

### **Assyrian Invasion Predicted**

Their hopes were disappointed. Verses 7 and 8 proceed to an entirely different message. The King James Version has an unfortunate translation at the beginning of verse 7, "But they also have erred." The American Standard Version is much closer to the original, "And even these reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink." The Hebrew contains the word "these," which is a strong demonstrative pronoun and doubtless indicates that Isaiah pointed directly to the banqueting nobles in front of him. He refers to the drunkenness and filth of these carousing leaders of the people, and indicates that they also are erring in their vision and stumbling in their judgment. We can readily imagine that this arouses the ire of the nobles. Some of them are probably inclined to throw the prophet out of the room.

Verses 9 and 10 are either the statements of the nobles as they criticize him or the prophet's own quotation of the criticism which these nobles are thinking: "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."

The meaning is clear. The nobles are glad to have the prophet come to denounce their enemies, but they do not want him to treat them as if they were little children, giving them his ethical precepts, "line upon line, here a little, and there a little," as to the sort of life they ought to lead. They are not interested in this sort of message from God, and they are grumbling about it.

Verse 11 also is better rendered in the American Standard Version than in the King James Version. The American Standard Version reads, "Nay, but by men of strange lips and with another tongue will he speak to this people." God has been speaking to them "precept upon precept" and "line upon line" by the clear simple teaching of the prophet. They refuse to listen to him; therefore, God will give them what sounds like stammering lips and another tongue. He will speak to them through the mighty attack of the Assyrian army, whose speech will sound like gibberish to the Judeans.