



Isaiah

Autumn 2008

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Course Outline

	Seminar
Week One	Lieu, J (2004) <i>Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World</i> (Oxford: OUP), Chapter 2 (pp 27-61)
Week Two	What influence has Isaiah on Christmas? Consider carols/music, readings/lectionary and liturgy.
Week Three	Wilken, R L (2007) <i>Isaiah: Interpreted by Early Christian and Medieval Commentators (Church's Bible)</i> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans). Section on Isaiah 7
Week Four	Read Isaiah 40 and prepare a sermon outline based upon it.
Week Five	What are the main themes in Isaiah 56-66? How do they develop the themes of the earlier chapters?

If you would like to read through Isaiah alongside this module, I would suggest the following plan: week one, 1-12; week two 13-27; week three 28-39; week four 40-55; week five 56-66.

On the two weeks where there is a reading (weeks one and three) please read the chapter before the session and come prepared for a discussion on it. On the other weeks it would be good if one or two could prepare something to bring to the class - we'll talk about volunteers in week one!

You will find some book recommendations throughout the handouts in various places. These are books which you might like to refer to if you find a topic particularly interesting. Often students ask about a single book recommendation for a module. I'm afraid there simply isn't a single book which covers all that we look at. Moreover, different commentaries are written for different audiences and, as you will find, the whole question of how you treat the text is a controversial one.

Nonetheless, a few words on commentaries might be helpful. The technically minded would enjoy Oswalt or Watts (evangelical), Childs (canonical), Baltzer or Blenkinsopp (critical). Those wanting a sermon will probably look at Goldingay or the two volumes in the Interpretation series by Hanson and Seitz. Brueggemann fans will covet his two volume work, which will be as rewarding and suggestive as usual. Those brave enough to step outside the mindset of the past 400 years will enjoy the Isaiah volume in the Church's Bible Series by Wilken. More details on these can be found on the next page.

I maintain a website at cym.ckwmoore.com and will post some information there as well as answers to questions asked in the sessions. You will also find material relevant to other modules I teach which you might find interesting.

Finally, a quick word about the icon on the cover which shows Isaiah prophesying the virgin birth. It neatly summarizes the importance of Isaiah to the Christian church as a proto-evangelist. It is not for nothing that the book of Isaiah is sometimes called the fifth gospel.

Chris Moore

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Translations

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On Prophetic Literature

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McConville, G. (2002) *Exploring the Old Testament: The Prophets vol 4* (London, SPCK)

Petersen, D (2002) *The Prophetic Literature* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox)

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Prophecy and the Covenant

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The Role of Prophecy

A critique of the established order

Prophecy and revelation

The Prophets of Exile

Brueggemann, W (1986) *Hopeful Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press)

Jeremiah and grief

Ezekiel and holiness

Isaiah and hope

The Scriptures and the New Testament

Continuity

Reinterpretation

Canonical flux and Christ

John 5:39, Luke 24:27, Acts 17:2, Acts 18:28, Romans 1:2, Romans 15:4, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Not Prooftexting, but retelling

Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. (Luke 24:25ff, cf Philip in Acts 8:30-31)

The Authority of Scripture

For more on the role of scripture in the Early Church generally, see Young, F (2002) *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (New York: Hendrickson).

Such, then, is their system, which neither the prophets announced, nor the Lord taught, nor the apostles delivered, but of which they boast that beyond all others they have a perfect knowledge. They gather their views from other sources than the Scriptures and, to use a common proverb, they strive to weave ropes of sand, while they endeavour to adapt with an air of probability to their own peculiar assertions the parables of the Lord, the sayings of the prophets, and the words of the apostles, in order that their scheme may not seem altogether without support. In doing so, however, they disregard the order and the connection of the Scriptures, and so far as in them lies, dismember and destroy the truth. By transferring passages, and dressing them up anew, and making one thing out of another, they succeed in deluding many through their wicked art in adapting the oracles of the Lord to their opinions.

