

ISAIAH

Volume III

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BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK SERIES

ISAIAH

Volume III

by

Paul T. Butler

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THIS VOLUME

IS

DEDICATED

TO

Sandra VanNortwick
Charlene Martin Schell
Becky Blodgett Holt
Linda Thurman Rush
Darlene Ashcraft
Sherry Butler Lankford
Elizabeth Weeks

my lovely secretaries

through whose outstanding efficiency and cooperation
my writing ministry has been made possible

and

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whose aid has been

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SEVENTEEN ARGUMENTS THAT THE BOOK OF ISAIAH WAS WRITTEN BY ONE AUTHOR

Isaiah, the son of Amoz, is the author of the entire prophecy, because:

1. N.T. quotations leave no room for doubt that in the eyes of the N.T. writers Isaiah was the author of the entire prophecy.
2. Traditions, as early as Ecclesiasticus, attribute one authorship for Isaiah.
3. The heading of the prophecy (1:1) is intended to stand for the entire book.
4. The author of Isaiah 40-66 was a Palestinian—not showing familiarity with the land or the religion of Babylon such as we might expect from one of the exiles.
5. There are historical passages in chapters 40-66 which do not fit the time of the exile.
6. Once "higher critics" begin separating or dividing Isaiah, it is impossible to rest with two or even three large divisions, which ends in absurdity.
7. Passages in Zephaniah, Nahum, Jeremiah and Zechariah seem to indicate that the latter portion of Isaiah (40-66) was in existence when these prophets wrote.

Isaiah	Jeremiah
44:12-15	10:1-16
46:7	10:1-16
48:6	33:3
53	11:19
56:11	6:15
56:9—57:11a	6:15
65:17	3:16
66:15	4:13

Cf. also Isa. 47:8-10 with Zeph. 2:15; and Isa. 17:1, 7; 66:20 with Zeph. 3:10.

8. After nearly 200 years of intense research by negative critics, scholarship has not been able to present a satisfactory account of the authorship of Second Isaiah (40-66).

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9. No two critics agree on the identity of the author of Deutero-Isaiah (even assuming that there is such an author).
10. Even critics make many admissions to valuelessness of style as a vehicle of evidence for two Isaiahs.
11. Critics cannot account adequately for ancient tradition which says Isaiah is the author.
12. The Isaiah Scroll of the Dead Sea Scrolls gives only positive evidence for one authorship of Isaiah (these scrolls date somewhere between 100-200 B.C.).
13. Claims for Isaiah's authorship of the entire book from N.T. quotations

Isaiah	Quoted	Attributed by critics to:
40:3	Mt. 3:3	II
53:4	Mt. 8:17	II, III
42:1	Mt. 12:17	II
6:9-10	Mt. 13:14	I
29:13	Mt. 15:7	I
40:13	Mk. 1:2	II
29:13	Mk. 7:6	I
40:3-5	Lk. 3:4	II
61:1-2	Lk. 4:17	III
40:3	Jn. 1:23	II
53:1	Jn. 12:38	II, III
6:9-10	Jn. 12:39	I
53:1; 6:9-10	Jn. 12:41	I, II
53:7-8	Acts 8:28	II, III
53:7-8	Acts 8:32	II, III
53:7-8	Acts 8:30	II, III
6:9-10	Acts 28:25	I
10:22, 23; 11:5	Rom. 9:27	I
1:9	Rom. 9:29	I
53:1	Rom. 10:16	II, III
65:1	Rom. 10:20	III

That the writers of the New Testament claimed Isaiah to

be the author of the entire book is the strongest of all arguments that Isaiah was indeed the only author of the book.

14. *Circle of ideas*—strikingly the same throughout the entire book; e.g., the characteristic name for God, “the Holy One of Israel,” (25 times in Isaiah and only six in rest of O.T.).

Another idea unique with the whole book is “a highway.” (cf. Isa. 11:16; 35:8; 40:3; 43:19; 49:11; 57:14; 62:10).

Another characteristic is the idea of “a remnant.” (cf. Isa. 1:9; 10:20-22; 11:11-16; 14:22-30; 15:9; 16:14; 17:3; 21:17; 28:5; 37:31; 46:3; 65:8-9).

Another characteristic idea is that of “Zion.” (cf. Isa. 2:3; 4:5; 18:7; 24:23; 28:16; 29:8; 30:19; 31:9; 33:5-20; 34:8; 46:13; 49:14; 51:3-16; 52:1; 59:20; 60:14; 62:1-11; 66:8).

Another oft-repeated expression is, “pangs of a woman in travail.” (cf. Isa. 13:8; 21:3; 26:17-18; 42:14; 54:1; 66:7).

These, and many other characteristics . . . stamp the book with an individuality which it is difficult to account for, if it be broken up into countless fragments and distributed, as some do, over the centuries.

15. *The literary style*: Although literary style is not a sure criterion of authorship, yet it is certainly remarkable that the clause “for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it” should be found three times in the Book of Isaiah, and nowhere else in the entire O.T. (cf. 1:20; 40:5; 58:14).

The phrase, “streams of water,” occurs twice in Isa. and nowhere else (cf. 30:25; 44:4 in the Hebrew).

Another literary peculiarity is the prophet’s tendency to reduplication (cf. 2:7-8; 6:3; 8:9; 24:16-23; 40:1; 43:11-25; 48:15; 51:12; 57:19; 62:10).

Isaiah’s style differs widely from that of every other O.T. prophet, and is as far removed as possible from that of Ezekiel and the post-exilic prophets.

16. *Historical references*: The prophet’s constant reference to

Judah and Jerusalem, his country and its capital (1:7-9; 3:8; 24:19; 25:2; 40:2-9; 62:4). His reference to the temple and its ritual of worship and sacrifice. When there was prosperity and the people were profuse and formal in their ceremonies, the prophet brings God's complaint, 1:11-15; when the country had been devastated by Sennacherib and the Assyrian hosts, the prophet reminds them that they had not brought to Jehovah the sheep of their burnt offerings, 43:23-24, nor honored Him with their sacrifices; while in 66:1-3, 6:20, the temple and its services are certainly presupposed to be in existence (which was not the case in post-exilic times until rebuilt).

Isaiah's attitude throughout the book toward the captivities is that of both anticipation and realization (in 57:1 judgment is only threatened, not yet inflicted). While in the first part of the book (3:8) the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem is described as in the past.

17. *Predictive Element*: This is the strongest proof of the unity of the book.
- a. Predicted the breaking to pieces of Ephraim (7:8)
 - b. Carrying away of spoils of Damascus and Samaria (8:4; 7:16)
 - c. That Tyre would be forgotten 70 years (23:15-18)
 - d. That suddenly Jerusalem's foes should be as dust (29:5)
 - e. That Assyria should be dismayed and fall by the sword (30:17-31; 31:8).
 - f. Reminded the people after the siege by Sennacherib that he had predicted it (41:21-23, 26).
 - g. Cf. also, 42:9-23; 43:9-12; 44:7-28; 45:3-13; 46:10-11; 48:3-5; 48:6-16.