ISAIAH – STMA 593

Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry
Spring Quarter 2012 • Hunthausen 110 • Wednesday 5:45-8:35 pm

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Besides containing some of the Bible's most beautiful poetry, the Book of Isaiah is an important witness to periods of tremendous upheaval in Israel's history. This course will examine the book from a range of perspectives – literary, historical, and especially theological. We will consider how First, Second, and Third Isaiah make theological sense of difficult times and help later readers, including us, do the same.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Ability to read scriptural texts critically (MDiv, MAPS, MATS).
- Ability to use biblical tools and resources as a way to inform their own exegesis for the purpose of doing their ministry (MDiv).
- Ability to be a responsive, discerning listener who can enter another's worldview [whether ancient or modern] (MDiv, MAPS, MATS).
- Awareness of their own social location/assumptions/hermeneutics as they engage the text in their own lives, their communities, and the larger world (MDiv).

III. TEXTBOOKS

A. Required

1. Jacob Stromberg, *An Introduction to the Study of Isaiah* (T & T Clark, 2011). Available in the SU Bookstore.
2. Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah* (2 vols.; Westminster Bible Companion; Westminster John Knox, 1998). Available in the SU Bookstore.
3. Christopher Seitz, ed., *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah* (Wipf & Stock, 2002). Available in the SU Bookstore.

B. Recommended

1. Christopher Seitz, *Isaiah 1-39* (Interpretation; John Knox Press, 1985).
2. Richard Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (Academic Renewal Press, 2002).
3. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah* (3 vols.; AB 19; Doubleday, 2000-2003)
4. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel* (rev. and enl.; Westminster John Knox, 1996).
5. Donald Gowan, *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death and Resurrection of Israel* (Westminster John Knox, 1998).

IV. SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Mar. 28 **Introduction to the Book of Isaiah and Hebrew Poetry**
Recommended: Stromberg, *Introduction*, 1-6; Seitz, *Reading and Preaching*, 13-22.

Apr. 4 **First Isaiah – Part 1**

Assignment: Isaiah 1-6; Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, 1:8-63; Stromberg, *Introduction*, 7-25; Seitz, *Reading and Preaching*, 23-37.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 2:2-4.

Apr. 11 **First Isaiah – Part 2**

Assignment: Isaiah 7-12; Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, 1:63-115; Seitz, *Reading and Preaching*, 39-51.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 10:1-4.

Apr. 18 **First Isaiah – Part 3**

Assignment: Isaiah 13-23; Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, 1:115-87.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 20:1-6.

Apr. 25 **First Isaiah – Part 4**

Assignment: Isaiah 28-39; Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, 1:217-314.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 29:17-21.

May 2 **Second Isaiah – Part 1**

Assignment: Isaiah 40-48; Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, 2:1-109; Seitz, *Reading and Preaching*, 53-90.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 43:16-21.

May 9 **Second Isaiah – Part 2**

Assignment: Isaiah 49-55; Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, 2:109-63; Stromberg, *Introduction*, 27-40.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 49:14-15.

May 16 **Third Isaiah – Part 1**

Assignment: Isaiah 56-62; Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, 2:164-225; Stromberg, *Introduction*, 41-54; Seitz, *Reading and Preaching*, 91-103.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 56:1-5.

May 23 **Third Isaiah – Part 2**

Assignment: Isaiah 24-27, 63-66; Brueggemann, *Isaiah*, 1:188-216; 2:225-60; Stromberg, *Introduction*, 55-93; Seitz, *Reading and Preaching*, 105-26.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Isaiah 66:12-13.

May 30 **Isaiah in Post-Biblical Tradition**

Assignment: Stromberg, *Introduction*, 95-127; George Brooke, "On Isaiah at Qumran," in *"As Those Who Are Taught": The Interpretation of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL*

(Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 69-85; James Sanders, "Isaiah in Luke," *Interpretation* 36 (1982): 144-55; Elsie Stern, "Transforming Comfort: Hermeneutics and Theology in the Haftarot of Consolation," *Prooftexts* 23 (2003): 150-81.

