

Arguments against the unity of Isaiah are of three types: 1) Subject matter as related to historical background; 2) Difference of style; 3) Difference of theological ideas. The first of these is by far the most important. The first 39 chapters of Isaiah deal mainly with situations in the time of Ahaz and Hezekiah. The next section looks forward to the exile. It does not simply predict this event, but assumes it and comforts God's suffering people. Isaiah enters into their very heart and assures them of God's deliverance.

It seems evident that one of the main purposes of the second part of Isaiah was to bring comfort and assurance to people who would live a century and a half after Isaiah's death. Yet this was not its only purpose. The godly followers of Isaiah, like the other inhabitants of Judah, were familiar with the sufferings of the Ephraimites, who were dragged off into exile early in the time of Isaiah's ministry. They had heard his predictions that Judah would also be conquered and knew that these predictions would come true. Realizing that the continuing sin of the people made this exile inevitable, and that as a part of the nation they were implicated in its sin, they might easily give way to despair. In chapters 40-56 Isaiah brings comfort to his godly followers. Thus these chapters could meet a present need of Isaiah's contemporaries, while at the same time being prepared in advance to meet the need of the exiles of the following century. To the one who believes in a God who knows and controls the future, there is nothing impossible in His enabling His prophet to write a section that would fulfill both of these needs. The God who inspired the prophets led them to write not only for their own day, but for ours as well. God knows all the future and provides for the needs of His