

NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
The Book of Isaiah

BIBL 5141 Three Semester Hours

Spring 2010

Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00 – 9:30 a.m.

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Welcome to the Course

Welcome to the study of Isaiah (“The LORD [Yahweh] saves”). This seminary graduate course is a study of the message and theology of the book of Isaiah and its relevance for worship and preaching. Isaiah is a long and complex book with a long history of interpretation. The power and passion of its poetic oracles of judgment and salvation have been embraced by every generation of readers. Its narrative contexts and use in the NT have created a rich background for the present day interpreter.

This two hour graduate course requires a lot of reading and writing. Please see this syllabus for details. It is your roadmap. Please read it carefully. In addition to your textbooks (see below) you will need to use the North Park University Library to complete some required reading assignment and to research your writing assignments. Many of the commentaries on Isaiah have been placed on Reserve (ask at the desk) or are in the Reference section on the first floor. Some reading assignments have been placed in a binder and are on Reserve. You may read these in the Library or make a copy to take home.

You should begin this course by reading all 66 chapters of the primary document. You may use any good English translation of the original Hebrew (MT): KJV, RSV, NRSV, NIV, NASB. It would be helpful to have two translations so that you can compare them.

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Course Description

This course involves reading the book of Isaiah and its various interpretations. It seeks to provide knowledge of the over-arching content (events, characters, themes) and original cultural and historical settings. Attention will be given to literary genres, critical issues, and inter-biblical interpretations as they aid the interpretation of Isaiah’s text. The goal is to prepare students to appreciate, interpret, and teach from Isaiah in ministries of the Church.

Required Textbooks

The Holy Bible. [Good advanced student study editions are *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* and the *Harper Collins Study Bible.*]

Goldingay, John. *Isaiah* NIBC Series (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001). paperback 1565632230.

Seitz, C. editor. *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988). This book is available from *Wipf and Stock Publishers, paperback 1592440177.*

The New Interpreter’s Bible volume 6, edited by L. Keck, D. Petersen, et al. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001). hardcover 0687278198

This book volume contains two self-contained commentaries: “The Book of Isaiah 1-39” by Gene M. In

the NIB and “The Book of Isaiah 40-66” by Christopher R. Seitz. It also includes good commentaries on Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Course Requirements: In Outline

Successful completion of this course will include the following.

- 1) Attend all class sessions having read the assigned biblical text and readings.
- 2) Make an audio recording of yourself reading assigned Isaiah texts.
- 3) Keep an annotated record of your reading of secondary sources.
- 4) Research and make one 7-10 minute oral presentation on a critical issue in an assigned text.
- 5) Write three papers on assigned literary and theological themes (1000 words each).
- 6) Complete one objective midterm exam on the historical background of Isaiah.

Course Requirements: In Detail

1) Read and Attend.

Please be prompt (6:20 pm). Before class you should read the Isaiah texts and the secondary literature as assigned background information. Devise a method for mastering the Isaiah texts that you read and read about in the commentaries. You could keep a “commentary journal” in a loose-leaf binder with one page for each chapter of Isaiah. Keep a list of questions that arise when you are reading Isaiah, list the major themes, the literary genres, the literary structure, speaker, audience, etc. This could be the beginning of your own commentary.

2) Make an audio recording of yourself reading assigned Isaiah texts.

Isaiah was originally *heard*, not read silently. In the first week, read the texts *out-loud*, recording them on an audio tape (preferred) or on a CDR. It will take about 90 minutes. Make sure to label the tape and introduce the chapters by the section divisions listed here: *Isaiah chapters 1-5, 6-12, 36-39, 51-55, 61-66*. Please also include a 100 word reflection on the experience of reading Isaiah out-loud. See “Class Schedule” for due dates. Read the other chapters silently. Grading based on intonation, pace, and phrasing. (Grade scale: see #5 below).

3) Keep an annotated record of your weekly reading of secondary sources.

