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factory representative. He speaks to the whole house of David, giving assurance that it will not always have such unworthy representatives as Ahaz, but that God Himself will provide, as the true head of the house of David, One born of a virgin, whose name can properly be called Immanuel (Heb. for "God with us").

In vv. 15ff. the prophet turns his attention away from the house of David as a whole and back to Ahaz. No statement had been made as to when Immanuel will come. On the assumption that He might be born immediately, the time that would be involved in His growth is used as a measuring stick to show how soon God will cause Ahaz' faithless scheme to produce results quite different from what he had expected. Supposing that the child were to be born right at that time, before he would reach the age when he would be able to make simple choices the two kings who were menacing Judah would have disappeared (v.16), and the great depopulation caused by the Assyrian invasion would have resulted in a situation where crops that require human labor would be greatly diminished. Much of the land would revert to thorns and thistles for lack of