

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

All right, well, good evening. We want to welcome those of you that are joining us online. On Thursday nights, we have our midweek Bible study, and we're going through the Bible book-by-book, chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse. Tonight we find ourselves in Isaiah, Chapter 7, having completed chapter 6 last week.

And so, Lord willing, we'll make it through just the one chapter tonight. We'll invite you there online to join with us. And before we jump in, I want to give a shout out to our online members. Many of you have been praying for us. We certainly appreciate that, very grateful for that.

As you might imagine, it's not good, a lot of damage and a lot of people have been displaced and a lot of people have lost a lot, some losing everything. So we really do covet your prayers for the islands here. And we just need it to stop raining now, and I didn't check on the way here, but I'm pretty sure nobody is building an ark. Did anybody see an ark, anybody building an ark? Okay, so we just need this storm to pass over us in Jesus' name. So why don't we pray, and we'll begin if you would please join with me.

Loving Heavenly Father, we're ever so grateful to You that we can come to You at times like this and ask of You anything. And this is one of those times where we just want to ask You for Your Grace, for Your mercy, just for Your hand of protection over the islands. And, Lord, this storm system that has dropped a lot of rain on the islands would you just have it stop, have it move fast, and just minimize the loss of property, the loss of -- I know of at least one life that's been lost because of this, but I know a lot has been lost in this.

But Lord, as only You can, You can take things like this and use it to bring people to You. And so, Lord, we would ask You for that as well. Lord, thank You that as a church by Your Grace, we've been okay, we haven't lost electricity, we haven't really had any damage per se.

And so, Lord, I just thank You for those that are here tonight, that they could even be here tonight, for the many who aren't Lord, for whatever reason, we just pray Your blessing on them. And Lord, just help them, be our help in times of need, as the writer of Hebrews says. That we can come to You boldly, to Your throne of grace in our time of need and ask for help, and You'll show us mercy.

And so, Lord, we're asking You for that. Lord, we're looking forward to what You have for us in Your Word tonight. Lord, we love Your Word, we love you, and it's with great anticipation - I mean, that's why we're here tonight on a night like this especially to just be in Your Word and as we get into Your Word, Your Word gets into us.

And as that happens, Lord, we know that You're always so faithful to speak into our lives very specifically, sometimes very personally. And so, Lord, we're asking You to do that in our time together in Your Word tonight, we ask this in Jesus' name, Amen and amen.

All right, so once again, we have before us very big chapter here in Isaiah 7 and not necessarily in its length, but more so in its strength. And this because it very powerfully speaks to and even provides the cure for those who find themselves filled with fear concerning what may be coming.

Now I know that I've shared very openly in the past about my own struggles with anxiety and particularly worry and fear as well. Because sometimes the worry can turn into fretting, and fretting turn into fear. And once that happens, I mean you're just crippled and the enemy's

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

got you. And we have amazing minds that are capable of manufacturing and fabricating the worst possible scenario known to man that is certain to happen.

And that's the thing about fear: It'll take you down as far down this road as you will allow this spirit of fear to take you into the future. And so tonight we have before us a chapter that deals very specifically with fear, as we're about to see.

So as we go through this chapter, it's my hope that will all be encouraged, myself included, and strengthened by what God has for us tonight here in His words.

So with that, we'll jump right in, verse 1. "Now it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah (we learned about Uzziah last week in Chapter 6) 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. 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."

That's quite a picturesque description of how shaken they were by news of this, so much so that they're likened as to these trees that are just shaking in the wind. We have that expression, doubtless you've heard it: When you're so afraid, you're shaking in your boots."

I suppose you could say that of them of this King Ahaz. By the way, this king, a wicked king, did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. And he was King of the Southern tribes of Israel. And now Ahaz just learned -- I want to kind of give you -- this is going to be germane to our understanding of how serious this is and this fear that has set in; there's a reason for it.

Upon hearing now that the 10 Northern tribes of Israel, because at this time, thanks to Rehoboam, by the way, Israel has been split in two. You have Southern Judea and then you have the Northern tribes of Israel, two tribes in Southern Israel, Judea, 10 tribes in the North. And now this King Ahaz learned that the 10 Northern tribes of Israel had formed this alliance with Syria and they were coming against him there in Judah, the Southern tribes of Judah.

