



McMaster Divinity
College

OT 3XI3



The message of Isaiah: The Holy One of Israel, the Suffering Servant & Coming King

This course begins online on September 10

Class meets in person: Tues Oct 9: 9:30am-4:30pm; Wed Oct 10 9:30am-1:30pm

Course continues online until conclusion on Dec 12

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Course Description:

Isaiah is known as “the prince of the prophets” and the book named after him is probably the most famous Old Testament prophetic book. There is a majestic character to the book, with its towering theology and memorable passages arguably unmatched in holy writ. In order to appreciate its theological depth and wrestle with its interpretation, this course undertakes a thorough examination of the book of Isaiah in light of the historical and literary setting of the book and the experience of ancient Israel. Special emphasis will be placed on the composition of the book, the call of the prophet, messianic passages, the servant songs and the book’s teaching on social justice. This study will emphasize the importance of the original historical context and its message to its original audience, but also examine the later reception history of the prophecies of the book. In its pages, the prophet brings together the coming glory of the Messiah along with the humiliation of the Suffering servant making it essential for understanding the mission and ministry of Jesus in the New Testament. The message of the book of Isaiah will be examined in an effort to discover its continuing relevance for the church and society today.

Specializations: Biblical Studies and Pastoral Studies

Course Objectives

Knowing:

- To have an introductory knowledge and understanding of the prophetic book of Isaiah
- To understand and appreciate the challenges to the unity of Isaiah
- Gain an understanding of the literary structure of the book of Isaiah
- To gain an understanding of the contemporary relevance of the Book of Isaiah for the Church today

Being:

- To embrace the contemporary relevance of the book of Isaiah for the Church and society today
- To become a faithful and informed interpreter of Isaiah
- To grow closer to God through study of the book of Isaiah

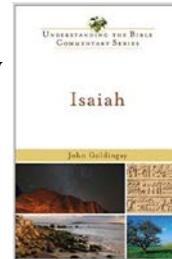
Doing:

- To be able to trace out themes that run throughout the Isaiah, (Zion, Trust, Holiness, Worship, the former things, Justice, and Messiah)
- To describe key prophetic literary forms and their conventions
- To be able to describe key OT historical events, tracing them chronologically and geographically and understand their significance for interpreting the book of Isaiah
- To be able to articulate the implications of Isaianic theology for a systematic theology and a Christian worldview.
- To complete an in-depth study on a passage from Isaiah

Required Textbook

1. John Goldingay. *Isaiah*. Understanding the Bible Commentary Series. Baker Academic, 2005.

2. Readings available on class website



Textbook Purchase:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, ON M9W 6H3: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Assignments and Schedule

1. Readings. 10%

Students must read the textbook in its entirety as well as all the readings posted on the course website. At the end of the semester students must submit a detailed list of the reading that they have completed in the assigned textbook, other assigned readings, and for assignments, including page spreads for partial reading.

A) Read the following passages in order to gain some historical background on the kings who reigned in Judah when Isaiah prophesied

- Uzziah - 2 Kgs 14:21–22; 15:1–7a; 2 Chr 26:1–23a
- Jotham - 2 Kgs 15:7b, 32–38a; 2 Chr 26:23b - 27:9
- Ahaz - 2 Kgs 15:38b–16:20a; 2 Chr 27:9b–28:27a
- Hezekiah - 2 Kgs 16:20b; 18:1–20:21; 2 Chr 28:27b–32:33

B) Read the entry for each of these kings in a Bible Dictionary (e.g., IVP New Bible Dictionary; Anchor Bible Dictionary etc.)

2. Pre-class Component (Jan – Feb 22): Online

A. *Online Discussion*

Due to this being a hybrid course, much of the class discussion will occur online on the Avenue to Learn course website. Students must actively participate in the online discussion and post minimum **one** discussion topic at the beginning of a week (Sun-Tues). Student posts must be in regard to the posted lectures / assigned readings that week. As well, to further the online discussion all students must respond to minimum **two posts** every week. Since initial posts will be online in the first part of the week, there will adequate time for all students to respond to posts in a timely manner. Instructions on how to participate in the online classroom will be sent to each student via email before the course begins.

Participation in online discussion is an assumed foundation for this course (like class attendance) if a student fails to participate every week their final mark will be reduced by one full letter grade (so A becomes B, A- becomes B-).

B. *Review Assignment #1 10%*

During the pre-class modules students will write one brief review/reflection on an assigned article. The paper must be **no more** than **5 pages** double-spaced. The paper should clearly summarize the contents of the article(s) in your own words and include your own critical interaction, evaluation, and reflections on the chapter. The written review is due **Sept 29, 2018**—No Extensions.

3. In-Class Component (Feb 23–24): At McMaster Divinity College

The on-campus Modules will consist of some in-class lectures, Q&A, presentations, and student presentations. Attendance is mandatory.

A. Student Led seminar discussion: 15%

As part of the on-campus modules, each student will lead the class in a 30-minute discussion of assigned chapters of Isaiah. In preparation for the discussion the student will consult the textbook and the four commentaries listed below (under the research paper description). A 2–3 page report showing your research and discussion notes will be handed in following the seminar.

