

EMBASSY

COLLEGE



SYLLABUS AND STUDY GUIDE

The Book of Isaiah

OT340

Dr. Ian Bond

BIOT399: THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

DR. IAN A. H. BOND

Textbook for the Course:
Insights into Isaiah - Second Edition
by Dr. Ian A. H. Bond

Course Syllabus

I. COURSE TITLE: BIOT399 The Book of Isaiah

II. **DESCRIPTION:** This course surveys the entire Book of Isaiah. Isaiah has been called “the greatest Old Testament prophet with a message for today,” the “messianic prophet,” and the “evangelical prophet.” The book has been described as the “Romans” of the Old Testament. Isaiah prophesied for all future ages, predicting both the first and second advents of Christ. No Old Testament book speaks more powerfully and appropriately to the modern-day church than the Book of Isaiah.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:

- A. State the content of each section of the book of Isaiah. (Knowledge)
- B. Summarize the message of each section of the book of Isaiah. (Comprehension)
- C. Describe the history of God’s people during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. The events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and the Babylonian captivity and relate it to the book of Isaiah. (Knowledge and Synthesis)
- D. Identify critical theological issues as they are given in the text of Isaiah and explain their spiritual and practical meaning. (Analysis and Evaluation)
- E. Relate the principle truths within this inspiring prophetic book to Christian life and faith today. (Evaluation)

IV. TEXTBOOK AND STUDY AIDS

- A. The Holy Bible, *New King James Version* or *New International Version* or a version of the student’s choosing
- B. This syllabus-study guide
- C. Textbook: Bond, Ian A. H. *Insights into Isaiah*, 2d ed. Columbus: TEC Publications, 2008.

V. PRE-COURSE WORK

- A. Prayerfully read the book of Isaiah in the *New King James Version* or the *New International Version* and in another modern version of your own choice.
- B. Carefully read the course textbook in its entirety.
- C. Become thoroughly familiar with this study guide. Fix the outline of the book of Isaiah firmly in your mind and heart.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADED STUDENTS

- A. Complete the pre-course work schedule.
- B. Attend ALL the class sessions.
- C. Complete the final Examination.

VII. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bazler, Klaus. *Deutero-Isaiah*. Hermencia Commentary Series. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2000.
- Beyer, Brian E. *Encountering the Book of Isaiah: A Historical and Theological Survey*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.
- Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Isaiah 1–39*. Anchor Bible Commentary Series. New York: Random House, 2007.
- _____. *Isaiah 56–66*. Anchor Bible Commentary Series. New York: Random House, 2007.
- Brown, F., S. Driver, and C. Briggs. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Isaiah 1-39*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.
- _____. *Isaiah 40–66*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.
- Childs, Brevard S. *Isaiah*. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster / John Knox, 2000.
- Chisholm, Robert B. *Handbook on the Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.
- Cornwall, Judson. *Isaiah*. Audio Lecture Series. Par: Good News Crusade, 1982.
- Drane, John. *Introducing the Old Testament*. Oxford: Lion, 1987.
- Elliott, Mark W. *Isaiah 40–66*. OT Volume 11: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture Series. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2007.
- Goldingay, John. *Isaiah*. New International Bible Commentary. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001.
- Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Electronic ed. Chicago: Moody Press, 1999.
- Harrison, R.K. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969.

- Hughes, Robert B. and Carl J. Laney. *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001.
- Keil, Carl Friedrich and Franz Delitzsch. *Commentary on the Old Testament*. Vol. 7. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002.
- Kittel, G., G. W. Bromiley, and G. Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. 10 Vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
- McGee, J. Vernon. *Isaiah 1–35*. Thru the Bible Commentary. Vol. 22. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991.
- _____. *Isaiah 36–66*. Thru the Bible Commentary. Vol. 23. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991.
- McKenna, D. L. *Isaiah 1–39*. The Commentator's Commentary. Vol. 16a. Dallas: Word, 1994.
- _____. *Isaiah 40–66*. The Commentator's Commentary. Vol. 16b. Dallas: Word, 1994.
- McKenzie, John L. *Second Isaiah*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.
- McKinion, Steven A. *Isaiah 1–39*. OT Volume 10: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture Series. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2007.
- Martin, A. *Isaiah*. Everyman's Bible Commentary. Chicago: Moody, 1956.
- Motyer, J. Alec. *Prophecy of Isaiah*. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999.
- Oswalt, John N. *Isaiah 1–39*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- _____. *Isaiah 40–66*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
- Prince, Derek. *The Last Word on the Middle East*. Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1982.
- Sawyer, John F. A. *Isaiah*. Vol 1. Daily Study Bible Series. Philadelphia: Westminster / John Knox, 1984.
- _____. *Isaiah*. Vol. 2. Daily Study Bible Series. Philadelphia: Westminster / John Knox, 1986.
- _____. *The Fifth Gospel: Isaiah in the History of Christianity*. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Schmidt, C. P. *Isaiah: The Greatest Old Testament Prophet*. Audio Lecture Series. Silver Spring: Immanuel's Church, 1991.
- Swanson, J. *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)*, electronic ed. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997.

- Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Vol. 1. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983.
- Watts, John D. W. *Isaiah 1–33*. Word Biblical Commentary. Vol. 24. Waco: Word Books, 1985.
- _____. *Isaiah 34–66*. Word Biblical Commentary. Vol. 25. Waco: Word Books, 1987.
- Webb, Barry G. *The Message of Isaiah*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996.
- Willmington, Harold. L. *The Outline Bible*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999.
- Young, Edward J. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949.
- _____. *The Book of Isaiah*. 3 Vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972.

INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH

I. EIGHT FACTS ABOUT ISAIAH

- A. ISAIAH MEANS “SALVATION OF YA[hwe]H”; derivatives of his name (*Yeshua, Yasha*) are used nearly 50 times.
- B. ISAIAH was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah and to its capital city, Jerusalem.
- C. ISAIAH, as a young man, was influenced by the prophets Amos and Hosea (compare Isaiah 1:1 with Amos 1:1 and Hosea 1:1), who were prophets to the northern kingdom of Israel and were contemporaries with Isaiah. Isaiah was also contemporary with Micah (see Micah 1:1) and shared his burden for the oppression of the poor, the selfish indulgence of the rich, their indifference towards God and their dead worship.
- D. ISAIAH, the evangelical prophet, is the Old Testament prophet most frequently quoted by Jesus and the New Testament writers.
- E. ISAIAH was married to a prophetess and had at least two sons:

Isaiah 8:3
Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, “Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.”

Isaiah 7:3
Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-Jashub your son...”
- F. ISAIAH experienced over 60 years of public life and ministry. He entered his public ministry about 750 B.C., about the time of the founding of Rome and the first Olympic Games of the Greeks. According to tradition, he was sawed in half by Manasseh, the wicked son of Hezekiah. Many scholars believe that the writer to the Hebrews referred to the assassination of Isaiah:

Hebrews 11:37

They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword...

- G. ISAIAH was a brilliant writer, using nearly 2,200 different Hebrew words—more than any other Old Testament writer. His book contains various of his sacred songs, giving insight into his poetic nature and worshipful heart (see Isaiah 5:1ff).
- H. ISAIAH, according to tradition, was of royal blood, conferring with kings as with equals sensing himself to be the Lord's royal ambassador to them.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO ISAIAH

Just before Isaiah began his prophetic ministry, the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah had both experienced great prosperity. Syria, to the immediate north, was weak and during the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham (792-735 B.C.), Assyria, to the north and east, was inactive in the area.

However, under Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.) Assyria became aggressive again. Syria and Israel tried to force Ahaz, king of Judah, to join them in an alliance against Assyria. Contrary to God's command through Isaiah, Ahaz called on Assyria for aid against the Israel-Syria coalition (see Isaiah 7). Assyria took Damascus, the capital of Syria, in 732 B.C. and invaded the territory east of the Jordan. Judah became a vassal of Assyria. In 722 B.C. Sargon II of Assyria captured Samaria, the capital of Israel, and deported the ten northern tribes.

Jerusalem, however, was miraculously spared. In Chs. 36 and 37, Isaiah recounts how God turned the Assyrian threat away in 701 B.C. Nevertheless, the incipient warfare with Assyria devastated much of Judah and brought the period of prosperity to an end.

During the early years, Isaiah warned Israel and Judah that God would judge His people's sins. After the northern kingdom of Israel had fallen and its people were taken into captivity in 722 B.C., Isaiah looked beyond the judgment, which descended upon Judah in 587-6 B.C., to describe the blessings God would have in store for His people in the last days.

