

with his clever scheme and money to call on the Assyrians to protect them from Israel and Syria, and he is rejoicing in his heart that he is going to have safety from Israel and Syria but really hasn't announced it yet to the people, and Isaiah has to force himself on to Ahaz's attention there and the attention of the people because Ahaz doesn't want to bother with it. Well, I think here he is forcing himself on the attention, and the attention he is here forcing himself upon is the attention of the group of the nobility, the leaders of Judah who are holding a banquet, and so the scene is very vivid. Imagine the scene and see if the details of the chapter don't fit into this hypothesis which is suggested to explain how they fit together. To my mind they fit far better than any other hypothesis that I think is likely to be thought of by any group, and the hypothesis is this, that beginning at 28 we have presented what Isaiah said at a meeting of the nobles, just as in Isaiah 7 we are told that we have what he said to Ahaz when he confronted Ahaz outside the walls of Jerusalem. Now the hypothesis goes further. Here are these nobles who are in the know in the clever scheme of Ahaz, and these nobles are having a banquet, celebrating. They say Ephraim is just about the same as defeated because Assyria is going to come and attack them. Now, they haven't told them that yet but they are having a big banquet and they are celebrating and they are happy and they are celebrating the great scheme that has been worked out and Ahaz has already sent tribute to Assyria secretly and the plan is under way, and as these nobles are having this banquet there, Isaiah walks in to the room where the large group of nobles are having the big banquet and there are a lot of servants around serving food and perhaps a lot of the common people are permitted to come in to the banquet hall and to have some of the remnants of the food and in walks Isaiah and he turns to them and begins to address them, and what are they going to do? Are they going to say, "Turn this man out of here. We're not interested in him, we don't want to be bothered with him? We're having a big banquet, we're having a great celebration, we don't want to be bothered with this prophet?" Well, there are some of them who think he is a true prophet and a lot of the common people there