Create a log to keep track of your reading. List the assigned source that you have read and make a brief comment (annotation) characterizing its content and author’s interest and purpose. Example:

Bright, John. A History of Israel, chapter 7. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981, third edition. This is an orientation to the historical situation of Israel and Judah in the latter half of the eighth century B.C. It is good background information for understanding the first part of Isaiah.

This kind of “annotated bibliography” is due for all the assigned reading *except for the two commentaries* (Goldingay and NIB). Write in it each week (beginning week three) as you complete the assigned reading. Each book chapter and each article should have its own entry. This annotated log is due twice in the semester. (See “Class Schedule” for two due dates.)

4) Research and make one 7-10 minute oral report on a critical issue in an assigned text.

Student Oral Report Guidelines

This research based exercise requires that you condense much material into a brief class presentation. Allow plenty of time for your research and for preparing your report. Students will present in alphabetical order throughout the semester.

Content and Form

Each student will present a summary of research for the class on *a critical issue from the Isaiah text assigned* for their day. Choose your issue by reading the critical commentaries and their varying opinions of the meaning of any portion of your assigned text. *Do not* attempt to cover all the chapters! Narrow your focus to one issue or portion of the text.

Include the following in your presentation: 1) a description of the interpretive issue (it may be textual, historical, theological, or literary); 2) a description of the main solutions (three if possible) proposed by different commentators; 3) a comparison of the relative merits of the solutions for resolving the interpretive issue. The oral presentation should be 7-10 minutes long and be accompanied by a one-page bullet style summary of your presentation. (Make copies for each member of the class.)

Sources

A list of reliable recommended sources is included in this syllabus. Many of them are on Reserve or in the Reference section of the Library. *From the sources listed in this syllabus*, you must consult at least five commentaries. Cite all the books used for your report. *Citation of sources should include:* Author, Title (City: Publisher, date) page number.

Grading

Grading will follow the same protocol as the weekly writing assignments (below). The report is 10% of your course grade. It will be based on the quality of your research, significance of content, and clarity of presentation.

5) Writing Assignment Instructions for Three Papers.

A list of literary and theological themes will be provided in class.

[Any student preferring to do a major research paper (15 pages) should consult the instructor.]

Format

1000 words each. Cite all sources in parentheses within the text of the paper (Author, page #). Include a full source citation as a bibliography at the end of the paper.

Content

Your papers should each describe a recurring theological theme or literary genre in the book of Isaiah. Provide the details of its occurrence in Isaiah, its literary function, and its use and development within the book. Key words and phrases should be noted, in the original languages (MT and LXX) if possible. One of the three papers may focus on Isaianic texts used in musical settings (focus on either contemporary, classical, or hymnic forms; Handel's "Messiah" excluded).

Sources

Commentaries, introductions to OT, and theological dictionaries are good sources for research. Cite at least five sources. One of them must be a theological journal article. You can find such articles by using the online ATLA search. [Go to <http://www.northpark.edu/library/resources/dbaz.htm> ; Then click on ATLA Religion Database; this will bring up the search page. Search for your text (e.g. Isaiah 23) using the Title field. If you need help using this resource contact the T.A. or the Reference Librarian on duty.]

Assignment Grading

- + Your essay integrated biblical texts, secondary reading, and reflection exceedingly well (wow).
 - √+ It integrated the texts, reading, and reflection on theme (very good).
 - √ It demonstrated an understanding of the theme in texts and reading (O.K.).
 - √- It lacked some basic understanding of the theme, texts, or reading (oops).
- (2% per day reduction in grade for late papers)

(See "Class Schedule": Due on weeks # 4, 11, and 13.)

6) One objective midterm exam.

The midterm will examine your understanding of the original historical and social backgrounds of the book of Isaiah (8th-6th century B.C.). I will post a brief study-guide for you one week before the exam (see Schedule). The guide will give you an idea of what may be included.

