

Chapter 7

Good evening and thank you for joining us! Would you plz turn in your bibles to Isaiah 7? What we're reading about is a dark moment in Israel's history.

Remember Israel split into 2.....
Story of Jeroboam and rehoam

And now, at this moment of Isaiah, we see what would have before have seemed unthinkable. The northern nation of Israel and the nation of Syria combine to try and attack the southern kingdom of Judah.

Now I'm gonna share the end of the story b/c it's important as we study these chapters. God will tell Judah they don't have to worry about Israel and Syria. In fact, in just a few years, the nation of Assyria will capture the northern kingdom of Israel. They will try to invade Judah. That's when the angel of the Lord kills 185k in one night.

So as we see this, remember the southern kingdom of Judah will not fall to the Assyrians, it will eventually be the Babylonians.

We're gonna study chapters 7-8, and the title of tonight's message is A Christmas Promise
Let's pray

1 Now it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin king of Syria and Pekah

the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to make war against it, but could not prevail against it. It's important to understand that Syria and Assyria were two different people groups.

SHOW PIC Assyria lived on the Euphrates River in the heart of Mesopotamia. Nineveh was its capitol. Syria lived north of Israel, with its capitol in Damascus. **CLOSE PIC**

At the time, Ahaz king of Judah was afraid of his nearer neighbors, Israel and Syria. In fact, he was courting the more distant Assyria - hoping to secure their protection.

2 And it was told to the house of David, saying, "Syria's forces are deployed in Ephraim." So his heart and the heart of his people were moved as the trees of the woods are moved with the wind. Ever heard the expression, "shaking like a leaf?" Here is where it originates. It described Ahaz.

Ephraim was the tribe just north of Jerusalem. This meant an invading army was camped in Jerusalem's northern suburbs. And it scared King Ahaz to death.

3 Then the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-Jashub[fn] your son, at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller's Field, Isaiah had two sons - and there's a price to be paid if you're the son of a prophet - you might get a weird name. Isaiah named both his sons prophetically. The phrase, "Shear-Jashub" means "a remnant shall return."

This promise of a Jewish remnant was God's assurance Judah would never be utterly destroyed. And God tells Isaiah where to meet King Ahaz, ...3 **at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller's Field**

SHOW PIC If you've been to Jerusalem "the upper pool" was probably the Pools of Bethesda, north of the Temple Mount. The location of the Fuller's Field is uncertain so we're not sure which way the highway ran. **CLOSE PIC**

King Ahaz is expecting a prolonged siege of the city, so Ahaz goes out to inspect the aqueduct - the city's water supply and Isaiah goes to intercept him on his way.

In verse 4 God tells Isaiah what to say to the king

4 and say to him: 'Take heed, and be quiet; do not fear or be fainthearted for these two stubs of smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and the son of Remaliah. God says these kings and their armies will blow a lot of smoke, but won't flame. There's no need to be afraid or intimidated by them.

Remember at this time, Ahaz is seeking the protection of the far-away Assyrians. Fear is forcing him into an ungodly alliance. Sadly, Ahaz doesn't trust God. In fact, in the future he'll go so far as to buy the security of the Assyrians with gold from the Temple. Ahaz will even bow to the idols of Assyria.

God promises to deliver His people, but Ahaz continues to compromise. 5-9

5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you, saying, 6 “Let us go up against Judah and trouble it, and let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves, and set a king over them, the son of Tabel”— 7 thus says the Lord GOD:

“It shall not stand,
Nor shall it come to pass.

8 For the head of Syria is Damascus,
And the head of Damascus is Rezin.
Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be broken,
So that it will not be a people.

9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria,
And the head of Samaria is Remaliah’s son.

If you will not believe,
Surely you shall not be established.” ’ ”Ahaz shouldn’t worry about Syria and Damascus - or Ephraim (a nickname for Israel). Within 65 years Syria and Israel will be no more.

At the time it was 733 BC. Eleven years later Israel’s capital fell to Assyria in 722 BC. By 668 BC, 65 years later, the northern kingdom of Israel had lost its Hebrew identity.

One truth you learn by studying the Bible is that nothing God does is random.

Here, the location of Isaiah’s prophecy was no accident.
Remember, Ahaz had invited the Assyrians to protect him against

Syria. Yet in the years to come, Assyria will pose a greater threat than either Syria or Israel.