Their manner of acting is just as if one, when a beautiful image of a king has been constructed by some skilful artist out of precious jewels, should then take this likeness of the man all to pieces, should rearrange the gems, and so fit them together as to make them into the form of a dog or of a fox, and even that but poorly executed; and should then maintain and declare that this was the beautiful image of the king which the skilful artist constructed, pointing to the jewels which had been admirably fitted together by the first artist to form the image of the king, but have been with bad effect transferred by the latter one to the shape of a dog, and by thus exhibiting the jewels, should deceive the ignorant who had no conception what a king's form was like, and persuade them that that miserable likeness of the fox was, in fact, the beautiful image of the king. In like manner do these persons patch together old wives' fables, and then endeavour, by violently drawing away from their proper connection, words, expressions, and parables whenever found, to adapt the oracles of God to their baseless fictions.

Irenaeus (late 2nd century), Against Heresies, 8:1

The Scrolls and Eucharist

see also Katz, P (1945) The Early Christians' Use of Codices instead of Rolls in The Journal of Theological Studies, Oxford.

The Use of Codices & Testimony Books

Gamble, H Y (1995) *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale)

The New Testament use of Prophecy

Which Scriptures?

The role of the Septuagint

See also McLay, T (2003) *The use of the Septuagint in New Testament research* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans). For a good modern translation, use the *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (OUP).

The Targums

see Evans, C A (1993) *Word and glory: on the exegetical and theological background of John's prologue* (Sheffield: JSOT Press) for an interesting discussion on the influence of the Targum of Isaiah upon John's gospel

New Testament Interpretation

Matthew: an example

Matthew 1:22: All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet

Matthew 2:15: and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

Matthew 2:17: Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

Matthew 2:23: There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

Matthew 1:22-23: All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

*"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,
which means, "God is with us."*

But ... Hosea 11?

Isaiah 7:14 ... virgin birth?

1 Peter 1:10-12: Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours made careful search and inquiry, inquiring about the person or time that the Spirit of Christ within them indicated when it testified in advance to the sufferings destined for Christ and the subsequent glory. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things that have now been announced to you through those who brought you good news by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look!

2 Peter 1:20: First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Re-interpretation

Figurative Reinterpretation

e.g. Matthew 12:38–42, Numbers 21:8, John 3:14

Textual Communities

Lieu, J (2004) *Christian identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman world* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Intertextuality

Job 13:16 (LXX) - καὶ τοῦτό μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν
Philippians 1:19 - ὅτι τοῦτό μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν

Justin Martyr: Dialogue with Trypho

Allegorical Interpretation

Widespread use

Galatians 4:21-5:1

Tell me, you who desire to be subject to the law, will you not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and the other by a free woman. One, the child of the slave, was born according to the flesh; the other, the child of the free woman, was born through the promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One woman, in fact, is Hagar, from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the other woman corresponds to the Jerusalem above; she is free, and she is our mother. For it is written,

*“Rejoice, you childless one, you who bear no children,
burst into song and shout, you who endure no birthpangs;
for the children of the desolate woman are more numerous
than the children of the one who is married.”*

Now you, my friends, are children of the promise, like Isaac. But just as at that time the child who was born according to the flesh persecuted the child who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the scripture say? “Drive out the slave and her child; for the child of the slave will not share the inheritance with the child of the free woman.” So then, friends, we are children, not of the slave but of the free woman. For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Patristic Allegorical Exegesis

Lubac, H de (1998) *Medieval Exegesis. Volume 11: The Four Senses of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans)

- Literal - Jonah was swallowed by a great fish
- Tropological - which shows us that we cannot escape divine imperatives
- Allegorical - the swallowing prefigures Christ's three days of death
- Anagogical - it illumines heavenly reality (Christ redeems though his willing descent)

The Role of Allegory

Does not add anything new. Must conform to rule of faith (Augustine). Thus, Jerusalem can offer illumination to:

- church (theological)
- society (moral)
- heaven (eschatological)

Sometimes used to avoid literal sense

The problem with Allegory

Interpretation Now

Christian Zionist

Unfulfilled prophecies

e.g. Amos 9:11-15; Ezekiel 37:21-2

Jesus as the New Israel/Temple

Matthew 12:6; John 2:13-22; 4:20-26; Hebrews 8:6; Revelation 21:22 etc.