Now the question needs to be asked: Why are they going to advance against, why has Syria and the Northern tribes of Israel formed this alliance to come against Judah? And the answer is because Ahaz refused to join their alliance. They had come to him, approached him, asked him to join them, to go against Assyria, different than Syria.

So picture a map, you know, if you're good with geography. I'm not; I always have to look at a map. But you have Syria, you have Israel here, Northern Israel, where the 10 tribes were, and then you have Syria, and then you have Assyria. And what they were trying to do was get Judah to join with the Northern tribes of Israel who had already formed an alliance with Syria because they were threatened by Assyria.

And you have to understand that to be threatened by Assyria was a death sentence. It was game over! And all you had to hear was word of Assyria advancing against you, and you would be filled with terror because of how evil through and through the Assyrian Empire was. So they tried to get King Ahaz to join with them, and he refuses. And now, in response to his refusal to join their alliance against Assyria, they plan, they plot to dethrone him and put their own puppet king instead of him.

That's a problem because you have to understand that it would be from the line of David, the tribe, the lion of the tribe of Judah, from which would come the savior of the world, and we're

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

going to see that tonight. The king, had they succeeded -- they would never succeed, God would never allow it. "No weapon forged against them would prosper, (Isaiah will go on to say) or prevail, no weapon forged against you" (no evil plan).

By the way, that's a word for us today, isn't it, the evil plan afoot today? I mean, it is -- I think about what the Apostle Paul said. I'm pretty sure it was Paul who said it (I could be wrong, I stand corrected if I am) something to the effect of, you can't even speak the evil. It's unspeakable, the evil that is committed and is going on today.

But God sees it. God sees all of it. But there is an evil plan afoot today. It is gaining traction. It is so satanic, and it's this plan. You know how we always say, "God has a plan for your life?" Well, Satan has a plan for your life, too. God's plan is for salvation, and Satan's plan is for destruction, and damnation.

And that's what we're seeing take place in the world today with everything that's happening. And I can't really go beyond that. I will, on the prophecy update though, spoiler alert.

But I digress. So now here's this evil plan (it won't succeed) and they want to replace him, dethrone him, and they want to put in his place this puppet king that will ally with them to join forces against Assyria.

This is interesting and I kind of want to preface this before we go any further. But it's important to understand that what Ahaz feared concerning this alliance now of the Northern Kingdom and Syria coming against him, it wouldn't happen, it didn't actually happen.

Now what do I point that out? Because God promises him like God promises us. And in verse 7, as we're about to see, God through Isaiah gives him this promise that "I will not let this happen."

And maybe that's a word for somebody tonight. You're facing a situation, something is coming against you, and it is creating fear in you. But you have a promise from the Lord that He will not allow it to come upon you. He will protect you. He will always protect you.

Well, verse 3, "Then the Lord said to Isaiah, "Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-Jashub your son" Interesting detail, hang on to that, I want to come back to that in a moment. This is his oldest son. We know that Isaiah had two sons. So the Lord is telling Isaiah, I want you to go speak to Ahaz now. And I want you to take your oldest son, and we're told what his name is for a reason. And then we're even told where very specifically, and I think there's a reason for this.

"At the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller's Field." Now why that detail? Here's a thought. This is a true story that actually literally happened. I think sometimes when we're in the Word of God and we read accounts like this, we read them just as that accounts, and I almost wonder if the Holy Spirit inspired this to be recorded so that we could put ourselves in what's taking place here.

That's a very good thing, by the way, when you're studying the Bible, put yourself in that situation. Picture yourself there with King Ahaz. you happen to reside in Southern Israel there in Judah, and word has just gone out that this is coming, and you see the King freaking out and all the people freaking out. And so what are you gonna do? You're gonna freak out too.

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

And so now you put yourself there. This is the actual location, and picture while you're there Isaiah taking his first-born son with him. We have this detail for a reason. So here's the son going with his father to speak to, prophetically prophecy to King Ahaz. And I think we're going to see why here in a moment. So verse four, this is what Isaiah is to say, "And say to him: (this is interesting) Take heed and be quiet." Be still, be calm. "Do not fear or be fainthearted."

