

similarly addressed, not to the king but to the leaders of the people. To them is given much the same message as was given to Ahaz, although from a slightly different angle.

It is stated at the beginning of chapter 7 that Isaiah went outside the city of Jerusalem in order that he might speak to the king when the latter was on a defense inspection trip, at a place where he could not very well refuse to listen to the prophet. We are not told where chapter 28 was spoken but examination of its contents makes it clear that it was spoken at a banquet of the nobles as they were celebrating the decision which had been made to secure help from Assyria against Syria and Ephraim. We can be sure that the mass of the people did not know what the nobles were celebrating. The nobles, however, were in high glee over the clever decision which had been made, and there was no limit to the extent of their celebration. Under these circumstances, the people had a certain amount of access to the banquet hall, and were doubtless given presents as a mark of the general happiness of the nobles. In this situation Isaiah could come into the banquet hall and begin to speak, and the nobles could not throw him out without risking the displeasure of the people.

This statement of the situation in which Isaiah 28 is spoken may seem a bit imaginary to some, but if they will read the following discussion of the message of the prophet and check it carefully with the words contained in the chapter there can be little doubt that they will be convinced that this is the true interpretation of the situation under which the chapter was spoken.

### **The Prophet's Tact**

In reading the messages of the prophets we find that they often they show a great deal of tact in their manner of approach. Sometimes God leads them first to present something that will secure the approbation of those to whom they are speaking, and then to present a rebuke after respectful attention has been secured. This was the case when the prophet Nathan came to rebuke David. Instead of immediately rebuking him for his heinous sin in taking Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, and in causing Uriah to be