

incense at the high places. The idolatry and rebellion was to come out into the open in the reign of Ahaz. To this people Is. was to bear his message. It is appropriate that Is. should receive the glorious vision of the Lord high and lifted up, for he was to preach with little apparent success: the people as a whole would not hear. Only the handful or the remnant would accept the message. God's prediction would thus sustain Is. and convince him that in spite of the hardness of the people, even when they continuously heard the faithful presentation of God's message, God was in control, for He knew the future and had predicted it would be thus. And there was the promise that some would hear.

The ~~literary form~~^{nuance} of the statement in Is. apparently irony, and a most poignant irony. Jehovah of Hosts who had proven Himself again and again throughout the history of Israel to be a gracious and mighty Saviour who loved His people, is now telling His people not to hear. And in the very act of telling them to hear and not comprehend and repent, He is sending one of the greatest and most eloquent of the prophets! The expression is at the same time, by the force of the irony, the proof of God's desire that His people should hear, and a prediction that they will not hear.

The expression appears to be a prediction, from the preceding analysis and from its relation to the obvious predictions which follow. Anticipating the NT occurrences and interpretations, it may be suggested that the expression is not a prediction in the strict sense of a ~~ix~~ a prognostication to be fulfilled in one specific, precise historical event, but a prediction of a continuing or repeated situation. It could hardly be a specific prediction and be fulfilled in Is's lifetime, and also fulfilled in the time of Christ and in the time of the Apostles, and in the continuing situation of the centuries following the Apostles.