

OT 203-3 Exegesis of Isaiah
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Spring Term 2013
Wed and Fri 10:00am-11:20am

Instructor: Tyler Mayfield
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Office Hours: email for appointment

Course Description

This course provides an in-depth examination of the prophetic book of Isaiah through translation and exegetical exercises in the original Hebrew text. Students will gain greater familiarity with exegetical methods and interpretation of particular texts. In addition, greater facility may be attained in translating and interpreting biblical Hebrew and the use of secondary literature.

Course Objectives

Students completing this course will be able to:

- 1) Describe the various historical divisions, literary features, and theological outlooks of the book of Isaiah.
- 2) Translate Hebrew prose and poetic texts with greater facility.
- 3) Exegete prophetic passages by asking historical, literary, and theological questions of the text.
- 4) Write an exegetical paper combining multiple methods on a selected biblical passage.

Required Books

- 1) English translation of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. I highly recommend the JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh. English translations will be helpful in Wednesday class sessions.
- 2) Elliger, K. and W. Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967/77.
- 3) Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009. [Or another suitable lexicon such as BDB or HALOT by Koehler & Baumgartner]
- 4) Child, Brevard. *Isaiah* (Old Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001).
- 5) Keck, Leander. ed. *The New Interpreter's Bible: Isaiah - Ezekiel* (Volume 6) (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001).

Assignments & Evaluation

1) Attendance and Class Participation (10%)

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend “all scheduled meetings of the courses” excepting illness or “other valid reasons.” In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify me of their planned absence from class preferably prior to the session. Tardiness also affects classroom dynamics; please make every effort to be ready to start class on time.

Students should come to class each day eagerly ready to discuss the assigned biblical passage and secondary readings. Active participation includes, but is not limited to, activities such as listening carefully to others’ presentations and thoughts, taking notes, asking relevant questions, responding to others’ comments, and inviting others into the conversation. It does not include dominating a group or class discussion.

2) Group Exegetical Presentation (25%)

Once during the semester students will lead in pairs a class session on a given Isaian passage. Students should be ready to guide the class through the passage using multiple exegetical methods. This presentation will require the consultation of resources (primarily commentaries) not required on the syllabus. Further detailed directions will be provided.

3) Friday Hebrew Translations with Exegetical Notes (25%)

Students will bring to class and turn in their weekly Hebrew translations and exegetical notes every Friday. I will provide an example.

4) 15 page exegesis paper (40%)

Students will write an exegesis paper on a selected Isaiah passage. This paper will be completed throughout the semester in sections and receive significant feedback from me in order to strengthen the final product.

Translation of Passage with Text Critical Notes 1 pg <i>Draft</i> (5%)	Due Monday, Feb 25
Historical/Diachronic/Author Section 5 pg <i>Draft</i> (5%)	Due Monday, March 25
Literary/Synchronic/Text Section 5 pg <i>Draft</i> (5%)	Due Monday, April 22
Theological/Existential/Reader Section 4 pg <i>Draft</i> (5%)	Due Monday, May 6

Final Paper with revisions of above sections 15 pages Due Friday, May 17*

*I need a final paper from those graduating by Wed. May 15 so you can participate in ceremonies.

Course Policies:

Academic Honesty: All work turned in is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center and should make use of the available resources at an *early* date, since violations of seminary policy on academic honesty can lead to a failing grade for the course.

Citation Policy:

Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides:

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Accessibility and Accommodation: Students requiring accommodation for a physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) within the first few days of the course and should speak with me as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments.

Inclusive Language: Our use of language, personally and as a community, is a powerful tool of both healing and oppression. In order to establish a more egalitarian environment and in accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. Avoid language for people that excludes part of the population or perpetuates stereotypes. Do not assume masculine gender when the gender of the person is unknown. See http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp.

When referring to God, students are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors. The God of the Hebrew Bible is envisioned in both personal and non-personal ways, as well as masculine and feminine terms. Naming God exclusively as "He" does not capture this splendid diversity.

Policy on late work: All written assignments are due on the date given in the syllabus. Assignments submitted late will be penalized in the grading by one letter grade increment for every day (a B+ paper becomes a B if one day late, a B- if two days, a C+ if three days, etc.). Assignments submitted more than ten days after the due date will not be accepted.

