

The False Assertion of Two Isaiahs

- What is the assertion?

Critical interpreters assert the book of Isaiah was authored by two men: Isaiah wrote chps. 1-39 and an unknown writer produced chps. 40-66. Some even think there were three authors.

- Whence this assertion?

This assertion arose first in Europe and mainly in Germany.

- When did it arise?

It began early in the 19th century as the result of western society drifting away from Christianity into agnosticism and atheism.

- Why did it occur?

1. Due to the denial of the supernatural
2. Due to the two different linguistic styles

- What is the evidence for unity in the book of Isaiah and for one author?

1. All the “latter prophets” began their books with their names.
This is absent in chp. 40.
2. There is no manuscript evidence.
There is no break in the Dead Sea Isaiah at chp. 40.
3. The OT knows nothing of this presumed but unknown exilic/post-exilic writer.
4. Early extra-biblical evidence from 180 B.C. shows a pre-Christian writer speaking of Isaiah as the author of the second half of the book.
5. Linguistic unity:
 - a. Two styles is not a strong argument for two authors.
Many authors use different styles when the content is different.
 - b. There is abundant linguistic evidence for one author.
 - c. The conclusive evidence is Jn. 12:38; Acts 8:30; Rom. 10:6, 20
where the NT says Isaiah is the author of the second part of the book.

- Why consider this?

1. It is a test of faith and commitment. 2. Shows attacks arise not out of facts but out of false perspectives. 3. When all salient information is available, it is congruent with Scripture.