

Course Syllabus
WYB2315H Zion and the Servant: Key Themes for Understanding Isaiah
Wycliffe College
Toronto School of Theology
Summer 2021

Instructor Information

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Course Identification

Course Number: WYB2315H
Course Format: *Online*
Course Name: Zion and the Servant in Isaiah
Prerequisites: None

Course Description

This course focuses on the unity of the Book of Isaiah with special attention to the key themes of Zion and the Servant. Students completing this course will understand key components of the Zion tradition and the reworking of this tradition in Isaiah following the Assyrian invasion in 701 and the fall of Jerusalem in 587/6. Students will be able to describe the coherence of the Book of Isaiah through the figures of Zion and the Servant. Finally, students will apply the Zion and Servant texts in the context of proclamation within the church.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

- John Goldingay, *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014).
- Christopher R. Seitz, *Isaiah 1-39* (Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox, 1993).
- Selected readings posted on the course website.
- Weekly readings will be posted and categorized as “required” or “highly recommended” to help students prioritize the workload.

Course Website(s)

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you’ll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv, MDiv Pioneer):
Describe the coherence of the book of Isaiah through the figures of Zion and Servant	Reading the primary texts; secondary readings; lectures	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1 MDivPioneer: 1.1
Recognize interpretive issues in Isaiah and the historical contexts of the Zion and Servant texts	Secondary readings; lectures	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1; 1.2 MDivPioneer: 1.1; 1.2
Summarize the theological message of Isaiah in its final form in relation to the themes of Zion and Servant	Reading the primary texts; secondary readings; lectures	MTS: 1.1 MDiv: 1.1 MDivPioneer: 1.1
Compare and assess one's own approach to Isaiah through discussions with peers and immersion in Isaiah scholarship	Secondary readings; online forum	MTS: 3.1 MDiv: 2.1; 3.3 MDivPioneer: 2.1; 3.3
Interpret a particular Isaiah text and suggest ideas for its application in one's own context of ministry	Final writing assignment	MTS: 2.2 MDiv: 1.2; 2.2; 2.3 MDivPioneer: 1.2; 2.2; 3.3

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in four areas:

(1) Forum and Zoom Meeting Participation (30%) –Due Weekly

Each week there will be an online participation portion of the course in the form of an online forum and weekly Zoom meeting.

Online Forum

Each week, students will reflect on an overarching question related to the readings or lectures. Questions could come from a specific biblical text, an essay, or topic or theme mentioned in the textbook. Students will be asked to post their answer on the Quercus discussion forum and then respond to the answers of their peers. The instructor will likely divide the class into small groups for discussion. Your mark for this portion of the course will be calculated by gaging your timeliness in posting, as well as your engagement with other students and the course materials.

The discussion question, along with a recorded lecture, PowerPoint, and assigned readings will become available on Friday morning at 8:00am for the following week. This will allow for weekend participation for those constrained by work commitments.

Posts on the discussion board will be due Wednesday by midnight (EST) for each week of the course.

Weekly Zoom Meeting

Toward the end of the week we will have a short (one hour or less) Zoom meeting as a way for the instructor to give overall impressions from the week's forum and for students to interact with the instructor and ask questions. Think of this as a "watercooler meeting", in which we assess what took place over the week and look forward to the next module.

We may hold a vote for the best time to hold these meetings, whether Thursday evening, Friday evening, or Saturday morning.

(2) Reading Summaries (20%) – **Final Exam Week**

This assignment will need to be submitted as a DOCX file to the instructor at his email address.

Students will turn in one set of reading notes based on the weekly readings.

Guidelines for reading notes:

1. The reading notes should range between one-half page (minimum) to one full page (maximum) of notes per book chapter or article. Part of the purpose of these limits is to make sure you are spending enough time in the reading, but also to make sure you not spending too much time in it as well. The assignment is not meant to be busy-work, but is there to help you work through the material and engage with it.
2. As such, a better mark is given to reading notes that are closer to the maximum than the minimum. These are more likely to engage with the chapter or article than those that do not. Think of it from my perspective: you are trying to show me that you have read these chapters and have engaged with them. Aim to write one full page double spaced per chapter or article (12 pt font; Times New Roman or equivalent), and if you want to go a little longer (1.5 pages) that won't be a problem. Just use your time wisely.
3. Along the same lines, please give some examples in your summaries. For example, instead of simply writing, "Goldingay says that Isaiah 40ff is written by someone other than Isaiah ben

Amoz.” it would be helpful to add an example of why he thinks this: “The reasons for Goldingay’s view include that the prophet is addressing contemporaries, identifying Cyrus, etc.” A little bit of extra explanation shows that one is not simply leafing through only to summarize in generalities.