The old covenant:

“By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and ageing will soon disappear. ” (Hebrews 8:13)

Millennialist Interpretations

Application to current events

Replacement Theology or Supersessionism

The prophecies transferred to church and fulfilled in a spiritual sense.

Jesus as Israel

Prophecies fulfilled in Christ

2 Samuel 7:12-17 and Matthew 1:1; Mark 11:10; Luke 1:69 etc.

Hosea 1:10, 2:23 and Romans 9:24-26

Isaiah 28:16 and 1 Peter 2:4-6

Hosea 6:1-2 and Luke 24:45-46

Jeremiah 31:23-34 and Luke 22:20,

Jesus as goal and fulfilment of Law

Using Prophecy Today

A Christological Bias

The rule of faith

The background and context of the text itself is important

How Many Isaiahs?

The Growth of Critical Scholarship

See the introductory sections of most commentaries for discussions. Childs is useful.

Stages of Transmission	Critical Method	Example
events	historical criticism	did exodus happen?
↓		
oral traditions	form criticism/historical	narrative, songs
↓		
written records	source criticism	J, E, D & P
↓		
redaction	redaction criticism	differences between Luke and Mark
↓		
transmission	textual criticism	differences between manuscripts
↓		
translation	textual criticism	Aramaic (Targum), Greek (Septuagint, NT), Syriac (Peshitta), English (AV, NRSV, etc)
↓		
reception	hermeneutics	commentators, preachers, theologians, individuals

One Isaiah

Tradition of Jews and Christians prior to 18th Century.

John 12:38-41

This was to fulfill the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

“Lord, who has believed our message,

and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” - Isaiah 53:1 (II)

And so they could not believe, because Isaiah also said,

“He has blinded their eyes

and hardened their heart,

so that they might not look with their eyes,

and understand with their heart and turn—

and I would heal them.” - Isaiah 6:1 (I)

Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke about him.

Romans 10:20

Then Isaiah is so bold as to say,

“I have been found by those who did not seek me;

I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.” - Isaiah 65:1 (III)

Text Form of Dead Sea Isaiah scroll (1Qisaa – The Great Isaiah Scroll)

Isaiah 36–39 itself shows an historical transition

The Cyrus prophecy is consonant with divine prediction
e.g. 1 Kings 13:1-2

Similarity in style throughout, and distinctive from other prophets
cf. R. Margalioth (1964) *The Indivisible Isaiah*. *New York: Yeshiva University)

“for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken it” (1:20; 40:5; 58:14); nowhere else in OT

“streams of water” (30:25; 44:4 in Hebrew); nowhere else in OT

“the Holy One of Israel” (12 in ch. 1-39, 13 in ch. 40-66). 5 times outside Isaiah.

“highway” 2 times in ch. 1-39, 5 times in ch. 40-66

“remnant” 14 times in ch. 1-39, 3 times in ch. 40-66

“pangs of a woman in travail” 4 times in ch. 1-39, 3 times in ch. 40-66

Two Isaiahs

Eichhorn (1783) and Döderlein (1789)

Historical Situation

First half

Setting

Assyria

Destruction, exile and suffering are presumed

Second half

Audience addressed is already in exile in Babylon (48:20)

Concern for captives (40:21, 26, 28; 43:10; 48:8; 50:10-11; 51:6, 12-13; 58:3-14)

Jerusalem ruined (44:26; 58:12; 61:4; 63:18; 64:10-11)

Babylon is not a world Empire in the time of Isaiah ben Amoz

40-66 does not predict the Exile, but sees it as something that is presupposed

And restoration to Jerusalem (40:2; 46:13; 48:20)

Theological Differences

Chapters 1 - 39	Chapters 40-66
God is majestic	Larger and fuller conception of God
Nation led by Davidic king (11:1)	Led by priests, levites & princes (61:6; 66:21)
Messianic king	Righteous servant
Doctrine of faithful remnant	No comparable theme
Concrete historical background	No historical background

