



# The Book of Isaiah

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## Programmed Syllabus

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**Updated 2006**



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## Course Description

Few Old Testament books are as theologically rich and literarily compelling as Isaiah. Learners discover those dynamics as they complete an exegetical study of the Book of Isaiah. In addition to surveying the contents of the book, the course develops the understanding and skills of exegetical exposition. In the process, students examine key chapters in Isaiah, such as the Promise of Immanuel (7), the Message of Hope (40), and the “Suffering Servant” (53). The course demonstrates how the theology of the Messiah is integral to successful Christian life and ministry.

## Course Objectives

1. To gain a better understanding of the Book of Isaiah, becoming familiar with the theological motifs, the hermeneutics of prophetic literature, and the major theories about the book.
2. To come to a better understanding of the method of doing exegesis in the Old Testament prophetic literature, observing how the approach is used in passage after passage through the lectures and the reading, seeing how the details of exegesis must be carefully selected and arranged for interpretation, and in the process learning what books and procedures will be most helpful in the future.
3. To learn how to adapt the findings of exegesis to exposition, learning how to identify and apply the biblical theology of a passage, to word the ideas in an expository form, to correlate the subject matter with the New Testament, and to make useful applications.

## Course Texts

The student will be expected to have access to at least *one version of the biblical text of Isaiah*, preferably one that is new to the student and will require some comparison with the more familiar translations.

Motyer, J. Alec. *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*. Downer's Grove, IL: IVP, 1993.

Ross, Allen P. *The Exegesis and Exposition of the Book of Isaiah (EEBI)*. Grand Rapids: The Institute of Theological Studies, 1996. **(Only available through ITS)**

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**NOTE:** This text (EEBI), published by ITS, serves both as required reading and as the study guide for the course. It contains the lecture outlines for note-taking purposes and comments by Ross to supplement the lectures. For the page numbers corresponding to each lecture see the assignment sheets in this syllabus (p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**ff).

## COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Whether you sit in a traditional classroom or study from a distance, you will benefit from interaction, collaboration, and spiritual formation (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 10.3.3.3; 10.3.4.3). In order to meet this need in distance theological education, ITS is developing structures and resources to encourage spiritual formation and community interaction in our courses. In this course, we have included three collaborative learning features:

1. ITS Online Interactivity Forum (see course requirements) - fosters peer-to-peer interaction in a global, threaded discussion (required for all students)
2. Spiritual Formation Project (see course requirements) - fosters mentor-to-learner interaction in a mentor-guided reflection, discussion and application (required for all students)
3. Learning Community Assignments (see end of syllabus) - fosters peer-to-peer collaboration in a group approach to assignments (optional but recommended where possible)

Go to [www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/](http://www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/) for the most up-to-date ITS resources.

## Course Requirements

1. *Time:* In order to receive three semester (or four quarter) hours of credit, the student is required to put in a minimum of 120 hours and complete the course within the requirements of the institution in which he/she is enrolled.
2. *Listening:* The student is required to listen carefully to the twenty-four lectures of recorded material by Dr. Ross. Before listening to a taped lecture, the student should prepare by reading that portion of the Book of Isaiah to be covered in the lecture.
3. *Reading:* In conjunction with each lecture the student must read the assigned pages from Motyer and Ross. This will give further exegetical development of the text, which cannot be covered fully in the brief lecture.

**NOTE:** At the end of the course, the student will estimate on an index card what percentage of the required listening and reading he/she completed. This should be turned in at the time of the final exam.



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4. *Study Questions:* For each lecture there are a number of study questions to be answered. The student may use any notes, the recorded lecture, the Ross study guide, or the Motyer commentary to answer these questions.
5. *ITS Online Interactivity Forum:* Participate with other students worldwide in an ongoing asynchronous threaded discussion of two major course topics.

Go to [www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/](http://www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/) to register for and enter the ITS On-Line Forum. In order to get the fullest benefit from the Forum, complete the assignment *after* you have listened to *all* the lectures. Be sure to return to the forum after finishing the course to see how others respond. Follow these steps to complete the assignment:

- ♦ Post an original answer to each question for your course (75 word min.).
- ♦ Post your response to any previous answer given to each question (75 word min.).
- ♦ Submit a document to your proctor that contains the original questions, your postings, and the postings to which you responded.

**NOTE: Please read the “Assignment Instructions” in the Forum for details.**

Objective: to develop critical thinking skills through personal interaction with the content of the course and the responses of others within a diverse community of learners.

6. *Spiritual Formation Project:*

**RATIONALE:** Ministry preparation and the Christian life require more than academic exercises. Learners also need personal, spiritual formation, which involves theological reflection and critical thinking on their current practices and assumptions. This process occurs as learners engage in self-reflection and interaction in a community of learning. **With this in mind**, ITS includes in all courses a capstone project addressing these issues and facilitating interaction beyond the formal learning environment (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 4.1.1; 10.3.3.3).

