

Dr. Marv Wilson, Prophets, Session 24, Isaiah, Part 2

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Wilson, Prophets, Session 24, Isaiah, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Marv Wilson's teaching session on Isaiah, part two, explores the book's background and authorship. **The session begins** with a prayer acknowledging divine inspiration in prophetic writings and connecting them to Jesus. **It then shifts** to practical reminders about a Seder and reflections on the Christian connection to Jewish history. **A key focus** is the debate surrounding the authorship of Isaiah, presenting arguments for both a single author and the Deutero-Isaiah theory, which suggests a second author for chapters 40-66. **The discussion encompasses** historical context, literary style, and theological perspectives associated with each proposed author, including Cyrus by name, and the impact on interpreting the text.

**2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Wilson, Prophets, Session 24 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Major Prophets → Prophetic Literature).**



**Wilson_Prophets_S
ession24.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Wilson, Prophets, Session 24, Isaiah, Part 2

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Marv Wilson's lecture on the Prophet Isaiah:

Briefing Document: Dr. Marv Wilson on Isaiah - Session 24

Introduction:

This briefing document summarizes the key points from Dr. Marv Wilson's lecture on the Prophet Isaiah (Session 24, Part 2). The lecture explores the historical context, significance, and authorship debate surrounding the Book of Isaiah. Dr. Wilson emphasizes the importance of Isaiah for both Jewish and Christian traditions, especially its role in understanding the messianic expectations and the nature of redemption.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. The Nature of Prophecy and Inspiration:

- Dr. Wilson opens by acknowledging the mystery of divine inspiration, highlighting how prophets used their own vocabulary while being guided by the Spirit. He states, "their words are their own vocabulary, and yet we believe you superintended, you guided, you indeed spoke through them." This emphasizes the dual nature of prophecy as both human and divine.

1. The Christian Connection to Israel's History:

- Dr. Wilson emphasizes that the history of Israel is integral to the Christian faith. He quotes John Bright, stating, "the history of Israel becomes our history." He asserts that Christians, through Christ, are Abraham's seed and inherit the promises and narratives of the Old Testament, connecting Christian identity to the Jewish heritage. He also adds, "the church... is an extension of Israel, not apart from Israel. It is part of Israel."
- He also notes that the Exodus is a shared history, not just for Jews, "Our forefathers came through the Red Sea. Those are our fathers, not those of a different community."

1. Isaiah's Significance and Messianic Prophecies:

- The book of Isaiah held a "central place" in the Jewish community, particularly noted in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

- Isaiah is called the "most messianic prophet of all." Dr. Wilson mentions Qumran's messianic beliefs and how Isaiah fits into that story, even while acknowledging that Qumran may have had a slightly different version of Messiah.
- He notes that the New Testament mentions Isaiah by name 20 times more than all the other writing prophets combined, showing his immense influence on the New Testament authors, especially Paul.
- He notes that Jesus uses Isaiah 61 as His first public declaration of his ministry.

1. Historical Context of Isaiah:

- Isaiah was a resident of the southern kingdom (Judah), active around the 8th century BC.
- He was married, unlike Jeremiah who was called to remain unmarried, which is noted as foundational to Biblical thinking.
- Dr. Wilson references Isaiah's sons, whose names had symbolic meaning reflecting the impending Assyrian threat, and Isaiah's wife, described as a prophetess.
- Dr. Wilson notes Isaiah apparently wrote other books, including a biography of King Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26.22).

1. The Structure and Length of Isaiah:

- Though Isaiah is 5th in the Bible by length, his influence is disproportionately high, "It's a little deceiving, however, if you go back to the New Testament and you go by the number of chapters, Isaiah actually ranks 5th in terms of length."
- The scroll was very long, "When they are all sewn together, I think there are 11 different segments that were sewn together with animal gut that comprise the whole scroll. It was 24 feet long."
- The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Masada scroll discoveries provide further evidence of the importance of biblical texts during the relevant time periods.

1. The Haftarah and Synagogue Readings:

- Dr. Wilson discusses the practice of Haftarah, or readings from the Prophets, in synagogues.
- These readings developed during the Maccabean period when possessing Torah scrolls was punishable by death. The haftarah helped preserve Jewish tradition.

- Jesus used Isaiah in his inaugural public reading. Dr. Wilson mentions Jesus reading from Isaiah 61 in the Nazareth synagogue, a haftarah reading. He says, "So, this is probably what you have in Luke chapter 4, a haftarah reading. And this would therefore be something which would pick up some themes from the appropriate Torah reading for that day."
- He also notes the influence of Hellenism on both Hebraist and Hellenist Jews in the book of Acts.
- He highlights the shift from Isaiah 53 being a part of the Haftarah, but its removal because of how the church has used it in relation to Christ. He says "Jews ended up backing off and stopped using Isaiah 53 as part of a haftarah. So, you will not find it today."
- He notes the significant place of Isaiah in the Haftarah, "Of all the haftarah readings in synagogue life, most come from the prophecy of Isaiah"
- He notes other prophetic books used for Haftarah, including Kings, emphasizing that Kings are in the Nevi'im section of the Hebrew Bible.