Passages: a) 56-57; b) 58-59; c) 60; d) 61-62; e) 63-64; f) 65-66

5. Post-Class Component (Oct 11–Dec 12): Online

A. Online Discussion

In the post-class component students must continue to actively participate in the online discussion but now only need to post **one** discussion topic at the beginning of a week (Sun-Tues) and respond to **one other post** each week.

Participation in online discussion is an assumed foundation for this course (like class attendance) if a student fails to participate every week their final mark will be reduced by one full letter grade (so A becomes B, A- becomes B-).

B. *Inductive Study of Isaiah 56-66* **15% 6-7 pages**. See inductive study guidelines below. The inductive study is due **Nov 17, 2018**.

C. *Statement and Annotated Bibliography*. **10%. Due Nov 24**. In preparation for the major assignment students will write a one-paragraph statement of their project along with an annotated bibliography of at least 12 bibliographic items of secondary sources. These secondary sources do not include primary sources (the Bible, Josephus, Qumran). By way of **supplement** to these 12 sources, a student may use a **maximum of 2** Internet resources. Students are responsible for the quality of these Internet resources. Each source listed must be drawn on in the paper and evidenced in the footnotes etc.

D. *Major Assignment* **40%. Due Dec 12**.

All major assignment papers must follow the MDC Style Guide. Papers should be double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font (footnotes should be 10pt). The major assignment will be based upon the research represented in your annotated bibliography and draw on (and explicitly cite) all 12 sources within the paper.

i. Major Assignment for Biblical Studies Specializations:

There are **two** (2) options for Biblical Studies: Choose only **one** (1) of the following:

a. Research paper: 12-15 pages double-spaced. This is especially recommended if you are planning to go on to a research degree or write a thesis in OT (or if you have

a particular topic in mind that you wish to write on). The topic of this research must be related to Isaiah and approved by the professor.

b. Exegetical Paper: 12-15 pages. In this option you will choose one passage from the book of Isaiah and write an exegesis paper. The chosen text should be between 10-20 verses. This paper will:

- Take into account the genre of the chosen text
- Take into account the historical context of the chosen text
- Provide a close reading of the text, noting key words, phrases, and literary features
- Identify different interpretive options and consider the validity of each and argue for the chosen interpretation.
- Elucidate the theological message of the chosen text
- Explain the applicability of the text for today for believers

c. Theological Theme Paper: 12 pages double-spaced. In this option you will choose one biblical-theological theme (e.g., social justice, atonement etc.), and write a paper that succinctly traces this theme throughout the book of Isaiah. This paper will note the diversity represented in the different passages but also note continuity. Finally, the paper will discuss how this theme is picked up in the New Testament and reflect on how the theology of Isaiah functions for the New Testament writer. A rough outline of the paper should be:

- i. **Introduction** stating the theme and its significance in the book of Isaiah.
- ii. **Discerning the Theme:** Analyze passages that evince your chosen theme, noting diversity and continuity with other passages and reflecting theologically on this theme
- iii. **NT connections.** Note NT texts that pick up on and develop this biblical theological theme. How does the OT function for the NT writer?
- iv. **Application for today.** How is this theme relevant for Christians today? How does the book of Isaiah function for Christian theology today?

ii. Major Assignment for Pastoral Studies Specializations:

There are three (3) options for Pastoral Studies Specializations. Choose only one (1) of the following:

a. Theological Theme Paper: 12 pages double-spaced. This is the same paper as outlined above in assignments for biblical studies specializations.

b. Sermon on passage from Isaiah (oral presentation). 20-25 minute video-taped sermon submitted on CD/DVD/USB drive or uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo. Beginning with the text of Isaiah this sermon will expound a theological theme from the book, tracing it throughout Isaiah and applying it to the contemporary context. The sermon will be delivered orally but include a written manuscript with an outline. The manuscript may be a combination of sentence, bullets/point form,

paragraphs (it need not be a complete essay of the words you preach). This manuscript should be grammatically correct and include appropriate citation of sources employed.

c. Sermon on passage from Isaiah (written). This assignment is the same as the previous assignment (oral presentation of a sermon) but instead of an oral presentation it will be written, but with an aim to oral delivery. The sermon must be written as it would be spoken and must not be in point form etc. but be a full written manuscript. It is expected it will conform to MDC style guide and be grammatically correct and acknowledge its sources appropriately with footnotes.

Style for Submission of Written Work

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

All assignments must be in electronic format only (PDF format) —no hardcopies— and uploaded to the designated Avenue to Learn course dropbox. Include your last name in the file name of your attachment (e.g., evans.researchpaper.pdf). To avoid late marks papers must be received by 11:59pm of the calendar day on which they are due.

