

Well now you have the same thing here but it's the hobles instead of the king. So the ch. begins, I'm quite sure, with this banquet being held. Probably the mass of people don't know what it's for. But it's a big occasion, and if the people want to walk in and out there is nothing to stop them. It's not strickly a closed meeting at all, but those who have arranged, the leaders, have got in mind exactly this situation. They need protection from Damascus and from Samaria. They are getting protection, but they want to hold the enemy off, the near enemy, until Assyria comes and delivers them.

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What Isaiah ~~said~~ out earlier/was that the King of Assyria conquered both those nations and then Judah was right next to them, and in constant danger. So his scheme backfired exactly as happened in connection with the second world war, and our present situation here.

So here is this banquet and these men who are secretly rejoicing, altho they are taking the attitude: "We've got to fight and hold back the forces of Ephraim; we've got to do this and we're going to succeed, but altho they are going to succeed the Assyrian is going to come and attack Ephraim and Damascus from the rear.

So Isa. walks into the banquet, and turns to the people and begins to speak. You can imagine they say: What's this old fool doing in here? Get rid of him. Let's put him out." But he disarms them. He begins: Woe to that reed the pride of Ephraim's drunkards. He is critisizing these people whom they are trying to arouse opposition to. That pleases them so they let him go on. "Woe to that reed, the pride of Ephraim's drunkards, to the fading flower, his glorious beauty, set on the head of a fertile vally--to that city the pride of those laid low by wine."

You notice there are two thoughts in this: "Woe to Ephraim." The people were afraid of them and wanted the Assyrians to deliver us from. The other is that one is that Ephraim has their people characterized by drunkenness. They are laid low by wine. Well, these nobles in Judah may themselves go in excess, etc. but even so they are glad to hear the other people being critisized. Most of us are glad when we hear someone we don't like critisized for something we do ourselves. So they let him keep on talking. He says, "See, the Lord has one who is powerful and strong. Like a hailstorn and a destructive wind, like a hailstorm and a destructive wind, like a driving rain and a flooding downpour, he will throw it forcefully to the groudn. That wreath, the pride of Ephraim's drunkards"-- you see how he critisizes Ephraim. "The pride of their drunkards will be trampled underfoot. That fading flower, his glorious beauty, set on the head of the fertile valley, will be like a fig ripe before harvest--as soon as someone sees it and takes it in his hand, he swallows it."

In other words, Ephraim is going to disappear. They are going to be overcome. Isn't that wonderful; we are going to be safe. They say to themselves, Yes we know it's going to happen because the Assyrians are going to attack ~~from~~ from the rear. We've already made this arrangement with them. Of course we don't think Isaiah knows anything about that, but this helps to arouse the people to hold back the people of Ephraim until the Assyrian comes and makes us safe.