Language and Styles

Three Isaiahs

B Duhm

Trito-Isaiah

Emphasis on the community of the restoration:

General setting is Jerusalem (cf Haggai and Zechariah)

- Postponement of fulfillment of promises is judgment on crime and incompetence
- The walls have still not been rebuilt (60.10)

A composite book

- Majority see an anthology containing about twelve passages

Loads of Isaiahs

From Stalemate to Meaning

Redaction criticism

Appreciation that texts evolve

Isaiah is a process (R Clements)

Redactional layers:

 eighth century: pre-exilic

 seventh century: Josianic

 exilic

 post-exilic

‘Retrospective reading’

The approach of Childs (canonical)

Post-Structural Interpretation

"A basic assumption of the historical critical method is that a proper exegesis depends on a correct assessment of the age of various oracles within a book. That this type of historical judgment is necessary for reconstructing the development of a composition cannot be denied. However, this historical enterprise should not be confused with the exegetical task of understanding how a community of faith heard its traditions, and bore witness to their authority in the very process of treasuring them" Childs, B. S. (1979). Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture. Fortress Press, p438.

Background to First Isaiah

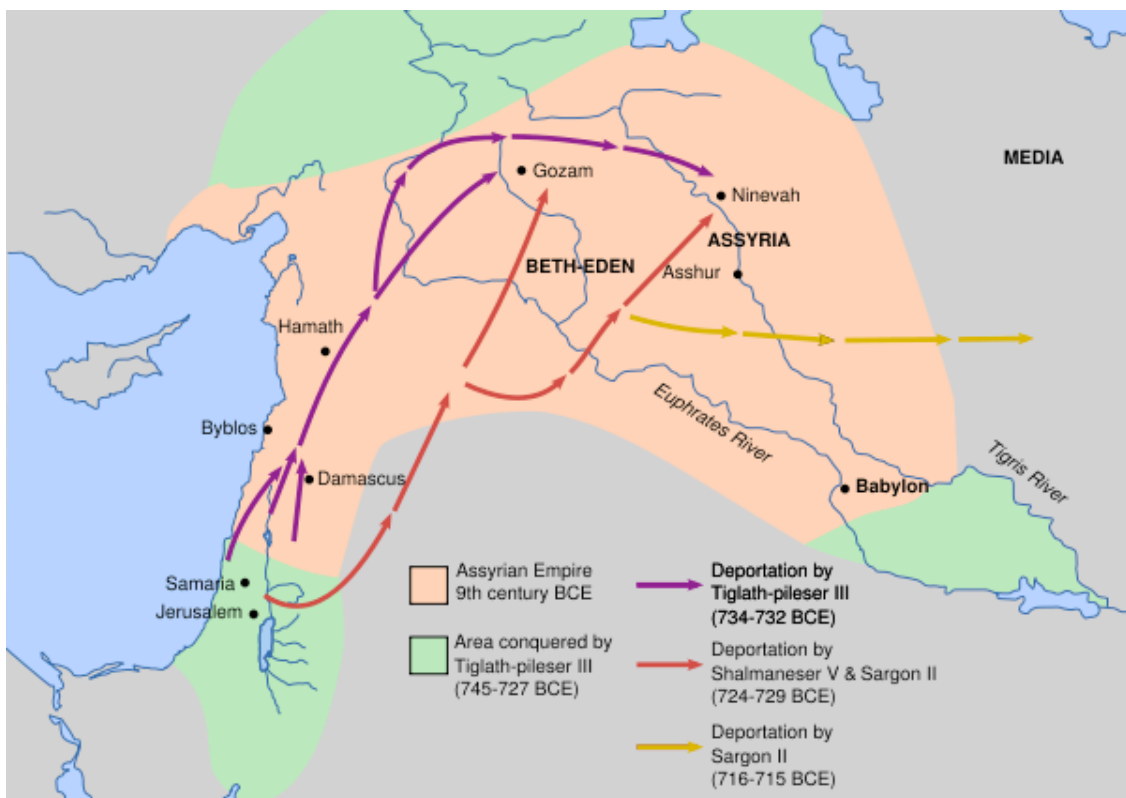
Introduction

Isaiah was a contemporary of Amos and Hosea.