And he doesn't just stop there; this is what Isaiah again is to say to King Ahaz. Here's why you're to be calm, be still, be quiet, and not fear or be fainthearted.

"These two stubs" (Syria and the Northern Tribes - I kind of like that). "These two stubs of smoking firebrands (that's all they are: just a bunch of smoke). There's no fire. It's just smoke. It looks like this big fire. What are we gonna do? No, it's just all smoke.

"For the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remaliah." That's what now Isaiah is given to speak to King Ahaz. Okay, question: Why the detail of Isaiah's son and Isaiah's son's name? Answer: his name, Shear-Jashub means "a remnant shall return." That's what his name means.

And if you've been with us for any length or period of time in our study through the Bible, one of the things that we've learned over and over again is that the name is the nature.

My name -- in the Middle East to this day, you name the child based on the nature of that child. And now I have two boys. Elias and Levi are their names. Had I waited and known their nature, I would not have named them Elias and Levi. I would have named them "search and destroy" because that was their nature growing up.

But my name in Arabic means "number one" or "alone only." In fact, in Arabic of Jesus, the only begotten son, it's "El Wahid," "El Wahal." That's my name, my given name, Wahid. It literally means "number one."

The numbers one through five in Arabic are wahid, ithnan, thalathah, arba'a, hamsa. Wahid, literally my name means "number one." Thank you very much. Yeah, I know, it's hard being me.

No, the name is the nature. I was the first and only begotten son, and that's why they named me that way. The name is the nature. Another example, it's one of my favorite because the name is the same in Hebrew as it is in my native tongue of Arabic. We pronounce it English as Isaac. We pronounce it differently in Arabic than in Hebrew.

But in Hebrew, it's Yitschâq. In Arabic, it's 'Ishâq. You know what that means? Literally, it means laughter. You know the story, right? You know how that went down? Here's Abraham, and here comes the Lord. This is the Lord who says to Abraham, "I'm going to give you a son, biological son by Sarah, who is 90 years old," by the way; actually, she was 89 at that time.

"One year from the day I'm gonna I'm give you a son." I know it's not in the text, but if I'm Abraham, I'm like, "Oh, Lord, thank you, but that's a very old prayer," because now he's 99. Because when they have "laughter," Isaac, Yitschâq, Ishâq, he's 100 and she's 90. And He says, "One year from the day I'm going to give you a son."

And then all of a sudden, off in the background is this laughter. And the Lord says that Abraham says, "Sarah's laughing?" "Yeah." And then when she's confronted, "No, I wasn't

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

laughing." "Yeah, you were." So what did they name him? Laughter. This is laughable. A woman who is 90 years old and a man who is 100 years old? That ship sailed a long time ago. Or how do we say it? I'm mixing metaphors, I know. The train left the station years ago. This is laughable, Yitschâq.

Can you imagine every time you said Hey, Yitschâq, Brother Yitschâq, you were saying "laughter?" It was a reminder of how laughable in the eyes of man is that which God did. The name is the nature.

So back to this account. Can you imagine? I mean again, this literally happened. I wonder what the conversation was on the way to see King Ahaz. I wonder what Shear-Jashub said to his dad. So I know you name me "A remnant will return" or "shall remain," but why did you name me that? You know, Bob would have been fine, you know, Steve, John, something, but Shear-Jashub, why? Because it would be a prophetic picture, son, of Judah, yet future.

Because you see, right after this, soon after this, they are taken into captivity and only a remnant would return, which is exactly what his name signified and was a picture prophetically of.

Verse 5, "Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you, saying, (I want you to notice the specificity beginning here in verse 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."

Thus says the Lord God: "It shall not stand, nor shall it come to pass. For (verse 8) the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin.

"Within (again, notice the specificity) 65 years Ephraim will be broken, so that it will not be a people. The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son."

And then he says this: "If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established." Wow, that's pretty detailed! I'm relatively certain that when Isaiah speaks this to Ahaz, Ahaz is like, "Oh, wow, you even know the name of this puppet king that they want to replace me with?" "Yeah, he's the son of Tabel."