III. THE UNITY OF ISAIAH

The Book of Isaiah divides logically into two sections, separated by a small historical "booklet." The message and perspective of these two sections are dramatically different; however, before the 18th century, no one questioned the unity of Isaiah.

Today critical scholars believe Isaiah was written by two, or even three, authors. Two types of evidence are presented:

- A. **Isaiah 1-35 reflects pre-exilic conditions. Isaiah 40-66 has a post-exilic perspective. It describes the fall of Babylon, and Isaiah 44 and 45 even names its conqueror, Cyrus.**
- B. **Linguistic analysis shows differences in vocabulary and style between the two major sections of Isaiah.**

Most conservative scholars do not view this evidence as conclusive. Biblical prophets often speak as if witnessing the future events they describe. The linguistic differences can be explained by the difference in subject matter between the two sections. In fact, many distinctive stylistic traits are found in both parts of Isaiah.

There is much evidence against the critical theory of two Isaiahs. No early tradition supports it. New Testament authors quote from Isaiah some 50 times, and treat both sections as the work of Isaiah. (see Matthew 4:14; Luke 4:17; John 12:38-41). Manuscripts of Isaiah found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, dating to about 150 B.C., show no division of the book. Major sections of Isaiah 40-66 are addressed to Jerusalem, which according to the critical theory did not exist at the time this section was written (see Isaiah 40:2; 41:27). It is best to accept Isaiah as it is presented in Scripture: a unified work by the greatest Old Testament prophet with a message for today.

IV. THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Isaiah's vision exalts God as the "Holy One of Israel." This phrase occurs 26 times, 13 times in each section of the book. God's righteous character is demonstrated in the words of judgment (see Chs. 2, 5). Glorious passages declare God's transcendence (see Ch. 40), and affirm His complete control of events taking place on earth (see Chs. 10, 37). Isaiah draws a number of clear pictures of the Messiah (see Chs. 9, 53), and prophesies His virgin birth (7:14). Isaiah gives the clearest revelation found in the Old Testament of the last days, describing a new heaven and earth that God will create to become the home of the righteous (Chs. 65, 66). Nearly every chapter

contains some fresh and life-changing revelation that helps us to know God better or to better understand His dealings in our lives and with humanity.

V. MESSIAH REVEALED IN ISAIAH

Seventeen chapters of Isaiah contain prophetic references to Messiah. He is revealed as the "LORD," "Branch of the Lord," "Immanuel," "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," "Prince of Peace," "Rod of Jesse," "Cornerstone," "King," "Shepherd," "Servant of Yahweh," "Elect One," "Lamb of God," "Leader and Commander," "Redeemer" and "Anointed One."

Isaiah 53 is the greatest single Old Testament chapter that prophetically reveals Christ's atoning work on the cross. No other text in the entire Bible more completely unfolds the purpose of Christ's vicarious death on the cross than this chapter. It is directly quoted nine or tens times in the New Testament: 52:15 (Romans 15:21); 53:1 (John 12:38; Romans 10:16); 53:4 (Matthew 8:17); 53:5 (Romans 4:25; 1 Peter 2:24); 53:7, 8 (Acts 8:32, 33); 53:9 (1 Peter 2:22); 53:10 (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4); 53:12 (Luke 22:37). In addition to these direct quotations, there are many New Testament fulfillments of details of Chapter 53.

CHAPTERS 1-6

I. INTRODUCTION—1:1 750-690 B.C.

A. THE GOSPEL OF ISAIAH

More teaching about Jesus and the Church than any other prophet

B. STRUCTURE OF ISAIAH:

1. Certain immediate crises arise in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah from which Isaiah springboards into the eternal purposes of God in the last days.
2. There are two major sections to Isaiah (an anthology of entire Bible / the Bible-in-miniature).
 - a) Chapters 1-39—under the shadow of the ASSYRIAN threat
 - b) Chapters 40-66—under the shadow of the BABYLONIAN threat

II. IN THE DAYS OF UZZIAH, THE LEPER KING (CHS. 1-5)

A. HISTORICAL CONTEXT: 2 Chronicles 26:3-21

B. THE FIVE MAJOR THEMES OF THE WHOLE BOOK ARE FOUND IN CHS. 1-5.

1. The moral decay and spiritual DEADNESS OF GOD'S PEOPLE (1:1-15)
 - a) Addressed to JUDAH—PRAISING people
 - b) 1:2—Underneath the religious facade is a heart of rebellion.