1. **The Authorship Debate: Unity vs. Multiple Authors:**

- Dr. Wilson addresses the scholarly debate regarding the authorship of the Book of Isaiah. He mentions the traditional view that Isaiah, son of Amoz, wrote the entire book versus the view that it has at least two (Deutero-Isaiah) or even as many as 18 authors.
- He notes that the Deutero-Isaiah view is the more commonly held view today in many academic circles. He notes that this view was not prominent before the 18th century.
- **Arguments for Deutero-Isaiah (Second Isaiah) 40-66:**
- **Different Historical Setting:** Chapters 40-66 appear to reflect the Babylonian exile (6th century BC), while Isaiah the son of Amoz was an 8th century prophet. This is based on descriptions of a destroyed Jerusalem, people in exile, and the anticipation of Cyrus's rise to power. Wilson mentions, "Those chapters, 40-66, do not fit the time of the 8th century prophet Isaiah. They really reflect a different period. They reflect the period of Babylonian captivity."

- **Different Literary Style:** The language in chapters 40-66 is described as more emotional, poetic, and dramatic, contrasting with the more historical or rebuking style of chapters 1-39. Wilson notes, "This style of Hebrew is far more emotional. The writer personifies cities and nature. He seems to be trying to tell stories to be given to dramatic touches."
- **Different Theological Perspective:** Chapters 1-39 emphasize judgment and repentance, while chapters 40-66 focus on comfort, redemption, and the return from exile. Wilson notes, "the theological perspective speaks of this suffering servant people, who, through the process of suffering, become purified."
- **Cyrus as Evidence:** The mention of Cyrus by name in Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1 is a key argument for the Deutero-Isaiah view, because Cyrus lived in the 6th century, much later than the time of Isaiah, the son of Amoz. Dr. Wilson asks if the name of Cyrus is: "simply be there when the second Isaiah, this anonymous prophet, is writing among the captives, and therefore, he alludes to his name? Could Cyrus, if one does not accept that view, could Cyrus be inserted at a later time as these scriptures were being redacted and his name becomes what scholars call a gloss?"
- Dr. Wilson notes, "The final chapters, 40 through 66, speak of a suffering servant who replaces the messianic king."

1. Theological Emphasis of "Second Isaiah":

- The section is characterized by "pardon, deliverance, restoration, and grace, and comfort, and hope."
- The emphasis on the "Suffering Servant" replaces that of the "Messianic King."
- The return from captivity is emphasized, as well as a purified Jerusalem.

Conclusion:

Dr. Wilson's lecture provides a valuable overview of the complex issues surrounding the Book of Isaiah. He stresses Isaiah's crucial role in both Jewish and Christian scriptures, and examines the main arguments for the multiple authorship theory, while noting that this is a relatively recent development. The lecture aims to equip his audience with an informed perspective on the book's historical, literary, and theological dimensions, encouraging further exploration of Isaiah's message and its connection to the larger Biblical narrative. Dr. Wilson also mentions that he will review arguments for the unity of the book in the next session.

4. Study Guide: Wilson, Prophets, , Session 24, Isaiah, Part 2

Isaiah: A Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 complete sentences.

1. According to Dr. Wilson, what is the mystery surrounding how prophets spoke?
2. How does Paul use the concept of the Exodus in 1 Corinthians 10, and what is the connection between this and the history of Israel?
3. What are two ways the prophet Isaiah is symbolically contrasted with the prophet Jeremiah?
4. What significance do the Dead Sea Scrolls have regarding the book of Isaiah?
5. What is a "geniza," and how does it relate to the story of Jesus reading from Isaiah in Luke 4?
6. What was the conflict between Hebraists and Hellenists in the book of Acts and how does it relate to the Septuagint?
7. Describe the historical context of the origin of the haftarah readings.
8. What are the three main arguments for a Deutero-Isaiah and how do they relate to the historical settings in the book?
9. How does the theological emphasis in Isaiah 40-66 differ from the first 39 chapters according to the Deutero-Isaiah theory?
10. How does the mention of Cyrus by name in Isaiah 44-45 support the idea of a Deutero-Isaiah, and what is one alternative explanation?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The mystery is that the prophets used their own vocabulary, yet their words were believed to be divinely inspired. This suggests a combination of human expression and supernatural guidance, which is a concept that is difficult to fully understand.
2. Paul reminds Greek believers that their spiritual ancestors passed through the Red Sea, emphasizing that the history of Israel is also their history in Christ, and thus they have a shared heritage of redemption. This history includes the prophets, sages, and patriarchs of Israel.