You understand in the Middle East, even to this day they call you, they name you after your father, son of a Tabel. Son of Fiaz, my father's name, they would also do it the other way around, too. Abu Wahid, the father of Wahid. We sit in the Gospels: Jesus, son of Joseph. That's how they would identify them. And so we have his identity, and we're also not only told who, but how.

They're going to make a gap in the wall and that's how they're going to get in. And hey, that's pretty detailed. And then after this detail, the Lord has Isaiah tell him that, here's the thing Ahaz, even though you're a wicked king, and that, I want to come back to that in a moment.

You would think if it was a good king, of which there were only nine and all of the nine good Kings were only in Southern Judah, Northern Israel had not one good king that did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. you know Ahaz is going to have a son, his name: Hezekiah. He was one of those nine good kings.

And in our study through Kings, and 1st and 2nd Samuel, and 1st and 2nd Chronicles one of the things we saw was good kings coming from bad kings, and in other words, an evil father

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

had a righteous son who would have a righteous reign, and then it went the other way around too. And this is what we see here with Ahaz. His son would be Hezekiah, was one of Israel's greatest kings, whereas his father, Ahaz, was one of Israel's most evil kings.

How about that one? That's interesting in and of itself. So he's telling him, "Listen, it's not going to happen. I'm not going to let it happen. And, oh, by the way, fast forward 65 years and there's not even going to be a Northern tribe of Israel, Northern Kingdom of Israel. Ephraim is synonymous with the Northern Kingdom of Israel. It won't even exist in 65 years.

You know, actually, we know that within two years, these two kings that were coming against King Ahaz, they're taken out in two years. They're not even around anymore. I mean, in other words, Ahaz, it's not going to happen. This is why you don't need to fear.

But let's talk just a minute about this point of, "If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established." Think this through with me: You know what he's saying to him? Whether you believe this or not is not going to affect the outcome, but it will affect you.

See, I don't want to get ahead of myself here, but I've already told you. Let me say this way: I've given you My word this will not come to pass. This plot against you will not prevail. I will never let it prevail because the Savior of the world is going to come from this lineage from David.

I made David a promise: he could not build me a temple, but I would build him a house because from him would come the Savior of the world. And I've already given My word, so it ain't going to happen.

Now you can believe it or not, Ahaz. It doesn't matter whether you believe God's Word to you or not. It's still going to happen because it's God's Word. It will come to pass exactly as God's Word has said it would. Now the onus is on you, Ahaz, whether or not you're going to believe it because if you don't believe it, it's still going to happen. If you do believe it, it's still going to happen.

But "if you don't believe it, then you shall not be established." Translated: If you don't believe it, the impact's on you, the effect is on you. You lose, and he will because as we're about to see, he will not believe this. He will not trust in the Lord. He will put his trust in man.

"Moreover (verse 10) the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying (this is interesting) "Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above." In other words, you want to sign that what God has said is true, God's Word to you? Ask for a sign. I don't care how outlandish it is, height or depth, you just ask Me for any sign.

Hey, if I'm Ahaz, I'm like, "Anything?" "Yeah." "All right, You're sure, right?" "Yeah, anything, any sign." Okay, well, Ahaz doesn't do that. What does he do? Verse 12, "But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord!" What, well, what is this, a trick question? I mean, almost at first read you think: Good answer, good. you passed the test because "Thou shalt not test the Lord thy God."

Problem: Unless and until the Lord says, "Yeah, I want you to test Me." Wait, we're not supposed to test Lord, right? No, there's one place in the Bible, you know where it's at, where the Lord says, "No, I want you to test Me"?

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

It's in fact, the only place other than here where the Lord says -- now, this was only to Ahaz; this does not apply to us. I mean, in the literal sense. It does in the figurative sense because Jesus did say, "You can ask anything, ask anything, and if it glorifies the Father, you've got it. If it's according to My will, if it's for My glory and your good, you got it, just ask."

