

ruin God will bring out a new Son of David ruling over a rejuvenated kingdom. The plain and didactic prophecies relating to the surrounding countries are mingled very intimately with the Messianic and eschatological passages of 7: 14; 9: 1-7; and 11:1-12:6.

The original point of departure for the prophecy is found in current events. Ahaz had lately ascended the throne of Judah, Jotham being still co-regent (see chronological table), and found himself at war with both Syria and Israel. Pekah in his campaign slew 120,000 men (II Ch. 28: 6), and certainly gave Ahaz cause for fear. Isa. 7:1-8:18 and 9:8-10:34 deal expressly with this situation and its consequences. Isaiah accosts king Ahaz at the historic upper pool, having with him his son with the name of warning--Shear-jashub (a remnant shall return)--and bids him not to fear the invaders but trust in God. The first prediction is that within 65 years Ephraim shall be broken from being a people.¹ The prediction is plain and is to be plainly Ephraim was now in about 734 still an autonomous and strong nation (though inwardly rotten), but by Esarhaddon (reigning from 681 to 668) they were exiled. (Ez. 4:2) We do not know in what year Esarhaddon carried on his conquests, but even Gray (loc.cit.) admits that the prediction which he calls a gloss does refer to a decisive defeat and deportation.

1. Gray, Int. Crit. Comm. p. 119 declares that in general scholars call this prediction a gloss because (1) it breaks the connection, (2) it anticipates the reference to Ephraim, (3) it would give Ahaz little comfort, and (4) it is more precise than Old Testament predictions generally (Is. 16:4; 20:3; 21: 16; 25:11 ff.). A full discussion of the problem is impossible here, yet the reasons seem insufficient. His examples of Old Testament predictions which are precise are: 3 years, 3 years, one year, and 70 years. These figures are not such round numbers after all. And even the 70 year period, though it may look approximate, was yet exact as a matter of fact, and was understood so by Daniel (Dan. 9:2). Also cf. Isaiah's prophecy in 48: 5 that 15 years (precise enough) would be added to Hezekiah's life. Furthermore Ahaz was not given this prophecy as his source of comfort, but was commanded to seek a sign to prove the truth of this whole prophecy. We with Delitzsch (Commentary 1st ed. p.211) are not convinced that the connection is broken beyond the custom of the Semitic

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