

# Term Paper: Requirements and Suggested Topics

**Assignment:** Write a paper with at least a loose thematic connection to the seminar topic and with at least some direct engagement with Old English. In this context, direct engagement with Old English means either providing your own translations or incorporating a discussion of Old English concepts into your argument.

## Some Possible Topics

The following list is intended to help you *find* a topic, but you don't have to limit yourself to the options listed. While you may absolutely copy out a topic directly from this list, it is your own responsibility to formulate a research question. Remember that originality of argument (and by implication originality of research question) is a factor in the assessment of your paper (see marking grid below).

Broadly, paper topics for this course may address any aspect of salvation history or any (group of) text(s) dealing with this theme, but also more tangentially related issues or texts. You may want to narrow down by studying any one stage of the conflict, one or more features of the theological or narrative content, or a particular (group of) text(s):

- War in heaven and the fall of the angels
- The fall of (hu)man(kind)
- Unbiblical elements in [*Genesis B/Exodus*]
- Cain and Abel
- Cain and Grendel
- The sons of God and the daughters of men (*Genesis 6*)
- Noah's Flood
- Satan's role in Job and Ælfric's adaptation
- Christ's temptation in the desert and *Christ and Satan*
- The Crucifixion
- The Harrowing of Hell
- Last Days
- Body and soul / the resurrection
- Judgement Day
- The afterlife
- Satan in Anglo-Saxon literature
- The measure of hell in *Christ and Satan* and manuscript illustrations
- Typology/the (four) senses of scripture
- Baptismal imagery in Old English literature
- The concept of sin
- The concept of evil
- Fire and water in Old English religious literature
- Anglo-Saxon conceptions of paradise and heaven
- Anglo-Saxon conceptions of hell

Good texts to work with include all of the texts on our list, but you may also explore our theme in another (group of) medieval text(s). Remember the language requirement, however: you'll have to engage directly with Old English to some degree.

## Some Possible Research Questions

In approximate ascending order of difficulty, as the later ones require corpus research and/or comparative work. You may use these questions for inspiration, but at least modify them for originality.

- How is the fall of man gendered in *Genesis B*?
- How is the transition to the afterlife depicted in [text/s xyz]?
- What is the understanding of body, mind, and soul as found in [text/s xyz]?
- How may the tradition of demonic concealing helmets be characterized and explained?
- How do Anglo-Saxon understandings of Satan's role in hell compare to those in patristic commentaries?
- How do Anglo-Saxon discussions of the first biblical fratricide compare to Anglo-Saxon legal documents on fratricide?

## Marking Grid

The following marking grid indicates the considerations used to mark papers for this course (but not their weighting):

Aspect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Argument (quality, originality)										
Structure										
Close reading & analysis										
Structural use of primary sources										
Use of secondary sources										
Grasp of source language										
Cultural context										
Command of academic English										
Mechanics (style, referencing, formatting)										
Length										