

# **THE UNITY OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAH**



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## INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

“The book of Isaiah, which at first glance appears to be the work of one individual, the eighth century prophet, Isaiah of Jerusalem, is considered by most scholars to be composite. The book can be divided into three parts:

- a. Chapters 1-39 contain, with numerous additions, oracles of Isaiah of Jerusalem, called First (I) or Proto-Isaiah.
- b. Chapters 40-55 record the words of a sixth century prophet living in exile in Babylon, called Deutero-Isaiah or Second (II) Isaiah.
- c. Chapters 56-66 from the post-Exilic period are a continuation of the work of Deutero-Isaiah, probably by his disciples, and perhaps containing some of the Babylonian prophet's sayings. This section is called Trito-Isaiah or Third (III) Isaiah”

([http://www.infidels.org/library/modern/gerald\\_larue/otll/chap18.html](http://www.infidels.org/library/modern/gerald_larue/otll/chap18.html)).

This is the popular view of the Bible critic concerning the book of Isaiah. One would have to wonder why there is so much controversy over the unity or authorship of Isaiah. Other than it being a part of God’s word it holds the key to many of the messianic prophecies. In the field of polemics, the fastest and easiest way to destroy a position is to knock out the props. If you kick the props out, the rest of the structure will fall. Thus, if critics are able to destroy the authorship of the Book of Isaiah, then the prophecies concerning Jesus Christ go along with that destruction.

A study of the unity of Isaiah is important for one and all because it strikes at the very heart of the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some are attempting to argue that Isaiah was written in the form of poetry, though it had serious instructions, like the Proverbs. While there are some prophecies of Christ in the Proverbs, the book of Isaiah is not poetry and neither are the other prophets. One such writer wrote on an atheist forum “*Atheist Toolbox*.” With his permission I am quoting him:

“I think Jerry that your misguided attempt to avoid admitting to errors in Scripture leads you to a kind of exegetical apartheid. In the present case, it's almost as if you think that the Song of Deborah is merely ornamentation to a more serious historical passage, and is therefore less important. However, like much poetry in the OT, the Song of Deborah carries its own theological message. The fact that it is written as a Song should not matter. **The prophets, Isaiah for example are written in the form of poetry, but no one can doubt their seriousness.** Many of the Psalms too are referred to in the NT for their doctrinal assertions. I would have thought that since this piece of writing has been deemed worthy to be in the Bible, and given you believe that those who decided what should be in and what not were acting under Divine guidance, you would have a little more respect for it, instead of treating this remarkable piece of writing in such a cavalier fashion. helensdad Darwin's pet”

He has been trying to figure out why I will not give up my faith in the inerrancy of the Bible. He brought up what he thought was a contradiction between Judges 4:21 where Jael drove a peg through Sisera's temple and killed him in his sleep: *“Then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died”* and Judges 5:26,27 where it says:

*“She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples. At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.”*

At first sight it looks as if a contradiction has occurred and there is no room for a copyist error. Some commentators have tried to offer an explanation that made little sense stating that Jael's first attempt at killing Sisera failed and she tried a second time and succeeded. However, when one looks at the context it is seen that all of chapter five is a song that was sung by Deborah and Barak to motivate Israel. Matthew Henry explained the part *“At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay*

*down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead” in the following way:*

But because there was no occasion for cutting off his head, nor was it mentioned in the history, many think it should be read, she struck through his head. That head which had been proudly lifted up against God and Israel, and in which had been forged bloody designs for the destruction of God's people, Jael finds a soft place in, and into that with a good will strikes her nail. [2.] **How mean does Sisera look, fallen at Jael's feet! Jdg\_5:27. At the feet of this female executioner he bowed, he fell; all his struggles for life availed not; she followed her blow until he fell down dead.** There lies extended the deserted carcase of that proud man, not on the bed of honour, not in the high places of the field, not having any glorious wound to show from a glittering sword, or a bow of steel, but in the corner of a tent, at the feet of a woman, with a disgraceful wound by a sorry nail struck through his head. **Thus is shame the fate of proud men. And this is a very lively representation of the ruin of those sinners whose prosperity slays them; it flatters and caresses them with milk and butter in a lordly dish, as if it would make them easy and happy, but it nails their heads and hearts too to the ground in earthly-mindedness, and pierces them through with many sorrows; its flatteries are fatal, and sink them at last into destruction and perdition, 1Ti\_6:9, 1Ti\_6:10”** (*Matthew Henry, on the Old Testament, e-Sword*).

