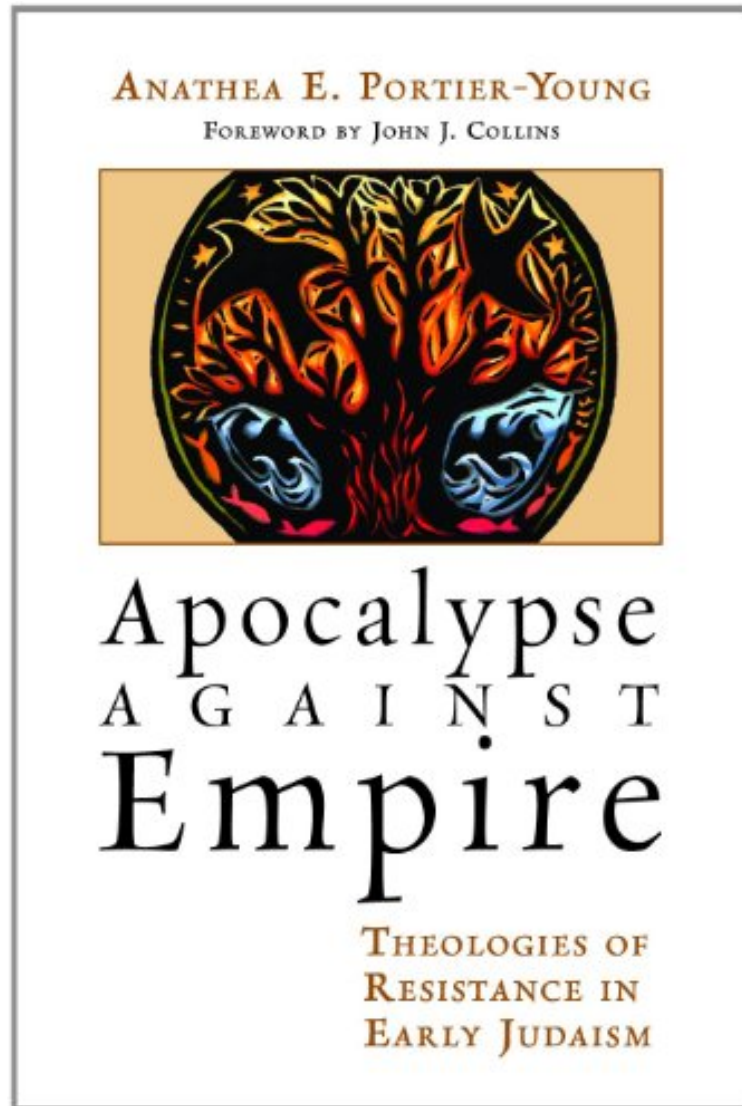


# Apocalypse against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism

Anathea E. Portier-Young

DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1237035 in Books 2014-01-09 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.25 x .81 x 6.251, 1.54 #File Name: 080287083X488 pages | File size: 59.Mb

**Anathea E. Portier-Young : Apocalypse against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Apocalypse against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent WorkBy Ron ClarkExcellent work.This book is well worth the read and has very current info on Apocalyptic Literature and resistance.20 of 22 people found the following

