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OT 630 Exegesis of Isaiah

Sandra Richter

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OT 630 Exegesis of the Prophets

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.
4) Analyze the theological and literary structure of the Book of Isaiah and, by extension, of any of the Writing Prophets.
5) Identify and assess the theological and literary structure of an individual oracle within the Book of Isaiah and, by extension, of any biblical oracle.
6) Confirm and refine, with some recourse to the Hebrew text, the literary, syntactical, and grammatical structure of individual pericopes within these oracles.
7) Present the biblical-theological significance of key terms in a given passage by using basic Hebrew language word-study tools and techniques.
8) 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 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

Either BDB (A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament)

Presently Required


Recommended


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:

 palabra O O O (7:14)
 palabra O O O O (42:8)
 palabra O O O O (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”*  

**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*  
*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 כוֹכֵב כוֹכֵב" *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; 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”

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)
Childs on Isaiah 5 & 6, pp. 37-60
Listen to Aubrey Speer’s sermon on Isaiah 6

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

Isaiah’s Bookends

Quiz: Seow chptr 6; Construct Chain Rules
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
Childs, pp. 171-198 32+Bible


Word Studies

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
- 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*
- 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**

*Syntactical analysis of Isa 44:12-23*
- Isaiah 44
- Review Childs on Isaiah 44
- Yehezkel Kaufemann, 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*
- 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*