The part about Sisera falling before Jael is symbolic of his power falling, not that he literally fell down. It was a chorus of the song. HD (Helensdad on the forum) wrote what he wrote about Isaiah to show that Isaiah was poetry, but had serious teaching.

The book of Isaiah is not poetry. It has prophecy in it, and what many people think is poetry is actually prophecy. The prophets were not poets they were relaying God's will to his people. The unity of the book of Isaiah has been called into question by Bible critics since Ibn Ezra, who lived in the twelfth century A.D, then in 1780 when a German theologian by the name of Koppe revealed his doubts about the authenticity of chapter 50. Since that time more and more

critics have called the authorship of this great book into question as can be seen in the following quotation:

“The unity of the book of Isaiah is not to be found on the level of history or authorship. Its unity lies on the level of its theological message about God and how the people responded, and should respond, to his work in the world”  
(<http://www.crivoice.org/isaiahunity.html>).

Next we need to look at some things about the textual critics that need to be brought out. In his article *The “Higher Criticism” of Isaiah* Robin Brace wrote:

“C.S. Lewis once famously observed that literary critics had come to many unfounded and incorrect conclusions about the works that he himself had written, and that therefore the judgments of literary critics concerning the New Testament simply could not be taken seriously. Lewis's critics lived in the same age as himself and it quite stunned the great man that their 'literary criticism' of his writings was so often really wide of the mark. Yet if such literary critics are discussing the Old Testament – rather than the New Testament – how much greater is the probability that such critics are going to be out of sympathy and out of any sort of 'time sync' understanding with the documents under discussion?”  
(<http://www.ukapologetics.net/2criticalisaiah.html>)

When we look at how literary critics do works such as the works of Lewis it is no surprise to find them being so careless with scripture. James was correct when he wrote “*A double minded man is unstable in all his ways*” (Jas 1:8). However one is in the secular realm will determine how he is in the spiritual. How he handles himself in the secular world, will determine how he handles himself in the spiritual world. How a man thinks in the secular realm will be how he thinks in the spiritual realm. If he thinks one way when dealing with secular literary works, that is going to be the way he thinks if and when he deals with spiritual literary works. He isn't going to change the way he thinks just because he is now dealing with a spiritual literary document. People don't change their way of thinking simply because they go from the secular to the spiritual.

However, they think in the secular will be how they are going to think in the spiritual. The literary critics on the works of C.S. Lewis proved that.

Why is it that critics of the Bible have taken a position against the unity of Isaiah? Again, Brace wrote:

“The reasons for imposing these divisions are somewhat related to the reasons that the now largely discredited Wellhausen Documentary Source Hypothesis imposed divisions upon the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), that is, an assumption was made that the Bible could not possibly be 'divinely inspired' and that various redactors (editors) had, at various times, been involved who wanted to make a strong case for their claim that a supernatural, all-powerful God had called Israel to be His special people. These people (according to this theory) were quite prepared to steal religious myths and legends from anywhere in the ancient world as well as to lie about dating in order to make their case. So the rationalist Bible critics looked upon the Old Testament in a purely mechanical way, looking for clues within the text as to real authorship/time frame/motivation. They accepted the Hegelian 'history of religions' school of thought (again, largely discredited in this early 21st century) which believed that the oldest human religions were naïve and animistic and that monotheism (belief in one all-powerful God) was a late arrival and that the concept of a supernatural God was preposterous. Therefore it is entirely accurate to say that these people had largely already made their mind up on many of the main points and subjects of their “research” before they had even commenced it! Yet their obviously biased approach plainly - and quite outrageously! - breaks the rules of objective critical research, discussion and analysis” (Ibid).