3. First, Jeremiah was commanded by God to remain unmarried as a symbol of the impending doom of the southern kingdom, whereas Isaiah married and had a family as was normal. Secondly, Jeremiah is often called the weeping prophet because of his message of judgment, while Isaiah's ministry had the capacity for marriage and celebration.
4. The Dead Sea Scrolls contained many ancient manuscripts of Isaiah, which demonstrates the importance of Isaiah to the Jewish community in the time period prior to Jesus. The scrolls also show that a community at Qumran had their own understanding of messianic beliefs, which were in part informed by the writings of Isaiah.
5. A geniza is a storage area for old and damaged religious texts. In the story of Luke 4, the synagogue would have kept their scrolls in a geniza, and the attendant would have brought out the scroll of Isaiah to Jesus.
6. Hebraists were Jews who lived in Israel, adhered to traditional practices, and did not adopt new linguistic or cultural influences from the diaspora. Hellenists, on the other hand, were diaspora Jews who adopted Greek language and culture, resulting in differing views on religious practices and the interpretation of scriptures. The Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, was primarily utilized by Hellenistic Jews.
7. The haftarah readings originated in the second century BC when the Seleucid Greeks prohibited the reading of the Torah, and thus Jewish people began to read thematically connected passages from the prophets in place of the Torah readings. This became a standard practice that continues today in Jewish worship services.
8. First, the historical setting of chapters 40-66 seems to reflect the Babylonian exile, whereas the first 39 chapters are set before the exile. Second, the literary style of chapters 40-66 is more poetic and emotional, unlike the more historical or rebuking style of the earlier chapters. Third, the theological emphasis shifts in the later chapters from warning and judgment to themes of hope, comfort, and restoration.
9. In the first 39 chapters, the focus is primarily on warning, judgment, repentance, and the Davidic messianic king. In contrast, chapters 40-66 focus on themes of comfort, redemption, and restoration with the suffering servant taking a more prominent role, and the people returning to the promised land from captivity.

10. The mention of Cyrus by name in chapters 44-45, more than 200 years after the historical Isaiah, suggests the later insertion of a later prophecy during the time of the exile, supporting the theory of a Deutero-Isaiah. An alternative explanation is that Cyrus' name was added as a gloss, a later update to the text, to clarify or update its meaning.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the historical and cultural context of both the early and late sections of the book of Isaiah. Explore how understanding these contexts shapes the interpretation of the text.
2. Compare and contrast the literary styles found in the different sections of the book of Isaiah. Consider how these stylistic differences might reflect distinct authorship or periods of composition.
3. Analyze the different theological themes that emerge in the book of Isaiah, paying particular attention to how they are presented in the earlier and later sections. What are the key shifts or developments in the theological perspective of the book?
4. Evaluate the arguments for and against the single authorship of the book of Isaiah. How convincing is the evidence for the existence of a Deutero-Isaiah, and what are the implications for interpreting the book?
5. Discuss the importance of Isaiah's prophecies for understanding the New Testament. Explore the ways in which New Testament writers used and interpreted the book of Isaiah and consider the significance of Isaiah's role in Jesus' ministry.

Glossary of Key Terms

Deutero-Isaiah: A term referring to the anonymous author of Isaiah 40-66, who is believed by some scholars to have lived during the Babylonian exile.

Essenes: A Jewish sect that withdrew from society, believed to have produced the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran, and who were awaiting the end of the age.

Exile: The period of Babylonian captivity (586-539 BC) during which the Jewish people were forced to live in exile from their homeland.

Geniza: A storage area for old and damaged religious texts, often found in synagogues.

Gloss: A later addition or explanation to a text, often added to clarify or update its meaning.

Haftarah: A reading from the prophets that is read in Jewish synagogues following the Torah reading on Sabbath.

Hebraists: Jewish people who lived in the land of Israel, adhered to traditional practices, and did not adopt new linguistic or cultural influences.

Hellenists: Jewish people of the diaspora who were more open to adopting Greek language and culture.

Masada: An ancient fortress in Israel where an ancient manuscript of Ezekiel was discovered.

Midrash: A Jewish interpretive method involving commentaries and stories that explain the meaning of the Torah.

Mashiach: The Hebrew word for "anointed one," referring to a person chosen or appointed by God.

Nev'im: The second major division of the Hebrew Bible, which includes the prophetic books.

Parasha: A section of the Torah that is read in synagogues on a weekly basis.

Qumran: The site of ancient caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.

Redaction: The process of editing or compiling a text, often resulting in the incorporation of new material or revisions.

Septuagint: The Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, produced in Egypt around 275 BC.

