

of Syria and the king of Israel. The king of Assyria did so and conquered these two areas. But as Isaiah pointed out in ch. 7 this brought the terrible force of wicked Assyria right next to Judah. So while it saved Judah from an immediate danger, it brought a far greater danger right next to them.

This situation in the course of which Isaiah gave this wonderful prophecy of the virgin birth of Christ, this situation seemed to have been known not merely to Ahaz but to his leading supporters, the nobles of Judah. Evidently Ahaz has discussed this with these leading nobles, told them about his clever plan, but he says, Don't tell the people about it. It was to be kept secret because Ahaz desired that the people should work hard in fixing up the defenses and preparing the fortresses to defend themselves. They could not defend themselves long against this coalition of these two great nations, but they must defend themselves until the Assyrian force comes. And you really can't understand Isaiah 7 without understanding that Isa. had revealed to him by God this plan of Ahaz, and he rebuked Ahaz for it in ch. 7.

Now in ch. 28 it would seem that the nobles are having a great banquet. They are having this banquet ostensibly just/<sup>as</sup>an occasion of general revelry, but actually their idea is that they are now to celebrate this scheme that they and Ahaz have worked out. They are celebrating the fact that Israel, the Northern Kingdom, which is about to attack them, having made one attack and is about to make another, is going to be overcome by the force of Assyria that will attack Israel from the other side. They are celebrating it. Now when they had a banquet in those days, great numbers of people would be present. All of the onhangers of these nobles would be present. And other people were free to come in and enjoy something