All of this goes back to men not wanting to accept the inspiration of the scriptures, not wanting to subject themselves to God. Thus they seek to rationalize scripture away and attempt to make it just another religious book so they can place it among the many and go their way.

When men don't want to accept the truth, they will find reasons for not accepting it. Those who divide the book of Isaiah into three sections are those who don't want the truth. They want to reduce the Bible to the status of nothing more than a book of religious myth and status. And you get enough men with

enough degrees behind their names, and you'll get the majority of people believing it; whether it is true or not.

Therefore, in this thesis we want to examine the objections to the authorship of Isaiah and see whether or not they hold true.

## DISCUSSION

The first objection that we will look at will be the objection that the book can be divided into three parts. The objection is as follows:

“Chapters 1-39 contain, with numerous additions, oracles of Isaiah of Jerusalem, called First (I) or Proto-Isaiah.

Chapters 40-55 record the words of a sixth century prophet living in exile in Babylon, called Deutero-Isaiah or Second (II) Isaiah.

Chapters 56-66 from the post-Exilic period are a continuation of the work of Deutero-Isaiah, probably by his disciples, and perhaps containing some of the Babylonian prophet's sayings. This section is called Trito-Isaiah or Third (III) Isaiah”

If what the previous statements are true, then it is not possible that the prophet Isaiah was the human author of the book which bears his name. In order to distinguish between the above objection and the position that Isaiah is the human author of the book which bears his name (for the purpose of syllogistic argument) we will call the objection “Larue” (the man’s name who wrote the article from whom I took this from) and we will call the position that Isaiah is the human author of the book of Isaiah “Biblical.”

**Major Premise:** If it is the case that “Biblical” is true, then it is the case that “Larue” is not true.

**Minor Premise:** It is the case that “Biblical” is true.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, it is the case that “Larue” is not true.

Now, it is just a simple modus ponens syllogism, if “p” then “q”, “p” therefore “q.” The argument is valid because (a) it is in proper format, and (b) the conclusion automatically follows from the premise. The major premise is worded in such a way that there is no ambiguity and there is no middle ground. Copi says:

**“The principle of excluded middle.** This principle asserts that *every statement is either true or false*. Using our notation we may rephrase it by saying that the principle of excluded middle asserts that every statement of the form of  $p \vee \sim p$  must be true, that every such statement is a tautology” (*Introduction to Logic*, p. 344).

Now if the Bible is true, then Larue is automatically proven false. However we will look to see the fallacies in Larue to show that it is false. Now to prove the Bible true automatically proves Larue false, but proving Larue false does not automatically prove the Bible true because there are other theories (such as the one brought up by HD that Isaiah’s book was written as poetry—another objection we will get to in this thesis) with which we will have to deal.

NOTE\* Some might ask “Why not just prove the Bible true and all the other ideas will fall?” This would seem to be the most prudent course especially since in polemics the best way to destroy a position is to destroy the base and structure will fall and therefore the best way to defend a position is to build a strong base. However, Bible critics aren’t going to be satisfied with our just proving the Bible to be true. They are going to want their objections dealt with, so this is the course of action we will have to take.

In the third annual Houston College of the Bible Lectureship, Brown wrote:

“In 1947, the first of ‘The Dead Sea Scrolls’ was found. Among these scrolls was the first Isaiah scroll. It is almost complete and is called ‘Isaiah A.’ In all, no less than twelve copies of Isaiah have been discovered. These copies go back to the first and second century B.C. None of the Isaiah scrolls have any kind of markings that would divide one section from another.

For example, Chapter 40:1, ‘Comfort ye, Comfort ye’ is written closely to the last verse of chapter 39, the scribe actually writing it on the last line of space left on the page” (*The Third Annual Houston College of the Bible Lectureship, Modernism’s Attack on Isaiah*, David P. Brown, p. 13).

In the ACU commentary the author wrote the following:

“The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, that contain an Isaiah manuscript, argues against the Deutero-Isaiah theories. For example, chapter 40 (allegedly the commencement of Second Isaiah), begins on the very last line of a column which contains chapter 38, verse 9, through chapter 39, verse 8. Noted scholar **Oswald T. Allis** observed: “*Obviously the scribe was not conscious of the alleged fact that an important change of situation, involving an entire change of authorship, begins with chapter 40*” (1950, 40)” (<http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1462-the-acu-commentary-and-the-unity-of-the-book-of-isaiah> emphasis mine jdm).

