student's personal reflection on the subject.

- f. Creative expression of the theme, either created by the student or by someone else but an expression which is meaningful to the student.

### **Final Grade**

The final grade will be calculated as follows. The course requirements for college students are the same as those taking the course for seminary credit but will be graded at an appropriate level.

a. Participation in class and attendance	20 %
b. Reading report	40 %
c. Project	40 %

### **Important Notes**

1. This course may be audited with the approval of the Registrar and the Instructor. Audit students are expected to attend class as required by the professor. Failure to do so may result in an AW (audit withdrawal) grade. No credit is granted for such courses. Projects and exams of auditors will not be graded, although reading may be required. Audit courses will be noted as such on a student's transcript.
2. Remember The Rules For The Class
  - Have fun!
  - Make mistakes!
  - Ask dumb questions! There are no dumb questions!
  - Cheat in class!
  - Consider this classroom a safe zone! There are no topics which are off limit.
3. Absences are intolerable because of the nature of the subject being learned and the manner in which this course is taught. We learn from the dialogue! If you must miss a class please work through the lesson(s) missed and then come to the instructor with any problems or questions. In the event you cannot be prepared, you are better being in class unprepared than not in class at all.
4. How to contact the professor between this course and the due date:
  - a. Email to the office     rremin@ambrose.edu
  - b. Voice in the office:    403-410-2000 ext 7906
  - c. Voice at home:         403-946-4635

5. No *ad hominem* arguments on points of exegesis, interpretation, translation or theology derived from the same, will be tolerated in this class. *Ad hominem* arguments attack the person who proposed the idea instead of the idea itself. *Ad hominem* arguments have typically dismissed an idea by pointing out that the author of the idea was a socialist (Amos), or a Pentecostal (Gordon Fee), or used to play in a night club (Wimber). Students must argue their point on its own merits. More recently *ad hominem* arguments have taken the form of *who are you to disagree with....* This means you cannot dismiss a point of view by citing the name and point of view of your favorite theologian or theological tradition, nor your preferred translation. Likewise, students cannot dismiss a contrary point of view because it didn't come from a well known scholar or is different from a favorite published translation. State the ideas in your own words, then we'll discuss the ideas.
6. All assignments must be submitted in printed (typed) hard copy.
7. If you don't know Greek or Hebrew, do not attempt to write either. To do so is committing a lie! If you do know Greek and/or Hebrew and use them these words (phrases) must use Greek and/or Hebrew fonts. Beware! Not all printers will print all fonts correctly. This is your responsibility. You are responsible to make sure all fonts are printed correctly in you papers. Italicized Greek (and/or Hebrew) is an option, unless you knew the languages in which case you must write (type, print) Greek and/or Hebrew.
8. As the need may arise minor modifications to this syllabus and the class schedule may adopted from time to time.
9. The instructor shall comply with all academic regulations as printed in the current *Academic Calendar* and *Student Handbook*, and it is the student's responsibility to be familiar with these regulations. The following academic policies are particularly relevant.

*It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at [privacy@ambrose.edu](mailto:privacy@ambrose.edu).*

*Although extensions to coursework within the spring/summer semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last due date listed on the syllabus unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office two weeks prior to the course due date*

<http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar>). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control.

*We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean.*

*Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.*

*Registration and payment in full is open up to the morning of the first day of class.*

*Students may drop this class and receive a full refund only prior to the second class session (i.e., before 1 pm on Tuesday, on the first day of class). No tuition refund will be issued after this deadline.*

*Students may voluntarily withdraw or change their registration from credit to audit, without academic penalty, only prior to completing 70% of the course (i.e., before 1pm on Friday, or the fourth day of class). Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. ‘W’ grades are not included in grade point average calculations. A limit on the number of courses from which a student is permitted to withdraw may be imposed. Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.*

*All registration changes must be made through the Registrar’s Office by completing a Registration Revision Form. Forms are available in the Registrar’s Office or on the website at [www.ambrose.edu/registrar](http://www.ambrose.edu/registrar).*

*Notification of grades will be mailed to all students shortly after they are received from the instructor.*

*An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.*

*Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else’s ideas, words, or work as one’s own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to*

*another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from Ambrose. Students are expected to be familiar with the policy statements in the current academic calendar and the student handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.*