The Apocalyptic Literature: Interpreting Biblical Texts Series

Stephen L. Cook

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Biblical texts create worlds of meaning and invite readers to enter them. When readers enter such textual worlds, which are strange and complex, they are confronted with theological claims. With this in mind, the purpose of the IBT series is to help serious readers in their experience of reading and interpreting by providing guides for their journeys into textual worlds. The focus of the series is not so much on the world behind the text as on the worlds created by the texts in their engagement with readers.

Nowhere is the world of the biblical text stranger than in the apocalyptic literature of both the Old and New Testaments. In this volume, Stephen Cook makes the puzzling visions and symbols of the biblical apocalyptic literature intelligible to modern readers. He begins with definitions of apocalypticism and apocalyptic literature and introduces the various scholarly approaches to and issues for our understanding of the text. Cook introduces the reader to the social and historical worlds of the apocalyptic groups that gave rise to such literature and leads the reader into a better appreciation and understanding of the theological import of biblical apocalyptic literature.

In the second major section of the book, Cook guides the reader through specific examples of the Bible's apocalyptic literature. He addresses both the best-known examples (the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation) and other important but lesser known examples (Zechariah and some words of Jesus and Paul).

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