4. Try to imitate the author you are summarizing as far as time spent on certain topics. For example, if a given author spent half of a chapter summarizing four theological themes in Isaiah 1-12, then roughly half of your summary (half a page) should be concerning these four themes. In other words, emphasize what the authors emphasize.
5. Summarizing the *required* readings is sufficient for a passing grade on this assignment. Students who incorporate some of the listed *recommended* reading into their summaries may expect a higher mark.

(3) Sermon Preparation Notes (30%) – Final Exam Week

This assignment will need to be submitted as a DOCX file to the instructor at his email address.

Using a more literal translation (for example, ESV; RSV; NRSV; NASB), choose a passage on Zion or the Servant in Isaiah. Keep a journal considering how to approach the text with the goal of proclamation in your particular church. Although the assignment should be typed, its style should be that of a journal where you wrestle with the meaning of Isaiah for today. Use the questions below as a guide to this process.

Part 1: Exegetical Considerations

Structure: Become familiar with the movement of the text, how it divides and structures itself. You may consult commentaries, but you do not have to. One good practice that will help you begin to think about structure is to copy the passage, giving a line for each grammatical unit, indenting clauses that are subordinate to the main clause.

Coherence: What is the meaningful unit that will be preached (where does it begin and end)? How does it cohere thematically and syntactically? What elements of parallelism are present in the text and how do they help one unpack its message?

Historical and Immediate Literary context: How does the placement of the passage fit in its immediate literary context? Does this context influence the message of the passage in question?

Are there elements in the text that would have been understood by ancient audiences that might be lost on our modern ears (such as metaphors used and assumed social practices)?

Is there a clearly discernable historical background such as the Assyrian crisis, the devastation or restoration of Jerusalem, or perhaps the rise of Cyrus and the Persian Empire? (Not all texts will have a clear historical background, such as those found in Isaiah 24-27.)

Part 2: Preaching Considerations

Context of the Book of Isaiah: Paraphrase for your community the relationship of your chosen passage to other Zion or Servant texts in the Isaiah Book. How does it relate to or differ from these texts?

Communicate what your passage adds to the overall narrative drama of Zion or Servant in the Book of Isaiah.

Lectionary Considerations: Most likely, the Zion or Servant text in question is picked up in the Lectionary. How has this text been heard in the church? What reasons seem to guide its juxtaposition with NT texts in the RCL and its placement at its particular time of the church year? Does Isaiah in the lectionary add to our understanding of Jesus and the church?

Message and Application Notes: State the central focus of your sermon in one clear sentence. What is going to be proclaimed? Show me your thought process concerning why this will be the central focus. What considerations from the text influence this decision? What considerations from your particular ministry context? What is the particular audience (youth, elderly, college and career, families)?

Finally provide a title that captures the main focus of your message and an outline of what your sermon would look like, with a main point for each part.

Essentials to remember:

1. *Grammar, spelling and style will account for 5% of your grade. Be sure to proof-read your paper carefully before submitting it!*
2. *If you use secondary sources, alert the instructor how you plan to cite them. Please review the "plagiarism" policy below.*
3. *Papers should be typewritten and not more than 7 pages (not including the title page and bibliography). Papers should be double spaced with margins of no less than 1 inch; use a 12 pt font.*

(4) Exam (20%) – Due Date TBD

The final exam will take place on Quercus. I will give a 48-hour window within which to write the exam. Within this window, once you start the exam, you will be given a time limit in which you must complete the exam (no more than 2 hours). You can only take the exam one time, and once you start the exam you must complete it during that session.

The exam itself will be closed book and closed note.

