

# SECOND and THIRD ISAIAH

ISAIAH 34-35, 40-55, 60-62, and 56-59, 63-66

First Session: Fall, 2023. September 18 – December 18

“Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.” (Isaiah 40:1)

THIRTEEN MONDAY EVENING DISCUSSIONS, WITH REFLECTION AND PRAYER

7:15 - 8:45 p.m. using Zoom

Questions: [jenjesen@aol.com](mailto:jenjesen@aol.com)

The years following 588 b.c.e. was a time of extreme despondency for those who believed in and worshiped Israel’s God. If Yhwh was a god at all, Yhwh as an inferior god, a god who did not or could keep promises. David’s Dynasty had been all but exterminated. Yhwh’s temple was demolished. The elite of Yhwh’s priests were slaughtered. Worship and sacrifice ceased. Jerusalem was in ruins. Most of those of Yhwh’s people who survived now lived in as exiles in distant Babylon.

But after some forty year, a new voice arose. Like the earlier Jeremiah and Ezekiel, this new voice claimed to be Yhwh’s, but with new and a very different message. A misguided faith in Yhwh’s promises had led to rejections of the earlier prophetic calls to repentance and reform. Now, decades of life in exile under Babylon’s rule resulted in similar rejections by the exiles of this new prophet’s visions of an end to exile and or restoration to their land. Babylon’s perceived continuing military and economic supremacy made this new prophet’s words seem unrealistic, even impossible.

History had vindicated Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and so too time would show the new prophet to have been a careful and accurate reader of the signs of the times. To the north and east in ancient Persia a new youthful leader named Cyrus was gaining power, forming alliances, and gradually extending influence southward. Through mismanagement, complacency, and corruption Babylon’s political, military, and economic supremacy had become a hollow shell. In 539 Cyrus marched into Babylon without a fight. Persia was now the world power. And with Cyrus a political agenda that included allowing and encouraging exiled peoples to return and reestablish the lives in their homelands.

This unnamed new prophet is referred to as Second Isaiah in that the written memories of his [or her] oracles were inserted into and added to the existing written oracles of a previous prophet, Isaiah of Jerusalem who had flourished about 130 years earlier.

Sept 18 The complicated book of Isaiah  
Sept 25 Isah 34 - 35  
Oct 2 Isah 40:1-31  
Oct 9 Isah 41:1-29  
Oct 16 Isah 42:1-25  
Oct 23 Isah 43:1-28  
Oct 30 Isah 44:1-28

Nov 6 Isah 45:1-25  
Nov 13 Isah 46:1 – 47:15  
Nov 27 Isah 48:1-22  
Dec 4 Isah 49:1 – 50:3  
Dec 11 Isah 50:4 – 51:23  
Dec 18 Isah 52:1 – 53:12

There will be handouts, and suggested readings for each session. Sessions will be recorded, and the recordings made available to all. My schedule prevents me from offering the course in person in Baltimore.

Suggested Textbooks: **A Bible**. Dr. Jensen lectures from the New Revised Standard Version [updated edition, 2023].

*Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Isaiah*. By Richard J. Clifford. Academic Renewal Press. 2002. ISBN 978-0-7880-9921-2.

Suggested tuition for the thirteen weekly sessions: \$90 per person or \$120 per couple (any twosome). Please make checks payable to Joseph E. Jensen.

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## Second and Third Isaiah – Session One: Sept 18 – Dec 18, 2023 Registration Form

Return to Joseph E. Jensen, Ph.D., 1133 Hewitt Way, Baltimore MD 21205

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_