In just three decades, in the reign of Ahaz' son, Hezekiah, 185,000 Assyrian troops will surround Jerusalem with their king Sennacherib. Assyria will send out an ambassador to insult, threaten, and pose terms of Judah's surrender.

And guess where Sennacherib, the assyrian King speaks to Jerusalem? 2 Kings 18:17 tell us "On the highway to the fuller's field." Sennacherib's envoy will do their threatening and trash talking at the exact same spot Isaiah promised God's protection. It was a double reminder.

In the exact spot where the enemy will hurl its threats, God has already promised His deliverance.

10-11

10 Moreover the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, 11 "Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above." God is going to assure Ahaz of His deliverance with a sign of the king's choosing. Ahaz can ask for the most outlandish sign imaginable, and God will do it!

If it were you, what would you have asked?

12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!" We'll learn from Ahaz' future actions that this was a false humility. Ahaz had already made up his mind. He didn't really want to trust God.

See king Ahaz had more confidence in his political maneuvers, than in God. He was planning to strike an alliance with the Assyrians.

So, since Ahaz refuses to name a sign, God does it for him

13 Then he said, “Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? And notice Isaiah takes this matter of a sign beyond the current, local situation. The immediate politics provoked the prophecy, but it’s as if God knew the sign would be wasted on Ahaz, so He broadens its implications to the whole house of David, and to all generations of the tribe of Judah.

14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.^[fn] What a sign! This sounds familiar right? Matthew 1 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,”^[fn] which is translated, “God with us.”

The sign to King Ahaz was “Immanuel.”

And here Isaiah introduces Immanuel to the nation Judah. He’ll be born of a virgin 700 years in the future, but He’s about to play a huge role in Judah’s current crisis

15-16

15 Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings. Curds and honey were baby food. Thus Isaiah is saying before this miraculous, virgin-born child reaches adulthood, Syria and Israel will no longer be a serious threat.

A Jewish boy celebrates his bar-mitzvah, or his passage from childhood into adulthood, at age 12. In a little less than a dozen years the Assyrians had wiped out both Syria and Israel. Both enemies were toppled. Assyria will conquer Syria and Israel, but they'll keep coming South...

And the rest of the chapter is all about Assyria, the nation Ahaz trusted, will also bring ruin to Judah.

17-22

17 The LORD will bring the king of Assyria upon you and your people and your father's house—days that have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah.”

18 And it shall come to pass in that day
That the LORD will whistle for the fly
That is in the farthest part of the rivers of Egypt,
And for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

19 They will come, and all of them will rest
In the desolate valleys and in the clefts of the rocks,
And on all thorns and in all pastures.

20 In the same day the Lord will shave with a hired razor,

With those from beyond the River,[fn] with the king of Assyria,
The head and the hair of the legs,
And will also remove the beard.

21 It shall be in that day
That a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep;
22 So it shall be, from the abundance of milk they give,
That he will eat curds;
For curds and honey everyone will eat who is left in the
land. There'll be no steak in Judah. The people will be forced to
survive, so they'll keep their few cattle alive as an ongoing source
of milk and cheese.

23-25

23 It shall happen in that day,
That wherever there could be a thousand vines
Worth a thousand shekels of silver,
It will be for briers and thorns.
24 With arrows and bows men will come there,
Because all the land will become briers and thorns.

25 And to any hill which could be dug with the hoe,
You will not go there for fear of briers and thorns;
But it will become a range for oxen
And a place for sheep to roam. Once populated areas will be a
wilderness. Animals graze where people lived. Normal agriculture
and life in general would be devastated

1 Moreover the LORD said to me, "Take a large scroll, and write on it with a man's pen concerning Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.[fn] Here's the name of Isaiah's second son, "Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz." Imagine the first day of school with the name.

This name was also prophetic. It means, "speed to the plunder, swift to the spoils." The name of Isaiah's first son spoke of God's deliverance. His second son's name spoke of God's destruction. Jerusalem's enemies will be plundered.

2 And I will take for Myself faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah." This prophecy continues from Isaiah 7, where God assured Ahaz, king of Judah, that he would not be overthrown by the combined forces of Syria and Israel. Here, God gives Isaiah a sign to explain more about how soon the defeat of Syria and Israel will come.

