

you will be beaten down by it. As often as it comes it will carry you away; morning after morning by day and bynight it will sweep you away." Then he gives ~~you~~ a figure of speech. Take v. 20 by itself and you might wonder what it is talking about. But he is saying in v. 20, This scheme of yours you think is so clever will actually backfire on you. It will not accomplish what you want.

He says, "The bed is too short to stretch out on, the blanket too narrow to wrap around you. The Lord will rise up . . . to do his work, his strange work and perform his task, his alien task." Now stop your mocking or your chains will become heavier, the Lord, the Lord Almighty has told me, of the destruction decreed against the whole land."

The rest of the chapter gives a general picture of God's dealing with the people. He says he is like a farmer who uses a certain type of treatment for a certain type of produce; one who uses heavy machinery for certain things, and uses very light easy going J _____ for other parts. It's all adjusted to the situation and that's the way God is going to deal, sweeping away the wicked and dealing gently with those who truly trust in Him.

So we have this 28th chapter which in the light of the background becomes very clear and easy to understand but which without the background is very difficult and seems just like words, words without much connection. In a way it's like reading Shakespeare with having the statements as to who is speaking left out. You have to study the context in order to discover them. But we have a marvelous picture here in these chapters of how God dealt with the people who _____ . Of how God would do away with this Ahaz _____ these who were not proper heads of the house of David. How he would send his own virgin born son, our Lord Jesus Christ to take the leadership of God's people. Of how he would do away with those people who honor him with their mouths but their hearts are far from him. He would replace them with a nation that would truly honor the Lord. We see here the tact that Isaiah used. How he came to Ahaz and used one method, how he came before the nobles and used a different method but he used a method that they simply could not drive him off and turn away from him. They were put in a position where they had to listen and he gave them first words that they liked to hear. To Ahaz (he said) God is going to deliver you from these nations.

Of course they thought== Ahaz thought he was going to do it with his clever scheme. To the nobles (he said) God is going to destroy these people of Samaria that are threatening you. They said, Yes, it is actually these Assyrians that we've hired. He leads on to show what will be the actual result of this, ~~of~~ of which we find the results later on of both of these sections as the Assyrians sweep over the land and then how God in mercy to Hezekiah and the others delivers them.

I think there is a great truth here for us. We have God's message. WE should give God's message and give it in a way that people will have to listen but we should give it in a way that does not immediately arouse such antagonism that we are not able to continue. We should study the situation; we should study the best way to present the message and to get the message across, and after he has their attention and their interest then we should give the full counsel of God and not hesitate to speak it clearly and plainly and tell exactly what God is saying to us. God wants us to be His messengers as Isaiah was, to go out fearlessly against the forces of our own time, but to go out graciously, to use tact, to use judgment ~~in~~ in presenting our message.