Josephus was convinced that Isaiah was the author of the book that bears his name:

“Upon which the prophet Isaiah came to him, and inquired of him whence those ambassadors came; to which he replied, that they came from Babylon, from the king; and that he had showed them all he had, that by the sight of his riches and forces he might thereby guess at [the plenty he was in], and be able to inform the king of it. But the prophet rejoined, and said, "Know thou, that, after a little while, these riches of thine shall be carried away to Babylon, and thy posterity shall be made eunuchs there, and lose their manhood, and be servants to the king of Babylon; for that God foretold such things would come to pass." Upon which words Hezekiah was troubled, and said that he was himself unwilling that his nation should fall into such calamities; yet since it is not possible to alter what God had determined, he prayed that there might be peace while he lived. Berosus also makes mention of this Baladan, king of Babylon. Now as to this prophet [Isaiah], he was by the confession of all, a divine and wonderful man in speaking truth; and out of the assurance that he had never written what was false, he wrote down all his prophecies, and left them behind him in books, that their accomplishment might be judged of from the events by posterity: nor did this prophet do so alone, but the others, which were twelve in number, did the same. And whatsoever is done among us, Whether it be good, or whether it be bad, comes to pass according to their prophecies; but of every one of these we shall speak hereafter” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 10, Chapter 2, Verse 2).

There are two types of evidences for determining the authenticity of any work;

(A) internal evidences, and (B) external evidences. The internal evidences are those evidences that one looks at within the work itself to see if it can justifiably be considered an authentic work of a certain person. This is where Larue argues that Isaiah was not the single human author. His argument is that there was

what he termed “proto-Isaiah” or first Isaiah because some of the first 39 chapters may have contained some of the quotations from the prophet himself, but it was not all written by the prophet. Then there was the “deutero-Isaiah” or second Isaiah which was the recorded words of a sixth century prophet in Babylonian exile, and then there was the “trio-Isaiah” or “third Isaiah” which is a continuation of the “deutero-Isaiah’s” works by his disciples and some of his collective sayings.

What causes Larue (and others like him) to think that there is any division between chapters 39 and 40 at all?

*“At that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon. Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days” (Isa 39:1-8).*

The next chapter begins with a prophecy of Isaiah which deals with a messianic prophecy:

*“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of*

*the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved. Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his*

*understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isa 40:1-31)*

John Gill wrote:

### “INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH 40

This chapter treats of the comforts of God’s people; of the forerunner and coming of the Messiah; of his work, and the dignity of his person; of the folly of making idols, and of the groundless complaints of the church of God. The consolations of God’s people, by whom to be administered, and the matter, ground, and reason of them, (<234001>Isaiah 40:1,2). John the Baptist, the harbinger of Christ, is described by his work and office, and the effects of it; it issuing in the humiliation of some, and the exaltation of others, and in the revelation of the glory of Christ” (*Commentary on the Old Testament, Isaiah*, p. 600).

The first verse of chapter forty speaks of the prophecy of the pending doom of the Israelites to the Babylonian nation. However, Isaiah (as his style is) integrates one of the messianic promises into this. Verses two and following deal with the prophecy of John the Baptist coming to be the forerunner of Jesus Christ

“**Ver. 1.** *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.*] The Babylonish captivity being predicted in the preceding chapter, for the comfort of God’s people a deliverance is promised, expressed in such terms, as in the clearest and strongest manner to set forth the redemption and salvation by Jesus Christ, of which it was typical. Here begins the more evangelical and spiritual part of this prophecy, which reaches to and includes the whole Gospel dispensation, from the coming of John the Baptist to the second coming of Christ. It begins with comforts, and holds on and ends with them; which consolations, Kimchi observes, are what should be in the times of the Messiah; and the word “comfort” is repeated, he says, to confirm the thing” (Ibid, pp. 600, 601).