Write a **five-to-six page reflective essay** and **interview a mentor**, discussing the spiritual impact of this course on your life. *Identify your mentor early in the course*, and submit the essay to your grader when you take the final exam. This last project should not be a summary of course content, but an application of course principles. Complete the following:



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a. **Personal Reflection and Evaluation: *Reflect on the course*** – To integrate your academic studies with your walk of faith, reflect on the content of the course and evaluate your life in light of what you learned.

1. Follow these steps in your reflection:

Step 1: What **one** theme, principle, or concept in the course is the most significant to you personally? Why is it significant?

Step 2: What portion(s) of the course brought this theme/principle/concept to light?

Step 3: Think about your past. Why is it vital now for you to deal with and apply this theme/principle/concept?

Step 4: How should this affect your thoughts and actions, and what *specific steps* should you take to *concretely* apply what you have learned?

2. Write your answers to the above questions in full paragraph form. (Recommended length for this reflection: **approximately three pages**)

3. Give a copy of this reflection to your mentor (see #2).

b. **Community Reflection and Interaction: *Interview a mentor*** – Since the Holy Spirit uses the input of others to guide and form His people, interview a mentor according to the following guidelines:

1. Who should you interview? (1-3 are required; 4-6 are recommended)

- a. Someone with whom you have a reasonably close relationship.
- b. Someone who is a mature Christian ministry leader (i.e. a pastor).
- c. Someone who is **not** your grader or a family member.
- d. Someone who values the spiritual formation process.
- e. Someone who is familiar with and values the subject of the course.
- f. Someone who has experience using the content of the course in ministry.

NOTE: ***Identify your mentor early in the course***, and give him/her the page entitled “Guidelines for Mentors.”

2. Focus of the interview – Your interview should focus on the issues and questions you raise in your essay. For example:

- ♦ What feedback can your mentor give in response to your essay?



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- ◆ In light of the course content, are the conclusions you made appropriate? Why or why not?

- ◆ What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications might he/she suggest from his/her own life and ministry?

NOTE: Conduct this interview either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do **not** use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc). Suggested length: 45 minutes.

**c. Synthesis and Application: *Draw your final conclusions*** – Having reflected on the course and the discussion with your mentor, synthesize what you have learned in these three sections:

1. Section 1: Begin your essay with the personal reflection from “a” above. This should be exactly what you gave your mentor for the interview.
2. Section 2: Comment on your interview, explaining what you discussed and the insights you gained from your mentor. Include the following:
  - ◆ What were the mentor’s comments regarding your essay?
  - ◆ What advice did he/she give?
  - ◆ How did his/her comments expand or correct your application of the course?
  - ◆ Include the person’s name, occupation, and the length of the interview.
3. Section 3: Conclude with a synthesis of what you have learned. Answer the following:
  - ◆ If your mentor corrected any thoughts in your “Personal Reflection and Evaluation”, how do you feel about these corrections? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
  - ◆ Synthesizing your thoughts from section one and your mentor’s insight in section two, what final conclusions have you reached? How is this different from section one?
  - ◆ In light of the interview and further reflection, what additional, *specific* changes need to occur in your life and what *concrete* steps will you take to implement them?

**NOTE TO STUDENTS:** Your effort in this assignment will determine its benefit. If by the end of this course you have not yet reflected critically on your life in light of what you have studied, allow this assignment to guide you in that process. The instructor for this course will not score your essay based on the amount of spiritual fruit you describe; so do not exaggerate (or trivialize) what you have learned. **The primary grading criteria is that you have thoughtfully considered the principles of**

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minimal requirements (as noted above), you will earn the full points for this assignment.

Note on confidentiality: Perhaps the Holy Spirit is dealing with you in some very personal areas of your life. Because of this, your grader will keep your essay entirely confidential and either return or discard it.

Objective: to stimulate reflection and interaction on course principles in order to enhance personal spiritual formation.

Revised 10/05

7. *Exams:* There will be both a mid-term examination and a final examination that must be passed in order to obtain credit for the course.

*Mid-term Exam:* The mid-term exam covers the introductory matters of the authorship and date of the book, the historical setting, and some of the most significant prophetic oracles in the first part of the book.

*Final Exam:* The final exam will test the student's knowledge of the contents of the book—what is in the various chapters of the book. It will also focus on the Servant and Messianic passages, both the suffering and the glory.

## Course Grading

1.	Listening and Reading.....	10%
2.	Study Questions .....	30%
3.	ITS Online Interactivity Forum .....	5%
4.	Spiritual Formation Project .....	15%
3.	Mid-term Exam .....	20%
4.	Final Exam.....	<u>20%</u>
		100%



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## **Notes Regarding This Downloaded Syllabus**

This downloadable syllabus is not exhaustive. It is designed to provide learners with a picture of the course, not a full outline of the course. Grader Guidelines, Appendixes, Bibliographies, Lecture Outlines, and Review Questions have been removed. The complete course syllabus is included with purchase of the course in either a digital or hard-copy format.

Likewise, individuals taking the class for credit are responsible for the syllabus requirements of the specific institution through which the course is offered. Each individual institution has reserved the right to alter or change the syllabus as deemed necessary.