



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE
ISAIAH 7:1-4, 7-16
LESSON: THE SIGN OF IMMANUEL – December 2, 2018

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose for the book of Isaiah is to call the nation of Judah back to God and to tell of God's salvation through the Messiah. It is written by the prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz. He is speaking and writing mainly in Jerusalem. This book is the longest of the prophets and looks further than any of its contemporaries. He was born during the reign of Uzziah and called to his prophetic ministry the year the king died (740 B. C.).

¹From now on in the Book of Isaiah, the names Israel and Ephraim and Samaria all refer to the northern half of the land that God promised to His special people. The southern half of the land is called Judah, and includes Jerusalem, David's capital. The nation split into these two separate nations after the death of Solomon (see 1 Kings 10:1-16).

LESSON: I. PERIL ON THE HORIZON ISAIAH 7:1-4

1. ²The Test

7:1 And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. Uzziah, the king for over 50 years, had died. Time has passed and Uzziah's grandson (Ahaz) is now on the throne.

- What problem does Ahaz face? — The two kings: Rezin and Pekah of Syria and Israel have laid siege to his country.
- Anything seem odd about the other country that is laying siege to Judah? — Well, the other country is Israel - the ten tribes to the north. Their brothers are ready to attack them!

But, the alliance of Israel and Syria could not prevail against Judah.

7:2 And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.

- How did Judah react to the news that its brothers to the north had joined; were in alliance with Syria to attack it? — Well, it greatly upset them. Their "*hearts ... were shaken, as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind.*" Let's see what God does next.

2. The Counsel

7:3 Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field;—

¹ <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/isaiah1-9-lbw-nh.htm>

² <http://www.cameronlaw.com/study/289.php>

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- What is God's counsel to King Ahaz? — Isaiah was to go meet with king Ahaz and bring
- Shearjashub, Isaiah's son. His name meant a remnant shall survive.

3. **The Context**

Let's look at the context for a minute. In verse 3 God tells Isaiah to meet King Ahaz on the road by the waterworks.

- What does this tell you about Isaiah's working relationship with the King? — If Isaiah were a trusted confidant of the king, he would not have to try to challenge the king out on some road.
- What does this tell you about King Ahaz? — He was not a good king. We can find proof for this by reading 2 Chronicles 28:1-3.
- Who has Ahaz been relying on? — He worshiped other gods. He was so corrupt in his worship that he sacrificed his own sons!
- If Ahaz is so corrupt, why is God trying to help Ahaz? — This shows that God keeps trying to work with us. No one who is lost will be able to complain that God did not do enough to save him or her.
- What does the fact that Israel had allied with Syria suggest to you? — God did not intend that His people be allied with other nations to gain power. Neither of the two nations of "His people" are faithful to Him. He has decided to offer help to Ahaz - perhaps to bring him back to faithfulness, or perhaps because of God's love for his ancestor, King David.

7:4 And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah. Continuing with God's counsel: Isaiah is to say to Ahaz— *"Take heed and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted..."*

- What does God call Syria and Israel? — Smoldering stubs/sticks of firewood.
- Is it a compliment? Is this what you want in a fire? — You want fire, not smoke. You want an entire log, not just the ends.
- What do you think God means by this? — Israel and Syria were about to fall to the Assyrians. Ahaz should not be worried about them. He says these countries are two tails of smoking firebrands, meaning that they are really in decline.
- What insult did God use? —The extent of God's insult is not obvious. However, in that culture you showed contempt by calling a person by the name of their father if their father was not well known. Nothing is said about Remaliah in the Bible other than he was the father of Pekah. God is saying, *'This is the son of an unimportant man.'* No one has attacked Judah. So, Pekah, the King of Israel, is referred to as *"the son of Remaliah."*

NOT APART OF THE LESSON ISAIAH 7:5-6

7:5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying,— These are the ones who have counseled together to devise evil against the throne of David.

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7:6 Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal:—

- What did Syria and Israel have in mind for Judah? — Tear it apart and put someone else on the throne, meaning the son of Tabeal.
- Why did they want to replace King Ahaz? — Because he was corrupt?

Our lesson quarterly and the commentaries I read suggest a background that I have not brought into this lesson. The suggestion is that Israel and Syria are concerned about the rising power of Assyria. They want Judah (King Ahaz) to join in an alliance with them to resist Assyrian expansion. If Ahaz will not join them, they will attack and put someone on his throne who will cooperate. And King Ahaz, 2 Kings 16:7-9, has entered into a secret deal with the Assyrians to be their ally. King Ahaz thought he was hiring the Assyrians to protect him. He has put his firm faith in the king of Assyria and he has given gold from the temple to the Assyrians to induce them to attack Syria (2Kgs.16:1-9). But, the Assyrians ended up destroying his country and humiliating him.

BACK TO THE LESSON:

II. PROMISE OF SALVATION ISAIAH 7:7-9

4. The Solution

7:7 Thus said the Lord God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. God speaks about this situation: "*It will not work; it won't come to pass.*" God has other purposes for that throne.

