



McMaster Divinity
College

OT 3X13



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

This course is being delivered in a modified Hybrid format. Class will meet in person and online in an alternating sequence. One week the course meets in person, on campus; the following week the course meets online

This course begins in person on January 11

Class meets in person: Tuesdays: 9:00am-10:50pm

Course meets online every other week on Avenue to Learn

Continues concludes on Apr 8, 2022

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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, Church and Culture, 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:

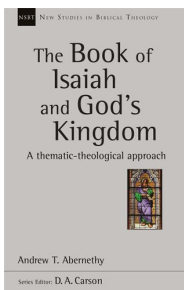
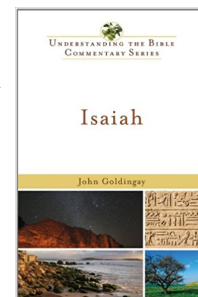
- To embrace the contemporary relevance of the book of Isaiah for the Church and society today
- To become a faithful and informed interpreter of Isaiah
- To grow closer to God through study of the book of Isaiah

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. Andrew T. Abernethy. *The Book of Isaiah and God's Kingdom: A Thematic-Theological Approach*. New Studies in Biblical Theology (InterVarsity Press) 40. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016.

3. Other Assigned Readings will be available on Avenue to Learn

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 Requirements**I. Classroom Experiences**

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

A. Face to Face Classroom Meetings (See Schedule below)

Class will meet together in person beginning on January 11 and every other week. Classroom experiences will include lecture, discussion, and some group activities. *Successful classroom experiences depend on student commitment to the classroom environment. Students are encouraged to take notes, and participate in discussion through asking and answering questions.*

B. Asynchronous Class Discussions (See Schedule below)

Much of the class discussion will occur asynchronously online on the Avenue to Learn course website. On weeks noted on the schedule below, students must actively participate in the online discussion and **post** minimum **two** discussion topics at the beginning of a week (Sun-Tues). Student posts must be in regard to the posted lecture videos / 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.

II. Formal Assignments: *The assignments and their weights are as follows:***A. Reading - 10% - Due April 8, 2022 (no extensions)**

Each student is to read the biblical book of Isaiah, the textbook in its entirety, as well as assigned readings provided on A2L. Students will submit a detailed list of the reading that they have completed in the assigned textbooks (including page spreads for partial reading) and assigned articles available through A2L.

- Upload Reading List assignment to the appropriate Assignment Box on A2L.

Students will also 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

Students are required to read the entry for each of these kings in a Bible Dictionary (e.g., IVP New Bible Dictionary; Anchor Bible Dictionary etc.)

B. Review Assignment- 10% - Due Jan 25, 2022 (no extensions)

During the pre-class modules students will write one brief review/reflection on the article “The Unity of Isaiah” by Ronald E. Clements (posted on the class website on Avenue to Learn). The paper must be **no more** than **5 pages** double-spaced. The paper should clearly summarize the contents of the article in your own words and include your own critical interaction, evaluation, and reflections on the chapter.

C. Student Led Seminar Discussion- 15% - (see schedule below)

As part of the in person classes, each student will lead the class in a 30-minute discussion of assigned chapters of Isaiah. Students will choose their passage and timeslot via signupgenius.com. In preparation for the discussion the student will consult the textbook and at least four commentaries on the book of Isaiah. A 2-3 page report showing your research and discussion notes will be handed in following the discussion.

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

D. Inductive Study of Isaiah 56-66- 15% 6-7 pages. See inductive study guidelines below. The inductive study is due **Mar 5, 2022.**

E. Statement and Annotated Bibliography. 10%. Due Mar 22. 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.

F. Major Assignment - 40%. Due on April 5: Length: 12-15 pages

All major assignment papers must follow the MDC Style Guide. Papers should be double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font (footnotes should be single-spaced and 10pt). The major assignment must draw on (and explicitly cite) at least 12 sources within the paper. See “**Major Assignment Evaluation Guidelines**” below.

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 Church and Culture Specializations:

There are three (3) options for Church and Culture 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. Reading Isaiah in a Postcolonial Context 12-15 pages.

The current cultural context of many in the West today suggests the world cannot be understood without considering the relationship of societies to the history of imperialism and colonial rule from the 18th to 20th centuries. This school of thought especially highlights the oppressive nature of Empire and the lingering effects of colonialism persisting today. In light of the theme of the Kingdom highlighted by Abernathy in the textbook (*The Book of Isaiah and God's Kingdom: A Thematic-Theological Approach*) this paper will read Isaiah in light of the postcolonial philosophical environment today and ask the following questions.

- How does the Kingdom in Isaiah contrast with Empire?
- How did the Assyrian Empire contrast with Isaiah's vision of God's Kingdom?
- How can the visions of God's kingdom in Isaiah speak into a Postcolonial context that imagines a world after colonialism that does not yet exist?

iii. 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.

College 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/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/> Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

All papers to be submitted in PDF format only. Upload the PDF file to the appropriate assignments folder on Avenue to Learn. Include your last name in the file name of your attachment (e.g., evans.researchpaper.pdf). To avoid late marks papers must be received before the end of the calendar day on which they are due (i.e., before midnight EST).

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 days (including weekends) and 4% per day after that. All assignments must be received by April 8, 2022 in order to avoid a failing grade in the class. Late assignments receive no critical feedback.

Gender Inclusive Language:

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

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 ~

<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>

Class Schedule

Wk	Date	Classroom Experiences	Content	Assignment Due
1	Jan 11	Face-to-Face class on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Overview and Introduction to the book of Isaiah 	--
2	Jan 16-22	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unity of Isaiah What is Prophecy? Formation of Prophetic books 	--
3	Jan 25	Face-to-Face class on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isaiah 1:10-17 critique of popular religion Isaiah 1-5 - The Portrayal of Zion 	*Review Assignment Due Jan 25
4	Jan 30-Feb 5	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isaiah 5 - The vineyard Song Isaiah 6-9 as literary unit Isaiah 6 and the Grave Commission 	--
5	Feb 8	Face-to-Face class on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isaiah 7-9 Immanuel Unto Us a Child is Born 	--
6	Feb 13-19	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isa 13-23 Oracles against the Nations The Babylonian Exile Second Isaiah 	--
7	Feb 20-26	READING WEEK		
8	Feb 27-Mar 5	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The New Commission The Resistance to the prophet Exodus and Creation Imagery Ongoing Exile? 	* Inductive Study due Mar 5
	Mar 8	Face-to-Face class on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Presentations 	--
9	Mar 13-19	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Messiah in Isaiah Who is the Servant? Jesus as the Servant 	--
10	Mar 22	Face-to-Face class on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student presentations 	* Statement and Bibliography due Mar 22
11	Mar 27-Apr 2	Avenue to Learn asynchronous discussions of readings and lecture video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isa 63 and Metaphors for God Anti-temple rhetoric in Isaiah 66? Isa 65-66 as conclusion 	--
12	Apr 5	Face-to-Face class on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isaiah as a Whole Theological Readings of Isaiah Isaiah for today 	* Major Assignment due Apr 5 * Reading Report due Apr 8

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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