Synagogue: A place of Jewish worship and gathering, often distinguished from the temple.

5. FAQs on Wilson, Prophets, , Session 24, Isaiah, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions about Isaiah and its Authorship

- What is the significance of Isaiah within the context of the Old Testament and the New Testament?** Isaiah holds a central place in the Jewish community, evidenced by the numerous manuscripts found at Qumran and the many times he is referenced in the New Testament. It's the most messianic of the prophetic books. Jesus Himself used Isaiah when launching his public ministry. He read from it in the synagogue, and it is a very rich source of prophetic material. Paul also draws heavily on Isaiah, emphasizing its importance for understanding Christian theology. Isaiah is considered vital for understanding the historical and spiritual context of both Judaism and Christianity, and its themes of redemption and freedom are particularly significant.
- What is the "Haftarah" and how is it related to the book of Isaiah?** The Haftarah is a selection from the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible that is read in synagogues on the Sabbath, following the reading of the Torah. The custom developed during a period of persecution when owning the Torah was made illegal. Jews then turned to readings from the prophets that thematically connected to the weekly Torah portion. Isaiah is a common source for these Haftarah readings. Notably, some readings from Isaiah, such as chapter 53, were removed from the Haftarah because of misinterpretations by Christians, which Jews felt were used to attack them.
- What does it mean that "the church is an extension of Israel?"** The statement "the church is an extension of Israel" means that Christians are not a separate entity, but rather, they are connected to the history and heritage of the Jewish people. Christians inherit the stories of the Old Testament, including the patriarchs, prophets, and sages, seeing them as part of their spiritual lineage. This concept is supported by Paul's writings in Romans 11, where he uses the metaphor of the olive tree to explain this relationship, emphasizing that Christian faith is rooted in the history and traditions of Israel.

- What are the main arguments for multiple authorship of the book of Isaiah (Deutero-Isaiah)?** The primary arguments for a second author (or more) of Isaiah center around three key points: (1) the historical setting: the latter part of Isaiah (chapters 40-66) seems to reflect the Babylonian exile, which occurred long after the time of the 8th century Isaiah; (2) literary style: the language and style of these later chapters differ significantly, exhibiting more emotion, vivid imagery, and poetic structure, compared to the first 39 chapters which focus on rebuke; and (3) theological perspective: chapters 40-66 emphasize comfort, hope, redemption, and the idea that sin has been paid for, contrasting with the earlier chapters which primarily focus on warning and judgment.
- Who is this "Deutero-Isaiah" and what is their proposed time period?** "Deutero-Isaiah" is the name given to the hypothetical author (or school of authors) who scholars propose wrote the second main section of the Book of Isaiah, from chapters 40-66. They are thought to have been a contemporary of the Babylonian exile around 540 BC. This period is supported by the historical references to Cyrus, the Persian King, who appears in the text and issued a decree allowing the Jews to return home. Some propose even a "Trito-Isaiah", an additional author responsible for the final chapters, roughly 55-66. These hypothetical authors are believed to have composed the texts during or after the time of the exile.
- Why is the mention of Cyrus important in the debate over Isaiah's authorship?** The mention of Cyrus, the Persian king who conquered Babylon around 539 BCE, is a crucial point in the debate over the authorship of Isaiah. Cyrus is mentioned by name in chapters 44 and 45 of Isaiah, and it is his decree that allowed the Jews to return from exile. Since the traditional prophet Isaiah lived in the 8th century BCE, more than 200 years before the time of Cyrus, this has led some scholars to suggest that the parts of the book referencing Cyrus could not have been written by the original Isaiah.

- **How does the book of Isaiah reflect both judgement and hope?** The book of Isaiah, particularly in its entirety, contains two primary tones: judgment and hope. The first section emphasizes warnings, political alliances, and impending judgment not only on Israel but also on surrounding nations. There is a strong call to repentance for the people of Israel, who are on the brink of disaster. In contrast, the second section (chapters 40-66) moves towards themes of redemption, comfort, forgiveness, and a restored relationship with God. This portion declares that the "hard service" is complete and sin has been paid for, promising a new future of hope for Israel with God as their delight. This is especially seen in the use of the expression Hephzibah (my delight is in her).
- **Is the idea of a "second Isaiah" universally accepted?** No, the concept of multiple authorship for the book of Isaiah, particularly the idea of a "second Isaiah," is not universally accepted. While it has become a fairly common view among scholars who study the Bible, especially since the 1800s, many conservative Christians, Orthodox Jews and scholars believe in the unity of the book. They suggest that all 66 chapters come from the 8th century Isaiah, son of Amoz. Those who oppose multiple authorship argue that the difference in language, style, and theology is best explained by the complex nature of God's prophetic message and that all of it could be understood to come from one author writing at different times and in different circumstances.