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OT 630 Exegesis of Isaiah

Sandra Richter

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OT 630 Exegesis of the Prophets

ISAIAH

Spring 2003

Tuesdays/Thursdays 1-2:15 pm

Instructor:

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Office Hours:

Wednesday 10-11:00 am
Thursday 2:30-3:30 pm
and by appointment

Course Description:

This class is designed for seminarians who have already laid a foundation in exegetical method by means of IBS, basic Hebrew grammar (OT501), and an Introduction to the history and literature of ancient Israel. Beginning with the larger historical, sociological, and canonical context of the prophet and his oracles, and proceeding to selected passages within Isaiah's book, this class will seek to guide the student through the process of exegesis in the Writing Prophets. The end goal of this class is to enable the student to develop the exegetical competence required for interpreting the biblical text, and responsibly representing that text to a contemporary audience.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will:

- 1) Understand the role of the biblical prophet in comparison to other divine intermediaries in the world of Ancient Israel.
- 2) Understand the canonical role of the Writing Prophets.
- 3) Identify the life-setting of the divine intermediary Isaiah such that his message may be better understood by his modern audience.
- 3) Analyze the theological and literary structure of the Book of Isaiah and, by extension, of any of the Writing Prophets.
- 4) Identify and assess the theological and literary structure of an individual oracle within the Book of Isaiah and, by extension, of any biblical oracle.
- 5) Confirm and refine, with some recourse to the Hebrew text, the literary, syntactical, and grammatical structure of individual pericopes within these oracles.
- 6) Present the biblical-theological significance of key terms in a given passage by using basic Hebrew language word-study tools and techniques.
- 7) Distill from any given passage the message intended to its original audience, and interpret and articulate its present theological import for the Church.

Course Procedures & Requirements

Method of Instruction:

The format of the class will be quite varied. Lecture and discussion will be augmented by in-class syntactical analysis. Informed student discussion will play a major role in the weekly class meetings. Hence, students will be expected to come to class prepared to demonstrate and discuss the readings and exercises assigned.

Textbooks:

Previously Required

- BHS Rudolph, W. and H.P. Ruge, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 2nd edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1984.
- Either BDB (*A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*)
or Holladay, William L. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament Based upon the Lexical Work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.
- Pritchard, James B., ed. *The HarpersCollins Concise Atlas of the Bible*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1997.
- Scott, William R. *A Simplified Guide to BHS*. Berkeley, CA: BIBAL Press, 1987.

Presently Required

- Childs, Brevard. *Isaiah*. The Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001
- Kaiser, Walter. *Toward An Exegetical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981.
- Soulen, Richard N. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 2nd Ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981.

Recommended

- Nissinen, Martti, ed. *Prophecy in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context: Mesopotamian, Biblical, and Arabian Perspectives*. Symposium Series. SBL, 2000.
- Oswalt, John. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1986.
- _____. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998.
- Wurthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979.

Requirements:

10% - class participation

15% - cumulative weekly quizzes on basic Hebrew vocabulary and paradigms

15% - IBS-style Book Survey of Isaiah

10% - 2 syntactical/structural analyses of assigned pericopes

20% - Word Study

30% - Final Exegetical Project on Isaiah

*As this is a seminar class, presence and preparedness are expected. Two absences (or the equivalent) will be waived. Following absences will *significantly* affect student's final evaluation. Missed quizzes cannot be made up, but the lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Word Studies:

Making use of the standard lexicons, concordances, and theological word books, the student will analyze the **semantic** range and theological significance of the word in question for the larger text and for Isaiah. Potential words/phrases include:

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ (7:14)

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ (42:8)

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ (52:15)

Final Projects:

The student will select one of the following pericopes upon which to write a 10-12 page exegesis paper. The paper will show evidence of all of the exegetical skills learned during the course of the semester. The student may choose one of two forms of presentation in the writing of this paper: either an academic (technical) presentation or a sermon format. Both presentations will require thorough citation, although the latter will necessarily involve more material in the footnotes. Potential pericopes include: 2:1-4; 9:1-7; 11:1-9(10); 53:4-9; 53:10-12. The *SBL Handbook of Style* will be used for citation and bibliographic form.

OUTLINE OF CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1, February 10: The Task of Exegesis

Kaiser, pp. 7-85, 185-96 "Exegetical Theology/Exegesis/Prophecy in Exegetical Preaching"

James Sire, *Scripture Twisting*, "World-view Confusion," pp. 23-30; 127-44

(See handout for discussion questions) 113

Recommended: Rodney K. Duke, "Teaching Genre Awareness in Introductory Bible Classes: An Exercise" *Spotlight on Teaching*, 6/2 (Nov 1998)

Week 2, February 17: The Sociological Context of the Israelite Prophet

The Role of the Prophet in the ANE

Quiz: *Seow chptr 2; Qal participle*

Robert Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*, pp. 89-134

Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel*, 27-48 (note that first ten pages of packet are only recommended)


ANET packet (8 pgs) 80

Recommended: Martti Nissinen, *Prophecy in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context*, pp. 47-114

The Role of the Prophet in Israel

Deuteronomy chapters 1-18, 28-30 (emphasis on chptrs 13 & 18)

Theodore Mullen, "Divine Assembly" *ABD* 2:214-17; (1 Kgs 22:1-40; Isa 6; Jer 23:18, 22; Amos 3:7, 8; Malachi 3:1)

John Huehnergard, "On the Etymology and Meaning of Hebrew  *Eretz-Israel* 26:

