

Joas-1
The Unbelief of Ahaz

From what we know of Ahaz, ~~it would seem evident that he~~ ^{Isaiah's} received this ~~statement with much~~ ^{message} scorn. What did he care if within sixty-five years Ephraim would be broken so that it would not be a people? He was interested in the immediate danger. Within the next two years Ephraim and Syria might succeed in conquering Jerusalem and destroying Ahaz and his whole house, if something drastic were not done. He had done something drastic by sending the king of Assyria an offer to become his subject, ^{but} He did not wish the people of the land to learn as yet about his wretched abasement before the wicked heathen king. He wished them only to know of the ^{immediate} terrible danger facing them, so that they would fight vigorously and protect the land until the Assyrian emperor would come and ^{conquer} ~~put an end to the~~ immediate danger from Ephraim and Syria. In view of this situation we ^{can see} ~~must~~ imagine that when Isaiah said these words Ahaz had on his face a look of impatience. He did not quite dare to tell Isaiah to get out of the way and allow him to go on with his important defense labors, for he knew that many of the people regarded Isaiah as a prophet of God and it might injure their morale if open hostility toward the prophet were publicly displayed. At the same time he was anxious that Isaiah confine his activities to strengthening the morale of the people without interfering with the king, ~~himself~~.

That this was the attitude of Ahaz is made clear by what follows. The Lord caused Isaiah to give a further message to Ahaz, in addition to what He had previously told him to say. Evidently, right there on the spot, the Lord ^{Isaiah to say:} ~~added to the message the following:~~ "Ask thee a sign of the LORD, thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above" (v. 11). ^{What} ~~What~~ a tremendous offer to Ahaz! Ahaz, you seem unwilling to believe this promise. You are all