Use of electronic devices in class: I ask that we create a time and space in the classroom to set aside such distractions as email, Facebook, and texting in order to engage our minds and hearts. Do not send or read text messages during class. In the event that you have a legitimate need to be accessible during class, you may ask me for an exception to this rule. Laptops should not be used if you cannot trust yourself to restrict your use to note-taking. You may not access the Internet during class time. Any misuse of electronic devices during class time, including checking of email or social networking sites, will be grounds for dismissal from the session and will negatively affect the course grade.

Course Schedule

Fridays are Hebrew Translation and Exegesis Days. Students will bring to class their translations with some textual/exegetical/historical/literary/commentary notes, and we will translate and discuss the passage.

Wednesdays are Exegetical Presentation Days. I will lead an exegetical workshop/presentation on a given topic or Isaiah passage OR you will lead an exegetical presentation on an Isaiah passage.

Friday, Feb 8

Introduction to course / syllabus

What is Exegesis?

Wednesday, Feb 13

One Isaiah, Three Isaiahs: An Introduction to the Book of Isaiah

Class Readings: Childs, 1-5
New Interpreters, 27-44, 309-326
David Petersen, *The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction*, 47-96.
[CAMS]

Friday, Feb 15

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 1:1-2, 16-20

English Exegesis: Isaiah 1

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 46-64
Childs, 11-23

Wednesday, Feb 20

8th Century BCE Israel and First Isaiah

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 27-44.
Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 98-105. [Library Reserve]

Friday, Feb 22

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 2:1-5

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 66-70
Childs, 28-31 [his translation on page 23]

Wednesday, Feb 27

Group Exegetical Presentation #1: Isaiah 7:10-16

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 106-113
Childs, 60-69

Friday, March 1

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 6:1-10

English Exegesis: Isaiah 6

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 100-105
Childs, 49-60

Wednesday, March 6

Group Exegetical Presentation #2: Isaiah 9:1-6

Class Readings: Childs, 77-81
New Interpreters, 120-24

Friday, March 8

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 11:1-10

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 138-144
Childs, 97-106

Wednesday, March 13

Group Exegetical Presentation #3: Isaiah 24-27 “The Little Apocalypse of Isaiah”

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 206-08

Childs, 171-74.

Friday, March 15

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 35:1-10

English Exegesis: Isaiah 35

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 279-83.
Childs, 249-58.

Wednesday, March 27

Group Exegetical Presentation #4: Isaiah 36-39 “Hezekiah and the Rabshakeh”

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 284-86.
Childs, 259-66.

Wednesday, April 3

6th Century BCE Israel and Second Isaiah

Class Readings: Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55*, 92-120. [Library Reserve]
Ronald Clements, *Old Testament Prophecy: From Oracles to Canon*, 78-92. [CAMS]

Friday, April 5

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 40:1-11

English Exegesis: Isaiah 40:1-11

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 327-339
Childs, 293-303

Wednesday, April 10

Group Exegetical Presentation #5: The Servant in Isa 42:1-9

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 360-67
Childs, 323-327 [his translation on pages 314-15]

Friday, April 12

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 49:1-6 & 50:4-9

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 423-430, 434-440.
Childs, 379-86, 387-95.

Wednesday, April 17

Suffering Servant: Historical Context, Reception History, Christian Interpretations

Class Readings: Anthony Ceresko, "The Rhetorical Strategy of the Fourth Servant Song (Isaiah 52:13-53:12): Poetry and the Exodus—New Exodus," *CBQ* 56 (1994): 42-55. [CAMS]

Friday, April 19

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 457-470
Childs, 407-423

Wednesday, April 24

5th Century BCE Israel and Third Isaiah

Class Readings: Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56-66*, 42-54. [Library Reserve]

Friday, April 26

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 56:1-8

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 483-86
Childs, 451-59

Wednesday, May 1

Group Exegetical Presentation #6: Isaiah 58: 1-12

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 498-99
Childs, 473-81

Friday, May 3

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

English Exegesis: Isaiah 61

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 513-15
Childs, 500-508.

Wednesday, May 8

Isaiah 64 and Advent

Class Readings: Childs, 519-26
New Interpreters, 522-32

Friday, May 10

Hebrew Translation: Isaiah 62:1-5

Class Readings: New Interpreters, 510-517
Childs, 509-13.