Threat of Assyria

Historical Background

Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727)



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Deportation_of_Jews_by_Assyrians.svg

Judah refuses to join alliance

Submission to Assyria

Hezekiah

Structure of First Isaiah

Chapters 1-12

Chapters 13 to 23

Chapters 24 to 27

Chapters 28 to 33

Chapters 36 to 39 (cf 2 Kings 18 to 20)

Themes in First Isaiah

Similarities with other prophets

Social Injustice and Moral Decay
Isaiah 5:7-10, 11, 18

Cultic practice
Isaiah. 1:10-17

Lack of morality brings judgment

The King and Zion

First Siege (chapters 7 & 8)

King Ahaz, 734

Maher-shalal-hash-baz: the spoil speeds, the prey hastens

Shear-jashub: only a remnant will survive

Immanuel: Who is the woman?

Second Siege (chapters 36 to 39)

Hezekiah and the Assyrians

The Siege

The Davidic Covenant

“Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, shoot an arrow there, come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege ramp against it. By the way that he came, by the same he shall return; he shall not come into this city, says the LORD. For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.” Isa 37:33

The Remnant (chapter 6)

*And he said, “Go and say to this people:
‘Keep listening, but do not comprehend;
keep looking, but do not understand.’
Make the mind of this people dull,
and stop their ears,
and shut their eyes,
so that they may not look with their eyes,
and listen with their ears,
and comprehend with their minds,
and turn and be healed.”*

Punishment and mercy

The result of the remnant

Isaiah 10:21: A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. For though your people Israel were like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return. Destruction is decreed, overflowing with righteousness. For the Lord GOD of hosts will make a full end, as decreed, in all the earth.

Eschatology in First Isaiah

The return of the remnant (cf Isaiah 2:2-4)

Development within Jewish theology
Genesis ('J')

Deuteronomy

Isaiah

Themes in Deutero-Isaiah

Backgrounds

Zedekiah and Babylon

Those left behind in Judah

Those taken to Babylon

Effects of the Exile

Theological import of Exile

Return: A New Exodus

An oracle of comfort or consolation (40:1-11)

The return (cf 55:12-13)

The Word of God is reliable (40:8, 55:11)

Monotheism

A response to Babylon

A response to Exile

Other gods are nothing (cf Isaiah 44:9–20)

God orders world affairs
Isaiah 41:25-29

Isaiah 44:28

Isaiah. 45:13

Cyrus is a messiah (Isaiah 45:1)

Outworking of Yahwistic faith

First Servant Song

Isaiah 42:1–9

Servant(s)? Individual, individuals or nation?

Isaiah 41:8-10

Focus on justice

Mission of Israel (42:5–8)

Second Servant Song

Isaiah 49:1-13

Chapter 48

Mighty words

Universal scope

The Third Song

Isaiah 50

Authority from the word

Non-rebellion brings with it suffering

Not all will receive the message (10-11, cf Trito-Isaiah)

The Suffering Servant

Isaiah 53:3-11

Servant as Jesus

Servant as a type of Israel

Israel's self understanding

Reinterpretation of the Davidic covenant

Isaiah in the New Testament

The Servant in Matthew's Christology

Isaiah 42:1-4

*Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
He will not cry or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
He will not grow faint or be crushed
until he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.*

Other uses of Isaiah in Matthew

Jesus' birth (1:23)

To describe the ministry of John the Baptist (3:1-3)

To authenticate ministry (11:2)

Elsewhere in NT

Luke 4:16-19

Acts 8:26-40

1 Peter 2:22-24

Isaiah in the Early Church

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The Bible in the Christian Tradition

Liturgy and debates

Commentaries

Marginal notes (scholium - σχόλιον comment)

Sermon series on particular books

Scholarly commentaries

1 Corinthians 10:1-4, 6

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ... Now these things occurred as examples [types- typicos] for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did.

Ephesians 5:31-32

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church.