The argument that the style of deuterio-Isaiah and proto-Isaiah are different is completely false. When one takes notice of this example where Isaiah is predicting the demise of the Israelite nation to the nation of Babylon and at the

same time gives a messianic prophecy and then goes back to Isaiah 7:14 we see the same exact same thing being done there.

In the seventh chapter Isaiah was dealing with Ahaz who was preparing to go up against Rezin, King of Syria. Verse three says *“Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.”* While discussing with Ahaz Isaiah told Ahaz to ask for a sign of his prophecy that his quest against Rezin would not be successful. Ahaz refused to ask for a sign:

*“Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel”* (Isa 7:10-14).

Right in the middle of dealing with a matter of Israel's national momentary or near future national security, Isaiah integrates a messianic prophecy. This integration is what has caused so many to conclude that Isaiah 7:14 is not a messianic prophecy at all, but rather a prophecy that would shortly come to pass.

This purpose of this thesis is not to deal with the meaning of the prophecy found in Isaiah 7:14, though it is and always has been the firm belief of this author that it is straight line messianic prophecy. The purpose here is to show the similarities between Isaiah's prophecy here and his prophecy in chapter 40:1ff. The evidence shows that both were written by the same man, not someone later on. It seems that those who work to find problems with God's inspired word often trip themselves up on important matters like this; they just can't help it. Error cannot be consistent! Both times, right in the middle of a

nation's national security issues Isaiah integrates a messianic promise. That is simply his way of doing things. This is something that cannot be denied.

Bible scholar and author Homer Hailey, in his commentary on the book of Isaiah wrote concerning chapter 40:2:

“2. *Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem*—Jerusalem stands for the surviving remnant, for at the time in view the physical city will lie in ruins and the people will be in captivity. The word of comfort is spoke ‘to the heart’ (margin), the center of the emotions which has long lain crushed under the consequence of sin and rebellion. It is now to be comforted by the God who has been spurned and rejected for empty vanities of wood and stone, the God who has sent faithless Judah into captivity for discipline” (*A Commentary on Isaiah, With Emphasis on the Messianic Hope*, p. 331).

Hailey goes on to say that verses three through five deal with the messianic promise of John the Baptist coming as the forerunner of the Messiah, Jesus Christ or Jehovah:

“3. In this verse the speaker is left unidentified. The prophet simply says, *The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah*. The message must receive the emphasis; the speaker is secondary. The voice is not that of Jehovah, for the way is to be made level for Him. Shortly before Jerusalem was destroyed Ezekiel saw a vision in which Jehovah withdrew a temple and city, removing toward the east (Ezek 11:23). And now through the trackless wilderness and desolate desert (cf. 21:1), He is returning to Jerusalem with His people after an absence of fifty years, the period of captivity (586-537 B.C.). The voice cries that the way for His return be prepared. Using the figure of preparation for the journey of a great king, the prophet says *Make level in the desert a highway for our God*” (Ibid, p. 332).

The remnant that was promised to be saved is what Isaiah promises will be saved and that remnant is of Judah, not Israel. So why is it that Larue, and others like him come up with these arguments that Isaiah is not the only writer of the book? Simply because the book is literally filled with messianic prophecies. Homer Hailey's commentary is rightly named: “*With Emphasis on the Messianic Hope*.” If critics can cast doubt on the authorship (unity) of the book, then casting doubt

on its content is a small matter. Thus the internal evidence for the book of Isaiah is extremely important and what we have examined (and we haven't even scratched the surface) leads to Isaiah as the only human author of the book; with God (the Holy Spirit) as the divine author.

Next we need to look at the external evidence. We have already looked at the fact that the manuscripts that were found in the Dead Sea Scrolls show that there was no division in the book, and Josephus understood that Isaiah was the human author. The New Testament writers also understood that Isaiah was the author of the entire book.

Matthew quotes Isaiah 7:14 to refer to the virgin birth of Christ in Matthew 1:20-25, and he calls Isaiah "the prophet," a name which Isaiah was commonly known by. Mark, on the other hand referred to "the prophets" when referring to the prophecy of John the Baptist (Mark 1:1-5). There were only two prophets who made this prophecy, Malachi and Isaiah. However, Luke calls the prophet by name and says that this prophecy was given by Esaias (or Isaiah) (Lk. 3:4). Jesus referred to a prophecy of Isaiah in Matthew 15:7 which was actually a statement from Isaiah 29:13. When Jesus went into the Synagogue he began to read from the book of Isaiah and read Isaiah 49:9 and the scripture says he read from the prophet Esaias (or Isaiah) (Lk. 4:17,18).