review helpful. good start but could have been more accessible

By Michael Lewyn

This book has two halves. The first half tries to explain why (assuming that the account in the Book of Maccabees is factually correct) Antiochus, the king of the Syria-based Selucid Empire, oppressed the Jews, leading to the Maccabees' revolt and of course the story of Chanukah arising from the revolt's success. The second half addresses the books of Daniel and Enoch, two books which (according to the authors) may have been Jewish responses to Selucid oppression. To begin with, even before Antiochus ascended the throne, his empire was fiscally stressed because of a nasty habit of making war against the neighboring Egyptian empire. So when various Jews sought to buy the Jewish high priesthood from the empire, Selucid officials were all ears. The last of these crooked priests, Menelaus, was unable to pay the promised bribe. So to make up the deficiency, Menelaus and his friends robbed the Temple, which in turn provoked rioting and eventually a rebellion by former high priest Jason, which Antiochus easily terminated. After ending the revolt, Antiochus began his reign of terror. According to the book of Maccabees, Antiochus began by randomly murdering and enslaving many of Jerusalem's inhabitants. The authors suggest that Antiochus's goal in murdering Jews was to create "a feeling of helplessness and powerlessness in Judea". The empire then enslaved as many Judeans as they killed; unlike its murders, this policy was financially profitable, as Judean slaves were sold in nearby markets. In addition, the dispersal of Judean captives would weaken Judaism (as Jewish slaves were forced to abandon religious rituals) and remind pagan purchasers in other parts of the empire that they could just as easily have been enslaved. Antiochus then plundered the Temple's cultic objects. The author suggests that this theft communicated to Judeans that they, and even their God, were powerless before the empire's might. Antiochus followed theft with an edict prohibiting nearly all forms of Jewish practice and requiring Jews to adopt a number of pagan rituals, essentially remaking Judea in his image. Presumably, Antiochus must have thought that his policies would not only end any chance of a Jewish revolt, but would deter nearby pagan peoples from making trouble. Both the Book of Daniel and the Book of Enoch refer to a tyrannical anti-Jewish ruler who may (according to the authors) have been Antiochus. But the two books suggest radically different remedies. In the book of Daniel, Daniel repeatedly refuses to adopt pagan practices, but rather than react violently, he allows pagans to attempt to kill him, and is always saved by a miracle. Thus, the lesson of Daniel appears to be that nonviolent resistance will lead to Divine deliverance. By contrast, the book of Enoch (a book which purports to be a revelation to Enoch, the father of Methusaleh) states that "a sword will be given to all the righteous, to execute righteous judgment on all the wicked." This language appears to endorse violent revolt against oppression. To a much greater extent than the first half of the book, the discussion of resistance reads like a Ph.D dissertation, both in its thoroughness and its occasional inaccessibility. I am not sure whether there was any way to make the book more accessible to nonexperts without reducing its thoroughness. However, it would have been nice if the book had included relevant portions of the books of Maccabees, Daniel and Enoch as appendices- especially the latter, since the book of Enoch is not part of most Christian versions of the Bible (or any Jewish version) and is thus much less easily available.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Nothing "bold" here at all, as New Testament scholars ...

By theoryfan

Nothing "bold" here at all, as New Testament scholars have always said apocalypses are resistance literature, as Tina Pippin's quotation makes clear: "happy people don't write apocalypses." Lots of sloppy eisegesis, viz., reading into biblical passages the author's obvious political biases (communitarian) and her ideology of universalism. The author is intolerant of other perspectives, and is rather dualistic and simplistic in her stance against all empire, as if hegemonic power structures can just be replaced by a utopian vision she gets to supply. Isn't this just more hegemony?. Overall, the analysis is naive and tendentious.

A fresh and daring take on ancient apocalyptic books. The year 167 b.c.e. marked the beginning of a period of intense persecution for the people of Judea, as Seleucid emperor Antiochus IV Epiphanes attempted forcibly and brutally to eradicate traditional Jewish religious practices. In *Apocalypse against Empire* Anthea Portier-Young reconstructs the historical events and key players in this traumatic episode in Jewish history and provides a sophisticated treatment of resistance in early Judaism. Building on a solid contextual foundation, Portier-Young argues that the first Jewish apocalypses emerged as a literature of resistance to Hellenistic imperial rule. She makes a sturdy case for this argument by examining three extant apocalypses, giving careful attention to the interplay between social theory, history, textual studies, and theological analysis. In particular, Portier-Young contends, the book of Daniel, the *Apocalypse of Weeks*, and the *Book of Dreams* were written to supply an oppressed people with a potent antidote to the destructive propaganda of the empire renewing their faith in the God of the covenant and answering state terror with radical visions of hope..

Make no mistake about it: this is a landmark study. It is theoretically informed and sophisticated, broad-ranging and erudite, historically aware, and hermeneutically sensitive. It breaks new ground in the field and should be required reading for anyone interested in early Jewish apocalyptic literature. Choon-Leong Seow Princeton Theological Seminary

Anthea Portier-Youngs bold proposal demonstrates how the earliest Jewish apocalypses conjured diverse strategies for resistance against imperial power. Her judicious, sometimes daring, application of resistance theories to the historiography of Seleucid Judea sets a challenging precedent for future research. In that cauldron of cultural and

political conflict, the apocalypses emerge as creative vehicles for counterimperial theologizing. Greg Carey Lancaster Theological Seminary *Apocalypse against Empire* portrays the Second Temple Jewish narrative of hope and survival, resistance and courage, with sensitivity and insight. Scholars and students will appreciate the careful research and fresh approach in this beautifully written book. Sharon Pace Marquette University