Isaiah the Evangelist

Post-fulfillment interpretation

Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah

Behold a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son (7:14 LXX, Vg.), a rod out of the stem of Jesse (11:1). His name shall be called 'Immanuel' (7:14), 'Wonderful counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace' (9:6), Key of David (22:22), the Christ (45:1 LXX, Vg). To us a child is born (9:6). The ox knows its owner and the ass its master's crib (1:3). The gentiles will come to your light and the kings to your rising ... they shall bring gold and incense (60:6). The idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence (19:1). Behold my servant ... in whom my soul delights (42:1). The spirit of the Lord will rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding ... (11:2). By the way of the sea, beyond Jordan and Galilee of the nations (9:1), the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor ... (61:1). Surely he has taken our infirmities and borne our sicknesses (53:4). Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened ... then shall the lame man leap like a hart (35:5-5). The glory of the Lord is risen upon you (60:1). He shall be a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation (28:16), but also a stone of offence and a rock of stumbling to both the houses of Israel (8:14). He said, 'Go and tell this people, Hear indeed, but understand not ...' (6:9).

I will weep bitterly ... because of the destruction of the daughter of my people (that is, Jerusalem 22:4). Say to the daughter of Zion, Your saviour comes (62:11 LXX, Vg). My house will be called a house of prayer for all people (56:7). My servants shall eat but you shall be hungry, my servant shall drink but you will be thirsty ... (65:13). Ho everyone that thirsts, come to the waters ... (55:1). He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter (53:7). The government (that is, the cross bearing the inscription 'King of the Jews' on it) shall be on his shoulder (9:6), and there shall come up briars and thorns (5:6). I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to those that pluck out the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting (50:6). He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities (53:5). From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness, but bruises and sores and bleeding wounds (1:6). He was numbered between transgressors (53:12). They made his grave ... with a rich man (53:9). His tomb will be glorious (11:10 Vg). Now i will arise, says the Lord, now I will lift myself up, now I will be exalted (33:10). Then shall your light break forth like the dawn (58:8). Seek the Lord while he may be found (55:6). Behold my servant shall understand, he shall be exalted and lifted up (52:13 LXX, Vg); he shall be high and lifted up (6:1). I will set a sign among them ... I will send survivors to the nations, to the sea, to Africa and Lydia, to Italy and Greece, to islands afar off, to those who have not heard about me and have not seen my glory; and they will proclaim my glory to the nations (66:19).

Sawyer, The Fifth Gospel, pp49f

Augustine, Confessions 9:5:

And by letters I notified to Thy bishop, the holy man Ambrose, my former errors and present resolutions, with a view to his advising me which of Thy books it was best for me to read, so that I might be readier and fitter for the reception of such great grace. He recommended Isaiah the Prophet; I believe, because he foreshows more clearly than others the gospel, and the calling of the Gentiles.

City of God, 29:

Isaiah, then, together with his rebukes of wickedness, precepts of righteousness, and predictions of evil, also prophesied much more than the rest about Christ and the Church, that is, about the King and that city which he founded; so that some say he should be called an evangelist rather than a prophet.

Isaiah in the pre-Critical Church

Wilken, R L (2007) *Isaiah, The Church's Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans)

The Liturgy – Isaiah 6:3

- Liturgy of St James (perhaps early second century). 6(13), p77
- Ambrose of Milan (c338-397). 6(14), p77
- The Syriac Liturgy Anaphora. 6(23), p81.
- Theodore of Mopsuestia (c350-428). 6(24), p82.
- Divine Liturgy of the Syro-Malakar Rite. 6(26), p83

The sevenfold gifts of the Spirit – Isaiah 11

Christ, the wound of Love – Isaiah 49:2
Origen of Alexandria (c185-c254). 49(6), p370.

Epiphany – Isaiah 60
Cyril of Alexandria (ca. 378 - 444). 60(2), pp462ff

Isaiah 63 – the returning Christ
Didymus the Blind (c313 - c398). 63(7), p494.

Isaiah after the Enlightenment

Change in worldviews

What is 'truth?'

Literature and music

Question of interpretation