James says it this way: "You have not because you ask not." So where in the Bible does the Lord say, "No, I want you to test Me" besides right here with Ahaz? It's in the book of Malachi and it's concerning the tithes and the offerings. And He says, "I want you to test me. "Test Me in this and see if I will not open up the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing that will be so massive you won't know what to do." I mean, think about it like this: You're gonna be like, "Stop, Lord, stop already, too much." I will pour out an abundant blessing that will just be off the charts, over the top. The prerequisite: You have to test Me, put Me to the test.

Oh, but I'm not gonna -- no -- and here's Ahaz all spiritual, "I will not test the Lord." I mean again, it sounds like the right answer, right? You know what's sad? According to 2 Kings Chapter 16, which, by the way, I spent some time in this afternoon, it's pretty intense. I went back into my archive notes from when we were in 2 Kings. It was about five, six years ago actually, 2016-ish. And I read through my archive notes in our study through this chapter, and I just man, you know what Ahaz did?

It's recorded in 2 Kings 16. His own sons: He put them through the fire, sacrificing them, burning them alive to the God Moloch, his own sons! Detestable in the sight of the Lord, an abomination in the sight of the Lord. Sacrificed his own sons! And you know what else we're told in 2 Kings 16 that he did?

And this actually explains why he answers Isaiah this way. He took the money from the Temple treasury, the gold and silver, and he bribed the King of Assyria. He says, "Hey, buddy, old pal, have I got a deal, for you! I'm going to make you an offer you can't refuse." However that goes, he basically makes a deal with the King of Assyria.

And you know what's even more chilling than that? That he would do that, the plan that he had and the deal that he made actually worked, or so he thought. What's the point? The point is, is that he would take matters into his own hands instead of trusting the King of Kings, as it were, he put his trust in the King of Assyria, allied with the King of Assyria, who would ultimately turn on him in the end.

How's that one? It's even worse than that. I don't recommend reading Second Kings 16 before you go to bed; it'll ruin your whole night sleep. Read it in the morning when God's mercies are new every morning. It's a very sobering.

Verse 13, "Then he said (this is Isaiah) "Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also?" Wrong answer, Ahaz. I mean, you wouldn't test the Lord when he said, "No, go ahead and test Me." But look what you just did. By the way, don't think for a second the Lord already knew because He foreknows, He's omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent.

He already knew what Ahaz was up to. He already knew that this is how Ahaz was going to answer. And that's why He inspired the Prophet Isaiah to actually test him in saying, "Test Me." It was a test that God knew he would not pass.

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

"Therefore (verse 14) the Lord Himself will give you a sign." In other words, you won't test or ask for a sign no matter the height or the depth of it, I'll give you a sign. Here's a takeaway, just parenthetically let me say: If the Lord says, "Ask Me for something," do it. Just do it, ask Him. "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign."

What is that sign? "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." It's March, but Merry Christmas. Isn't this a very famous verse that we quote, love to quote rightfully so in the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ?

Verse 15, "Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. for before the Child (capitalized) shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings. Watch this: This prophecy would be fulfilled because when Jesus was virgin-born, there were no more two kings of Israel. There's no kings in Israel, exactly as Isaiah said.

Oh, by the way, verse 14 is quoted in, I want to say it's Matthew 1 again. You know, sometimes, you guys, I probably should take the time to be more accurate, and please correct me if I'm wrong. But I want to say it's Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 1, where this very passage is quoted and referred to when it is talking about the birth of Jesus Christ, and it goes something like this: It had to happen this way in order to fulfill the Prophet Isaiah who said, "Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel."

Now, I know that this is a very well-known verse, and I know that it is certainly a prophecy that points to the virgin birth of the Savior. But I would suggest that it's here for another very practical reason, and it has practical application for us, such that Immanuel means "God with us." You know those -- again, I'm kind of just adding this parenthetically -- Jehovah witnesses: Jesus is not God. Mormons: Jesus, oh, He's Lord, Savior, you can have that conversation with them till the cows come home, whatever that means. That presupposes you have cows to come home.

But you can have that conversation with them. But boy, as soon as you get to Jesus is God, stop right there. To which I would say, "Well, okay, Immanuel is Jesus, God with us. What are you gonna do with that?" Well, you can do what the Jehovah Witnesses do with John's Gospel, Chapter 1, "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God, and when you get to verse 14, John 1, "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled amongst us, God with us, that's Jesus, God with us.

