

*Reading the Poetry of First Isaiah* provides a literary and historical study of the prophetic poetry of First Isaiah, an underappreciated but highly sophisticated collection of poems in the Hebrew Bible. Informed by recent developments in biblical studies and broader trends in the study of poetry, J. Blake Couey articulates a fresh account of Biblical Hebrew poetry and argues that careful attention to poetic style is crucial for the interpretation of these texts. Discussing lineation, he explains that lines serve important rhetorical functions in First Isaiah, but the absence of lineated manuscripts from antiquity makes it necessary to defend proposed line divisions using criteria such as parallelism, rhythm, and syntax. This engaging work examines poetic structure, and highlights that parallelism and enjambment create a sense of progression between individual lines, which are tightly joined to form couplets, triplets, quatrains, and occasionally even longer groups. It also treats imagery and metaphor in First Isaiah. A striking variety of images—most notably agricultural and animal imagery—appear in diverse contexts in these poems, often with rich figurative significance.

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