88-93 *Recommended:* Blenkinsopp, 16-26 8+Bible

Week 3, February 24: The Canonical Context of the Writing Prophets

The Biblical Theology of Covenant

Quiz: *Seow chptr 3; Qal perfect*

Kaiser, pp. 87-163 "Syntactical, Theological, and Homiletical Analysis" 76

The Lawsuit & the Litigator

"The Prophetic Lawsuit" handout

Isaiah 1:1-4:6; Jeremiah 2, 51:36; Amos 3:7; Micah 6:1-8

Week 4, March 3: The Historical & Literary Context of the Book of Isaiah

The Life & Times of Isaiah the Prophet

Quiz: *Seow chptr 4*

Atlas, pp. 72-77

Oswalt, vol. 1, pp. 3-64 66

Recommended: Blenkinsopp, "Isaiah in Jerusalem," 98-121

The Book of Isaiah

Childs, pp. 1-10

Kaiser pp. 197-231 "The Use of Narrative/Poetry in Expository Preaching"

*Rodney K. Duke, "Teaching Genre Awareness in Introductory Bible Classes: An Exercise" *Spotlight on Teaching*, 6/2 (Nov 1998) 52

Week 5, March 10: First Isaiah: The Litigator

Isaiah 1-6

Quiz: Seow chptr 5; Qal Imperfect

Isaiah chptrs 1-6 (cf. Matt 13:14)

Oswalt on Isaiah 1, pp. 79-111

Childs on Isaiah 1, pp. 11-23 44+ Bible

The Song of the Vineyard

syntactical analysis of Isa 5:1-7

Kaiser, 165-81 (Examples of Syntactical Analysis; cf. Traina pp. 34-58)

(cf. Matt 21:33-46)

Childs on Isaiah 5 & 6, pp. 37-60

Listen to Aubrey Speer's sermon on Isaiah 6

23

Week 6, March 17: First Isaiah: Ahaz vs. Hezekiah

Isaiah's Bookends

Quiz: Seow chptr 6; Construct Chain Rules

Isaiah 7:1-12:6, 36:1-39:8

Atlas, pp. 78-83

Oswalt on Isaiah 7-9:6, pp. 192-248

62+Bible

Text Criticism & the Question of the Virgin

Childs on Isaiah 7-11, pp. 60-106 (cf. Matt 1:18-25; 4:14; Rom 15:12)

Translate Isaiah 7:10-19 with Bibleworks, read all the text critical notes associated with v. 14 making use of Wm. Scott, pp. 61-87; cross reference to Mt. 1:23 46

Week 7, March 24: First Isaiah: Oracles Against the Nations

Quiz: Seow chptr 7; pronominal suffixes

Read Isaiah 13:1-23:18

Translate Isa 14:10-17 with Bibleworks

Childs, pp. 113-170 60+Bible

Week 8, March 31: "The Little Apocalypse" & Wordstudies

The Little Apocalypse

Quiz: Seow chptr 8; temporal modifiers & narrative sequence

Read Isaiah 24:1-27:13

G.E. Ladd, "Apocalyptic," *The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 62-65

"Apocalypse" and "Apocalypticism," in the *Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period*, pp. 46-48

Childs, pp. 171-198 32+Bible

Recommended: Oswalt, pp. 437-456; Jacob Milgrom, "The Nature and Extant of Idolatry in Eighth-Seventh Century Judah," *HUCA* 69(1998): 1-13

Word Studies

Moses Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meanings*, "Introduction," pp. 17-32, "Etymology and Exegesis," pp. 44-51, "Some Basic Concepts," pp. 101-117

Word Study handout

One sample word study

READING WEEK

Week 9, April 14: Hezekiah vs. Ahaz

Hezekiah's Crisis in Text

Quiz: Seow chptr 9

Read Isaiah 36-39

Translate with Bibleworks Isa 37:28-29, 33-38

Oswalt, pp. 627-705

Atlas, 82-83 82+Bible

Hezekiah's Crisis in Living Color

wordstudy due

Week 10, April 21: Introduction to "Second" Isaiah (the Neo-Babylonian Era)

Quiz: Seow chptr 10; Infinitive Constructs

Isaiah 40-43:21

Translate with Bibleworks Isaiah 40:1-5 (cf. Matt 3:3/Lk 3:4/Jn 1:23)

Atlas, pp. 84-89

Childs, 289-337 (53+Bible)

Listen to Richter's sermon on Isaiah 43

Recommended: Oswalt, vol. 2, pp. 3-19

Week 11, April 28: The Servant

Quiz: Seow chptr 11

Isaiah 43:22-53:12 (Compare Servant Song #1 with Matt 11:1-5; 12:1-21; Servant Song #4; cf. John 12:38-41; Acts 8:32-35; Romans 9:29)

R.K. Harrison, "Servant of the Lord," *ISBE* 4:421-23

Childs, pp. 337-423 88+ Bible

Recommended: John Sailhammer, "The Messiah in the Hebrew Bible," *JETS* 44/1:5-23

Week 12, May 5: and the Idol

Isaiah 44

syntactical analysis of Isa 44:12-23

Review Childs on Isaiah 44

Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, pp. 1-59

Michael Dick, "The Mesopotamian  Ritual," *Made in Heaven, Born on Earth*, 55-117

Recommended: Oswalt, vol. 2:163-232 120+ Bible

Class Meeting 13, May 12: "Second" Isaiah Concludes

Quiz: Seow chptr 12

Isaiah 54:1-57:13 (Compare Isa 55:1-5 with John 7:25-44)

Kaiser, pp. 235-48 "Conclusion: The Exegete/Pastor and the Power of God"

Childs, 423-449 39+Bible

Recommended: Oswalt, vol. 2:411-83

Week 14, May 19: "Third" Isaiah & Post-Exilic Era

Quiz: Seow chptr 13

Read Isa 58:14-66:24 (cf. Lk 4:14-22)

Atlas, pp.90-91

Childs, pp. 451-547 (see especially p. 543) 98+Bible

Final Projects due, May 22 at 5:00 pm