

It is not our purpose to discuss here the prophecy of the Virgin Birth in vs. 14-16 of this chapter, for we shall include that with the Messianic predictions. But its context is important for our present work. It is not to be thought of as a sign of comfort to Ahaz, but rather the contrary. Isaiah comes with the declaration that the Lord is greater than the confederacy, and Ahaz listens likely with some impatience to the "fanatic". Ahaz knew Syria and Ephraim would be beaten because he had already hired Assyria to fight the Lord's battles. He was one of those who trust in God and (with a wink) keep their powder dry. He replies, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." "What a pious sound this has! And yet his self-hardening reached its culminating point in these well-sounding words. He hid himself hypocritically under the mask of Deut.6:16 to avoid being disturbed in his Assyrian policy." (Delitzsch op.cit. p.215) This hypocrisy of the wicked king leads us on to the prophecies into which Isaiah now throws himself with vehemence.

 (continued from last page) languages. Compare a sentence of Arabic from the "Last raid and death of Ta'abbata Sharran" (Thornton and Nicholson, Elementary Arabic, First Reading Book, p. 32 of the Chrestomathy) : "It is said concerning Ta'abbata Sharran (now his name was Thabat son of Habiri son of Shufina and he was brave, courageous, and a poet and a warrior) that he went out from his people on a raid with his kinfolk. He set out toward the sons of the Sahilaha son of Kahili son of the Garithi son of Tamirni son of Sa'di son of Hudaili (now that was in the end of the sacred month which was made sacred by the ancients) until he came to the center of Iddam." In these five lines of Arabic there are two parentheses breaking the connection as seriously, as our verse, yet no one thinks of them as glosses. It is merely the Semitic style to digress somewhat.