The goal of the exam is to test your introductory knowledge of the content of the course, not to stump you. Focus will be on key theological themes, important passages and historical events in the Book of Isaiah, and significant issues in Isaiah research. If you pay attention to the readings and lectures (take good notes) and study for the exam, you should do just fine. The exam will be broken down into several parts:

- (1) (40%) A multiple-choice portion based on the required reading. Good reading notes will be great preparation.
- (2) (20%) A True/False section based upon your Isaiah reading. I will be looking for a general understanding of key passages.
- (3) (40%) A short answer portion of the exam will cover key ideas from the lectures.

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate

punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library_archives/theological_resources/theological_guides/avoiding_plagiarism.html

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Day, Date

Topic: Introduction to Reading Isaiah

Possible Subtopics:

Overarching Themes

Hebrew Parallelism

Critical Issues

Biblical Text: Isaiah 1

Other Assigned Reading: Goldingay, “Introduction”; Selections from Seitz

Interpretation Commentary

Week 2

Day, Date

Topic: Zion's Need for Redemption

Possible Subtopics:

Structure of Isaiah 1-12: Judgement and Restoration of Zion

The Hardening of King and Judah: Ahaz and the Syro-Ephaimite Crisis (736-732)

Biblical Text: Isaiah 2:1-5; 5:1-9:7

Other Assigned Reading: Goldingay "Isaiah 1-12"; Selections from Seitz Interpretation Commentary

Week 3

Day, Date

Topic: Visions of a New King and New City

Possible Subtopics:

New King: Royal Oracles (9:1-7; 11:1-16; and Isa 32)

New Zion: Community of Right Worship (Isaiah 12; 24-27; 33; 35)

Biblical Text: Isaiah 11:1-12:6; Isaiah 24-27; Isaiah 32-35

Other Assigned Reading: Goldingay, "Isaiah 13-27" and "28-39"; Selections from Seitz Interpretation Commentary

Week 4

Day, Date

Topic: A Comparison of Ahaz and Hezekiah and a Consideration of the Tradition of Zion's Inviolability

Possible Subtopics:

Comparison of Ahaz (Isaiah 7-9) and Hezekiah (Isaiah 36-39)

Tradition of Zion's Inviolability

Siege of Sennacherib (701)

Royal Oracles Revisited: Historical Rootedness and Typological Significance

Biblical Text: Isaiah 36-39

Other Assigned Reading: Selections from Seitz Interpretation Commentary; articles by Goldingay

Week 5

Day, Date

Topic: Renewal of Israel after the Exile: the Figure of Zion in Isaiah 40-55

Possible Subtopics:

Hymnic Structure of Isaiah 40-55

The New Doxological Community

Reversal of Isaiah's Ministry of "Hardening" in Isaiah 40-55

Zion as Coherent Figure in the Book of Isaiah: Relationship to 1-39

Biblical Text: Isaiah 40; 43; and 49-55

Other Assigned Reading: Goldingay “Isaiah 40-55”; Articles by Webb, Seitz, and Leene.

Week 6

Day, Date

Topic: Renewal of Leadership after the Exile: the Figure of “Servant” in Isaiah 40-55

Possible Subtopics:

Coherent Literary Presentation of the Servant Songs

Identifying the Servant Figure: From “all Israel” as Servant to an Individual Servant Figure (representing restored Israel)

Mission and Accomplishment of the Servant

Servant in the Book of Isaiah: Comparing Servant in 40-55 and Promised King in 1-39

Biblical Text: Servant Songs in Isaiah 42; 49-50; and 52-53

Other Assigned Reading: Articles by Goldingay; Seitz; Berges; and Reventlow

Week 7

Day, Date

Topic: From “Servant” to “Servants”: The Zion Community in Isaiah 55-66

Possible Subtopics:

Servants as Inheritors/Descendants of the Servant and Zion

Democratization of the Davidic Covenant

Zion Community as Center of a Liturgical Empire for the Nations

Opponents of the Servants within Israel and the Question of “Who Belongs to the True Israel?”

Biblical Text: Isaiah 56-66

Other Assigned Reading: Goldingay “Isaiah 56-66”; Articles by Beuken and Knoppers

Week 8

Day, Date

Topic: Isaiah within the Canon

Possible Subtopics:

Intertextuality

Isaiah and the Psalter

Isaiah and Lamentations

Reception of Isaiah in NT and Lectionary

Biblical Text: Selections from Isaiah; Psalms; and Lamentations

Other Assigned Reading: Various articles by Seitz

Exam Week

TBD