Course Grading

Participation (attendance with texts read) 10%; Audio recording 10%; Writing assignments 30% (10% each); Mid-term exam 30%; Oral report 10%; Annotated reading record 10%. Late writing assignments will be marked down by 2% per day. The exam will contain objective questions concerning your knowledge of the basic facts from the lectures, biblical text, and reading assignments. An exam study guide will be provided.

A	93-100
B	86-92
C	78-85
D	70-77

Select Bibliography for the Book of Isaiah

Remember that your three textbooks are also good sources for research.

Research journal articles on special topics and on most individual biblical text in Isaiah can be found by searching the NPU Library resource ATLA. Some are also listed in your textbook bibliographies.

[Go to <http://www.northpark.edu/library/resources/dbaz.htm> ; Then click on ATLA Religion Database; this will bring up the search page. Search for your biblical text using the Title field. If you need help using this resource contact the T.A. or the Reference Librarian on duty.]

These may be found on the first floor of the Library in the Reference Section, beginning with call number BS1515.

Baltzer. *Isaiah 40-66* (Hermenia)

Childs, B. *Isaiah* (OTL Series)

Clements, R.E. *Isaiah 1-39* (NCBC)

Hanson. *Isaiah 40-66* (Interpretation)

Kaiser, O. *Isaiah 1-12* (OTL)

Kaiser, O. *Isaiah 13-39* (OTL)

Knight, *Isaiah 40-55* (International Theological Commentary)

Knight, *Isaiah 56-66* (International Theological Commentary)

Oswalt, J. *Isaiah 1-39* (NICOT)

Oswalt, J. *Isaiah 40-66* (NICOT)

Quinn-Miscall, P.D. *Reading Isaiah: Poetry and Vision*

Seitz, C. *Isaiah 1-39* (Interpretation)

Westermann, C. *Isaiah 40-66* (OTL Series)

Whybray. *Isaiah 40-66* (NCB)

Wilderberger. *Isaiah 1-12* (Continental Commentary)

Wilderberger. *Isaiah 13-27* (Continental Commentary)

Wilderberger. *Isaiah 28-39* (Continental Commentary)

Widyapranawa. *Isaiah 1-39* (International Theological Commentary)

You may also want to consult the following (use the library catalogue to find them).

The commentary series volumes would be quite helpful.

Blenkinsopp, J. *Isaiah 1-39* (Anchor Bible)

Blenkinsopp, J. *Isaiah 40-55* (Anchor Bible)

Blenkinsopp, J. *Isaiah 56-66* (Anchor Bible)

Brueggemann, W. *Isaiah 1-39* (Interpretation Series)

Brueggemann, W. *Isaiah 40-66* (Interpretation Series)

Childs, B. "Isaiah" in *Introduction to the OT as Scripture*

Clines, D.J.A. *I, He, We, and They: a literary approach to Isaiah 53*

Conrad, E. *Reading Isaiah*

Dorsey, D. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*

Heschel, A. *The Prophets*

Holladay, W. *Unbounded by Time: Isaiah Still Speaks*

Juel, D. *Messianic Exegesis*

Koole, J. *Isaiah III*, vol. 3 : *Isaiah 56-66* (HCOT)

Limburg, J. *The Prophets and the Powerless*

Mettinger, Tryggve. *Farewell to the Servant Songs*

Moyter, J. *Isaiah* (Tyndale OT)

Muilenburg, J. "Isaiah 40-66" in *The Interpreter's Bible*

Oswalt, J. *Isaiah* (NIVAC)

Pao, D. *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*

Peskett, H. *Isaiah: Trusting God in Troubled Times* (IVP LifeGuide)

Schmitt, J. J. *Isaiah and His Interpreters*.