Biblical passage for one-page paper: Luke 4:16-21.

V. REQUIREMENTS

A. *Completion of reading assignments*. They should be completed prior to the class on which they are assigned.

B. *Attendance and participation in class*. I expect you to arrive on time to each class. Since absence and tardiness, even when they are "excused," diminish your participation in class, they will likewise diminish your participation grade. Moreover, because your classmates and I deserve your full attention, I expect you to keep food and smart phones packed away during class time (not counting the fifteen-minute break). If you take notes on a laptop, I expect you to refrain from social networking during class time. Any of these activities will diminish your participation grade.

C. *Completion of weekly one-page papers*. For each class you will be expected to turn in a one-page paper – literally, a single sheet with text only on one side; I will not read or grade writing on the back of the sheet or on a separate sheet – with **two** paragraphs. In the **first** I want you to respond to a biblical passage that I have chosen from the week's assigned readings. In the **second** paragraph I want you to engage with the secondary literature. Choose something you found especially significant, insightful, challenging, or problematic, etc., and respond to it. These papers will be graded based on how thoughtfully you engage with the biblical text and the assigned reading for that class. **One-page papers that are late (i.e., not submitted as a hard copy in class and not emailed before 5:45 pm on Wednesday) will not be accepted but will receive a zero**.

D. *Completion of a final paper*. This paper will be an exegesis of a biblical text from a list that I will supply. (Students may propose to study a text not on the list. Such a proposal should be typed, double-spaced, about a page long, and it should persuade me that your proposed passage is the only biblical text that will enable you to write a successful paper. Proposals must be submitted to me by April 11. Unpersuasive proposals will not be approved.)

The term "exegesis" refers to "the process of careful, analytical study of biblical passages undertaken in order to produce useful interpretations of those passages…The goal of exegesis is to know neither less nor more than the information actually contained in the passage" (D. Stuart, "Exegesis," in *ABD* II, p. 682). A handout with more information on how to approach this paper, a list of biblical passages available for study, and a rubric will be distributed separately. Additionally, it may be helpful to consult M. Gorman's *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers* (rev. and exp.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2009).

The Second Paper is due to me by 3:50 pm on Thursday, June 7, which is the end of our assigned exam period. Late papers will be docked ten points per day until it is turned in.

VI. CITATION FORMAT

Students in the Pastoral Counseling degree submit papers with citations in APA (American Psychological Association) format delineated by the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. All other students submit papers with citations in CMS (Chicago Manual of Style) format delineated by *The Chicago Manual of Style: The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors, and Publishers.* The basic rules for these style formats may be found at the following websites:

- **APA:** http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/ (Diana Hacker website/social sciences)
- **CMS** http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/ (Diana Hacker website/history)
  or http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html (CMS website)

At times students need assistance with the writing process itself. In addition to face-to-face assistance offered by Seattle University's Writing Center (McGoldrick Learning Commons 2nd Floor), two websites offer online assistance with writing.

- **Seattle University Writing Center:** http://www.seattleu.edu/writingcenter/ (Resources)
- **Purdue Writing Center:** http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

VII. SPECIAL NEEDS

If you have or think you may have a disability (including an "invisible disability" such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, 206-296-5740.

VIII. ACADEMIC HONESTY

The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the Academic Policy concerning Academic Honesty as published in the Seattle University Student Handbook (see the Seattle University website).

IX. ASSESSMENT

Your final grade will be calculated thus:

Weekly Paper Average	40%
Participation	20%
Final Paper	40%
Final Grade	100%

Letter grades will be determined thus:

A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92.99
B+	87 – 89.99
B	83 – 86.99
B-	80 – 82.99
C+	77 – 79.99
C	73 – 76.99
C-	70 – 72.99
D+	67 – 69.99
D	63 – 66.99
D-	60 – 62.99
F	< 60