7:8 For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people. According to God, the head of Syria is Damascus and the head of Damascus was a man named Rezin, and within sixty-five years, Ephraim, the northern kingdom of Israel would fall and be taken into captivity (by Assyria).

7:9 And the head of Ephraim is Samria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established. The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son, Pekah— (The son of an unimportant man). This is the promise of God to the Judean king; on whom Judah and Israel should have been relying. Burn this text into your memory: "*If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all!*" The serious defect in all of the planning and maneuvering I discussed above is that no one is relying on God's power. They are all relying on other people. If Judah will believe, she can stand; if not, she too will fall.

III. PROPOSAL FOR A SIGN ISAIAH 7:10-13

7:10 Moreover the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, — Ahaz has placed his hope for salvation in human power rather than in the Lord. Here, the Lord speaks to Ahaz again through Isaiah.

7:11 Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. Here, God invites King Ahaz and all of Jerusalem to put their firm faith in a far more reliable ally—the Lord God Himself! Though Ahaz is the heir of David's throne who doesn't believe in

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the Lord, the Lord invites Ahaz to request a sign; test Him.

- What kind of test could the king give God? What was God offering? — It seems to be an offer of any kind of sign, either in heaven or the depths of the sea.

7:12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. However, the king responded that he would not ask, neither...tempt the Lord. Ahaz could have chosen any sign to attest God's message of hope as delivered by the prophet; but he refused.

7:13 And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? — Therefore, God chose His own sign to give to Ahaz. Isaiah says Hear ye now, O house of David. It's one thing to "weary men, but will you weary my God also?" Put yourself in God's place. If you offered a "test" to show you were reliable, how would you feel if the other person, who was not relying on you, said 'That's okay, some other time, maybe.' The Old Testament reveals that God wants obedience, accepts anger towards Him, but He hates being ignored or considered irrelevant. Ahaz definitely had the wrong response here, and since Isaiah included the whole house of David, the nation was also guilty of wearying God. God expects us to believe Him and His power regardless of circumstances.

IV. PROVISION OF A SAVIOUR ISAIAH 7:14-16

7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Since Ahaz refused to choose a sign, the Lord chose His own sign—a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. This prophecy reached forward to the virgin birth of the Messiah in the New Testament. "Immanuel", the title applied to Jesus in Matthew 1:23 meaning "God is with us." (Read Matthew 1:22-23. This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus).

- When you face problems, when you are tempted to rely on other humans for help, how is the birth of Jesus a sign to stand firm in faith, a sign to rely on God? — This was the ultimate rescue of humans! We were consigned to eternal death. We had no power to save ourselves. God loved us so much that He made the ultimate sacrifice to save us. Now there is a sign for you!

7:15 Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. As in verse 14, His name shall be called Immanuel, God is with us. He will eat butter and honey, to know to refuse evil and choose good. *Curds and honey* were poor foods for hard times.

7:16 For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings. But, before the child of prophecy knows how to refuse evil and choose good, the land that the two kings and their respective armies loathe and hate, they shall forsake and they both will be gone and out of the picture. A time lapse exists between the fulfillment of the prophecy in verses 13-16 and that of verse 17.

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SUMMARY:

In the days of Ahaz, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. And when this was told to the house of David, Syria joined Ephraim, their *"hearts were shaken, as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind."* The Lord sent Isaiah to meet Ahaz at the ditch that brings water from the upper pool on the road and say, *"Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails Rezin with Syria and the son of Remaliah are smoking fire-sticks"* (7:1-4).

The Lord God continues to say that their alliance shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. According to God, the head of Syria is Damascus and the head of Damascus was a man named Rezin, and within sixty-five years, Ephraim, the northern kingdom of Israel would fall and be taken into captivity (by Assyria). So, the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son, Pekah is no longer strong and their power will not increase. God says, if you will not stand firm in your faith, you won't stand firm at all. Ahaz has placed his hope in human power rather than in the Lord, and the Lord speaks to Ahaz again through Isaiah (7:7-10).

The Lord invites Ahaz to put his faith in a far more reliable ally, by requesting a sign whether it be in the depth or in the height above from Him. But, Ahaz responded that he would not ask for a sign, nor tempt the Lord. So, Isaiah speaks to the whole house of David about them wearying men and God. Their confidence and trust should be in God. God will give them a sign anyway. *"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."* This prophecy of this conception and birth was fulfilled in Jesus in the New Testament. His name will be *Immanuel*, which means *"God with us"* to remind the people that God would always be with them, and that their faith is to be in Him alone. And the child shall eat butter and honey that He may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. But, before the child of prophecy knows how to refuse evil and choose good, the land that the two kings and their respective armies loathe and hate, they shall forsake and they both will be gone; out of the picture (7:11-16).

APPLICATION:

When Jesus came to die on our behalf, He showed that He was willing and able to solve our greatest problems. Will you put your trust in Him knowing that God is with us?