Scott, R.B.Y. "Isaiah 1-39" in *The Interpreter's Bible*.

von Rad, G. *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 2

Sawyer, J. *The Fifth Gospel*
Seitz, C. *Zion's Final Destiny*
Watts, J.D.W. *Isaiah 1-33* (Word Commentary vol. 24)
Watts, J.D.W. *Isaiah 34-66* (Word Commentary vol. 25)
Watts, Rikki. *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*
Williamson, H.G.M. *Variations on a Theme*

***These are on Reserve in the NPU Library. Ask for them at the front desk.
(Articles listed in the syllabus are also on Reserve in a folder.)***

Holmgren, F. *With Wings as Eagles*
Koole, J. *Isaiah III, vol. 1 : Isaiah 40-48* (HCOT)
Koole, J. *Isaiah III, vol. 2 : Isaiah 48-55* (HCOT)
Luther, M. "Lectures on Isaiah" in *Luther's Works*, vols. 16, 17, and 35
Melugin, R. Sweeney, M. eds. *New Visions of Isaiah*
Seitz, C. *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah*
Watts, J. & House, P. eds, *Forming Prophetic Literature*.
Williamson, H.G.M. *The Book Called Isaiah*

***Other more specialized books may be found in the Library third floor stacks between the call numbers
BS 1515 and 1520. Here is a sampling.***

Bellinger, W., ed. *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*
Leclerc, T. *Yahweh is Exalted in Justice*
Neubauer, A. *Fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah according to the Jewish Interpreters, vol. 2*
Neubauer, A. *The Suffering Servant according to Jewish Interpretation, vol. 1*
Nielson, Kristen. *There is Hope for a Tree: Tree as metaphor in Isaiah* (JSOTS 65)
Sommer, B. *A Prophet Reads Scripture: allusion in Isaiah 40-66*
Wonsuk, M. *Until the Spirit Comes: the Spirit of God in the book of Isaiah* (JSOTS 271)

Commentary Series with volumes on Isaiah

AB	Anchor Bible
BO	Berit Olam
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
HBC	Harper Bible Commentary
IBC	Interpretation: A Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
ITC	International Theological Commentary
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NIB	New Interpreter's Bible
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIVAC	The NIV Application Commentary
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTG	Old Testament Guides
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentary
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WeBC	Westminster Bible Companion
WEC	Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary

General Reference

Blenkinsopp, J. *A History of Prophecy in Israel*.
Chisholm, R. *Handbook on the Prophets*. [a one volume conservative commentary of prophetic books]
Clements, R.E. *Old Testament Prophecy: From Oracles to Canon*. [introduction to major prophets]
Heschel, A.J. *The Prophets*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2001). [a classic interpretation]
Limburg, J. *The Prophets and the Powerless* (out of print).
Peterson, D. editor. *Prophecy in Israel*. [a collection of seminal articles]
Smith, G.V. *The Prophets as Preachers*. [a one-volume preaching commentary]**

Westermann, Claus. *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* [a collection of seminal articles + form critical commentary]

Historical Background

Bright, John. *A History of Israel*, 4th edition, 2000.
Gottwald, N.K. *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction*, 1985.
Kee, H.C., et al. *The Cambridge Companion to the Bible*, 1997.
Kuntz, J.K. *The People of Ancient Israel*, 1974.
Miller, J.M. and Hayes, J.H. *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 1986.
Schultz, S. *The Old Testament Speaks*, 4th edition, 1990.

Dictionary Introductions to Individual Biblical Books**

Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible
HarperCollins' Bible Dictionary
HarperCollins Bible Commentary (one volume)
Interpreters
The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament
Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (IDB) and its Supplement (IDBS)
Anchor Bible Dictionary (ABD, six volumes)
Other one volume commentaries: *Interpreters*, Peakes, Jeromes

Literary and Theological Resources

Berlin, A. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*.
Birch, et al. *Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*.
Brueggemann, W. *Theology of the Old Testament: testimony, dispute, advocacy*.
Childs, B. *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*.
Dorsey, D.A. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: a commentary on Genesis-Malachi*. **
Eissfeldt, Otto *The Old Testament: an Introduction*.
Gerstenberger, E. *Theologies in the Old Testament*.
Knierim, R. *The Task of Old Testament Theology: Method and Cases*.
Tate, W. Randolph, *Biblical Interpretation*.
G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2 vols.

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