We could go on, but from what we have examined there is enough evidence to show that the external evidence clearly states that Isaiah is the human and only human author of the book which bears his name. Here is a link to an online introduction and commentary to Isaiah, and though I haven't read it all, it seems to be sound <http://www.esvstudybible.org/images/excerpt-isaiah-intro.pdf>.

Now HD made the observation that Isaiah was written in the form of poetry.

There are those who believe that Isaiah was written in the form of poetry:

“Isaiah was a man of ability and displays much training and knowledge of the world in his day. He showed that he was very intelligent and also showed great skill in writing poetry and literature. ‘Many sections (of his writings) constitute literary masterpieces’ (Wood 305) and many scholars believe that chapters forty to sixty-six contain some of the most beautiful poetry in the Bible. The historical setting in which we find this man is Jerusalem during the reign of the four Judean kings” (*Isaiah 55 Then and Now*, Raymond So <http://www.passthemantle.net/Essays/ISAIAH.DOC>).

While there is poetry in scripture, such as the Song of Solomon which is a poetic song about a man’s expression of physical love for his wife, and there are some things that seem poetic in the some of the Psalms; the Prophets had far better things to do than to write poetry. This is just another way of degrading the seriousness of book of Isaiah and taking away from its authorship. Nowhere is there any evidence that Isaiah ever engaged in writing poetry for God’s children. His message was meant to be instruction and prophecy, and he didn’t teach through poetry; he wasn’t a poet.

Here is why some are calling this poetry, if you take the first verses of the first chapter and separate them and center them they will look like poetry. Notice:

**The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.**

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth:  
for the LORD hath spoken,  
I have nourished and brought up children,  
and they have rebelled against me.

The ox knoweth his owner,  
and the ass his master's crib:  
but Israel doth not know,  
my people doth not consider.  
Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity,

a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters:  
they have forsaken the LORD,  
they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger,  
they are gone away backward.

Why should ye be stricken any more?  
ye will revolt more and more:  
the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.  
From the sole of the foot even unto the head  
there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises,  
and putrifying sores: they have not been closed,  
neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.  
Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire:  
your land, strangers devour it in your presence,  
and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard,  
as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city (Isa 1:1-8)

One writer stated that this was the best way he could understand the writings of Isaiah was to put it in poetry form. He wrote that when you put it in this form that it is easy to understand. I guess so, because it makes a mockery of the whole thing. (1) it makes Isaiah some sort of weak-minded poet who can only speak out against the evil the Israelites have done through his poetry without having any repercussion, and (2) it romanticizes it all and takes away from the seriousness of what God was telling Israel. You know you don't have to change a thing (not one word) when you write something to change its meaning, all you have to do is to change the way it was written. Now read it as it was meant to be read:

*“The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city” (Isa 1:1-8).*

You see the difference in the tone of the writer and in the way it has been presented. In the first instance it has been presented as some piece of poetry by some name-pamper who can only express himself through poetry and the second is presented as condemnation by a strong prophet of God who is willing to suffer the consequences for what he has had to speak, regardless of what those consequences are. The very idea of putting the book of Isaiah into the form of prophecy is nothing short of blasphemy! How can one take that first instance seriously? You can't!

#### CONCLUSION:

Is it the case that Larue is true? No! Is it the case that the book of Isaiah was written in the form of poetry? There is no evidence of such, so the answer to that question is "No!" Isaiah was the sole human writer of the book which bears his name. We have looked at it from a logical standpoint. We have looked at the internal and the external evidence; both of which point to Isaiah as the sole human author. And we also noticed that there is no evidence that the book was written in the form of poetry; Isaiah was not a poet, he was a prophet of God—a teacher of God's people.

In Christ Jesus

Jerry McDonald