

Dear Teachers:

This letter will outline the overall structure and goals of the Yeshaya curriculum.

### Goals:

- Students will understand the words of the verses, as well as their literary features and syntax
- Students will understand the historical context in which the prophecies were delivered, and understand how the prophecies react to history
- After considering the ideas in their historical context, students will explore how these ideas can be abstracted from their historical context and made relevant in their personal lives, as well as in the national life of the Jewish people. Particular emphasis is placed on challenges that teens face, including self-control and relationship with God.
- Students will consider how the theological questions arising from the prophecies have been considered by the Rishonim and Hazal.

There are no doubt many other lofty goals which could be addressed in a curriculum on Yeshaya, including פרשנות הכתוב על-פי מדרשי חז"ל. But these are not the goals of this curriculum.

### Structure:

For each lesson, the guiding document is the lesson plan, which the teacher can use as a basis for the lesson or modify. Each lesson also contains a powerpoint, and nearly each lesson contains a worksheet. The lesson plan in each lesson will explain how to use these.

### Sequence:

The curriculum proceeds historically and chronologically through the book of Yeshaya.\* For this reason, it does not follow the order of the chapters.

The sequence of the core lessons is:

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Chapter 6 (3 lessons)                                                           | Date: between 743 and 734 BCE |
| B. Chapter 7 (3 lessons)                                                           | Date: between 738 and 734 BCE |
| C. Chapter 10:5-22 (1 lesson)                                                      | Date: between 722 and 720 BCE |
| D. 10:28-12:6 (4 lessons)                                                          | Date: shortly after 720 BCE   |
| E. Chapters 36-37 (3 lessons)                                                      | Date: shortly after 701 BCE   |
| F. Chapter 1 (3 lessons)                                                           | Date: shortly after 701 BCE   |
| G. Chapter 2 (2 lessons)                                                           | Date: sometime after 701 BCE  |
| H. Chapter 5 (2 lessons)                                                           | Date: Uncertain               |
| I. Introductory Lesson on Isaiah 40-66, which relate to the period of Shivat Tzion |                               |

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\* I base the dating of each chapter on my research, and note in the lesson plans some of the relevant articles.

J. Lessons on each of the Haftarot in Isaiah 40-66.

Concepts and themes developed in one lesson are often referred to in subsequent lessons, and the lessons build on each other in text skills. It is therefore important for teachers to use the lessons in this order.

### **Technical Requirements and Comments:**

a. In order to use the powerpoints, teachers must download the Ezra SIL SR font, available on [http://scripts.sil.org/cms/scripts/page.php?site\\_id=nrsi&id=EzraSIL\\_Home](http://scripts.sil.org/cms/scripts/page.php?site_id=nrsi&id=EzraSIL_Home). All citations of pesukim use this font, which is designed to allow accurate display of טעמי המקרא. The judicious use of טעמי המקרא is very important in teaching text skills.

b. All citations of Mefarshim are from Mikra'ot Gedolot Ha-Keter, edited by Menahem Cohen at Bar Ilan University. It is well worth the investment of 40\$ to use this edition, since the מפרשים in the standard printed Mikraot Gedolot on Isaiah contain many misprints.

c. Comments and critiques are welcome. I can be reached at [shawnzelig@gmail.com](mailto:shawnzelig@gmail.com)

Yours truly,  
Shawn Zelig Aster