Policy Concerning Late Papers

Extensions for papers will not be given except in very exceptional circumstances. (serious illness, family crises, etc.). Busy-ness, computer problems etc. are not legitimate reasons to grant extensions and in the interests of fairness any request for extensions will take into account the entire class. Late assignments will be docked at the rate of 2% per day for the first 7 calendar days (including weekends) and 4% per day after that. Late assignments receive no critical feedback. All assignments must be received by Dec 12, 2018 in order to avoid a failing grade in the class.

Gender Inclusive language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms,

including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty

~ <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

Disclaimer: This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.

Paper Evaluation

Name: _____ Topic: _____

I. The next items are rated according to this scale: 1 = inadequate; 2 = adequate; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = superior.

Bibliographic consciousness	1 2 3 4 5
Range and Use of Sources	1 2 3 4 5
Clarity in Defining Issues	1 2 3 4 5
Strength of Argument	1 2 3 4 5
Awareness of Exegetical Issues	1 2 3 4 5
Accuracy of Data and Assertions	1 2 3 4 5
Analysis /Critical Thinking	1 2 3 4 5
Introduction (Thesis Statement /Clear Issue)	1 2 3 4 5
Development of Thesis (focus)	1 2 3 4 5
Literary Style (awkward, wordy, repetitive)	1 2 3 4 5
Organization/coherence of ideas	1 2 3 4 5
Grammar/Spelling	1 2 3 4 5
Neatness/Presentation	1 2 3 4 5

§ Note: this is a simple evaluation tool to assist in paper assessment. The categories are not weighted equally, and thus are not added together or averaged to calculate your grade.

II. The following need attention if so indicated

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use inclusive language | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper is too long/too short |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a unified essay | <input type="checkbox"/> Edit your paper more thoroughly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper needs balance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., Gen 1:26; Gen 1; etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently |

Inductive Study Guidelines

An inductive study is a direct study of a biblical text without using any secondary resources. A close reading and analysis of the biblical text (following good hermeneutical principles) constitute the essence of the study.

No secondary resources may be used for this study (no study Bibles, commentaries etc.). However, one exception is if you consult an Atlas or Bible dictionary for a place name, term, or custom that you don't know about.

Initial Reading and Observations

To be able to write a good inductive study you will become intimately acquainted with the text.

Your inductive study should use the following **five (5)** headings (make sure the space given to each section reflects its weight—i.e., a section worth 5% should be a significantly smaller section than one worth 30%)

1. Table of contents of Isa 56–66 with descriptions (5%)

After becoming very familiar with Isa 56-66 (reading it in at least two modern translations—preferably in one sitting), and noting the content, structure, genre, and tone of Isa 56–66, write your own table of contents by giving a title to each 'chapter' (i.e., chapters as you determine them). Don't feel you have to stick to the chapter and verse divisions. These divisions are not part of the original text and are not always helpful in outlining structure book (E.g., the story of Genesis 1 does not end in until Genesis 2:4). Explicitly delineate what your chapter is by using the chapter and verse notations of your translation (e.g., your chapter 1 may be Isa 56:1-4; chapter 2 may be Isa 56:5-64:2)

2. Explaining the detailed structure of Isa 56–66 (30%)

This step will expand and your outline and explain why you divided up Isa 56–66 the way you did. You will justify your structure and how you see the different sections of the biblical assigned section. Explain your reasoning. How are these different sections broken down into smaller sections? Make sure you explain how you determined these sections and justify it. Look for patterns, key words, repeated phrases and/or different types of material (poetry etc.) present in Isa 56–66, all of which could be used as structuring devices.

3. Identifying the main theme of Isa 56–66 (35%)

In this step you will determine *what* the main theme of Isa 56–66 is and explain *why* you think it is. There won't be *many* different themes in one assigned section. If you find many themes, beware—you may have just noticed some smaller motifs). Remember, the goal is to find out what the theme is from your own reading of the text (not to make up your own theme). You must demonstrate that this theme is present in the text (giving examples from Isa 56–66 that point to this theme). Sometimes, noticing what is repeated will help you determine theme (examples of repetition can help support your assessment of theme). Sometimes, the plot or

characters in the story will point to what the theme of the work is. How does Isa 56–66 develop this theme? (The theme will likely be throughout Isa 56–66, or most of it). You must propose one “theme statement” that encapsulates the central message of Isa 56–66, when you take it as a whole.

4. Theological emphases (20%)

In this section you will determine what some of the most prominent theological emphases of Isa 56–66 are and explain how they are developed. What issues are raised for the reader (both original/implied readers and modern readers—like yourself!)? Are these theological emphases connected to or found in other biblical books too?

5. Ideas for integrating the results of your study for preaching, teaching, a Bible study, etc. (10%)

The fun part! Are the theological emphases found relevant to your life, your career, or your calling? Do they contribute to your worldview? How could you practically apply these insights/truths in your life? Or in the life of the Church? How would you preach or teach Isa 56–66? How could you communicate the results of this study in a Bible Study? Give an outline of how you could integrate the results of your study in real ministry situation. Make sure to delineate your intended audience (youth group, adults in a service, or Sunday school, etc.).

Selected Bibliography

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