3-4

3 Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, "Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz; 4 for before the child shall have knowledge to cry 'My father' and 'My mother,' the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be taken away before the king of Assyria." God will judge Judah's enemies by the hand of the Assyrians before Isaiah's son can even say, "Dad" or "Mom."

5 The LORD also spoke to me again, saying:

6 "Inasmuch as these people refused

The waters of Shiloah that flow softly,
And rejoice in Rezin and in Remaliah's son; God was upset with
the northern ten tribes of Israel for turning their back on
Jerusalem.

The "waters of Shiloah" was the pool of Siloam. It was
Jerusalem's water supply. Yet Israel had turned their back on the
waters of God - the city of Jerusalem. Instead, they partnered up
a rival kingdom in Samaria.

7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord brings up over them
The waters of the River,[fn] strong and mighty—
The king of Assyria and all his glory;
He will go up over all his channels
And go over all his banks. The armies of Assyria will overwhelm
the northern nation of Israel like a flood.

8 He will pass through Judah,
He will overflow and pass over,
He will reach up to the neck;
And the stretching out of his wings
Will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel.[fn] Here is where
the plot takes an interesting turn. Remember Isaiah 7:14-
Immanuel won't be born for 700 years, but Jesus, the Son of God,
exists from eternity past to eternity future. Jesus is this
"Immanuel." He is "God with us" - and the land of Israel belongs to
Him.

Of course, this is the truth that will one day dawn on both Jews
and Arabs, Israelis and Hamas. Today, they are fighting over

possession of the land. But when Immanuel returns He'll take what belongs to Him. Everyone will agree, it's "Your land, O Immanuel."

9-10

9 "Be shattered, O you peoples, and be broken in pieces!

Give ear, all you from far countries.

Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces;

Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces.

10 Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing;

Speak the word, but it will not stand,

For God is with us."^[fn]

Who would stop the invasion of Assyria and break the invaders?

"God is with us" - "Immanuel." What was the sign God gave to

Ahaz - the guarantee of deliverance? It was "God with us" or

"Immanuel."

11-12

11 For the LORD spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying:

12 "Do not say, 'A conspiracy,'

Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy,

Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.

13 The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow;

Let Him be your fear,

And let Him be your dread. At the time Ahaz was afraid of two nations conspiring against him - Israel and Syria. God says don't be afraid of a "conspiracy." One plus God still equals a majority.

It's wisely been said that when we fear God, we have nothing else to fear. God will be Jerusalem's defense! And when we trust the Lord, He'll be our defense too!

**14 He will be as a sanctuary,
But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense
To both the houses of Israel,
As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.** 1 Peter 2 takes this verse and applies it to Immanuel. Embrace Jesus as your cornerstone, and He'll make you a Temple of praise. Reject Him and you'll stumble. You'll stumble over Him, and be broken by Him.

This is what happened to the Jews. They stumbled over Jesus. He didn't meet their expectations. They were offended by Jesus' claims and His intentions.

**15 And many among them shall stumble;
They shall fall and be broken,
Be snared and taken."** Jesus said in **Matthew 21:44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."**

It's wonderful to come broken and humble before the Lord. But the haughty and self-reliant will be crushed.

16-18

16 Bind up the testimony,
Seal the law among my disciples.

17 And I will wait on the LORD,
Who hides His face from the house of Jacob;
And I will hope in Him.

18 Here am I and the children whom the LORD has given me!

We are for signs and wonders in Israel

From the LORD of hosts,

Who dwells in Mount Zion. Isaiah was a righteous man in a sea of idolaters. Isaiah's family were a sign against the faithless.

19 And when they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? Imagine, in Jerusalem's darkest hour some of her brightest minds turned to the occult, rather than God. It grieved Isaiah. Why would you trust a wizard, or try to speak to the dead, when you can go to a living God?

20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. This was Isaiah's strategy when he faced tough times and impossible circumstances. He turned to the law, the testimony, the Word of God.

And if a counselor steers you in any other direction than God's Word, they're not speaking for God. "There is no light in them."

21-22

21 They will pass through it hard-pressed and hungry; and it shall happen, when they are hungry, that they will be enraged and curse their king and their God, and look upward. 22 Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish; and they will be driven into darkness. When they forsake God's word and trust in mediums and wizards and the dead, they are courting darkness, not light.