Jesus is God: God the Father, God the Son God, the Holy Spirit. Remember our study last week? We had at least two references, no less than two references to the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

So where am I going with this? Well, here's what I'm thinking again: You're in a trial that has you paralyzed in fear. This is a truth that should set you free from that fear. God is with you. He will never leave you or forsake you. I want to talk about that more towards the end.

Now, beginning in verse 17 through to the end of the chapter, we turn a catastrophic corner, if I can call it that. I mean, it is a graphic description of the destruction, decimation, and desolation that will ensue because Ahaz did not believe the Lord, did not trust in the Lord, and instead made this alliance with the King of Assyria, and to do that, he did so to his own peril in the end.

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

I say that to say this: What we're about to read as graphic as it is, as disturbing as it is, none of it needed to happen. None of what we're about to read would have happened had Ahaz but trusted God because he was presented with the choice: Are you going to trust Me? Are you going to believe My Word, My promise to you that this shall not come to pass that this plot, this plan against you will not prevail, this weapon forced against you will not prevail?

Are you going to believe -- it's going to happen either way -- but are you going to believe Me? Are you going to put your trust in Me, or are you going to do what he ends up doing, and put your trust in this alliance with the King of Assyria?

It's really a takeaway from this for us tonight. It's this, and this is something I'm learning in my life by trusting the Lord in those terrifying trials, and I mean, there are times when it is just perilous and terrifying. I get that, I know that. I've been there, I've done that. I've tasted from that cup more times than I care to talk about.

I am walking in victory, but God has been doing a profoundly deep work in my life in this area to just trust Him, to not be afraid, to not be full of fear and anxiety, to not worry and fret. Because when you trust the Lord in those terrifying trials, you will avoid needless pain and suffering in your lives.

I think of that hymn of old, that classic hymn of old, "What A friend We Have In Jesus." Oh, what needless pain we bear because we don't carry everything to prayer. Wow!

So you're ready, verse 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 (when the Kingdom was split). And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will whistle for the fly."

You know -[whistling] -kind of like -- I can't whistle for anything. In other words, He's going to get the flies, call them by whistling to them. "That is in the farthest part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria (of all places). I'm going to get them over here too; how about that?"

"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. In the same day the Lord will shave with a hired razor, with those from beyond the River, with the King of Assyria, the head and the hair of the legs, and will also remove the beard.

I don't want to go too far off; this is what Assyria would do, and we're not talking about going into your local barber and stylists and they're very careful and give you a shave and a trim. You know what the Assyrians would do? They would take these blades and they would shave off all of their hair. It was a humiliation.

Think King David: They did it to him, not to him, to his servants. And they came back and they had shaven them completely to shame them, to just humiliate them and disgrace them. And David says, "I'll take care of this, you guys just go over here to this retreat until all your hair grows back. I'll take care of it, and he did. But that's what they would do.

And that's what Isaiah is prophesying is going to happen, and it did happen. Verse 21, "It shall be in that day that a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep. 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. It shall happen in that day, that wherever there could be a thousand vines

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

worth a thousand shekels of silver, it will be for briers and thorns" (that will have basically taken over the desolate land now).

"With arrows (verse 24) and bows men will come there because all the land will become briers and thorns. And to any hill which could be dug with the hoe, you will not go there for fear (interesting) of briers and thorns. But it will become a range for oxen and a place for sheep to roam."

And this is exactly, precisely what would happen when they were taken into captivity, and none of it needed to happen. Had Ahaz but humbled himself before the Lord, in obedience to the Lord, trusting in the Lord this would have read very differently.

Well, if you'll kindly allow me to, I want to in tonight's Bible study with a list of what I'll call: Five Fast Facts on Fear, pretty clever, isn't it? Yeah, I came up with that; actually, I didn't really. I think the Lord just kind of put it on my heart to share with you with the hopes of encouraging you.

A lot of this comes from my own experience over the years and how the Lord has really been gracious to me and merciful to me, the things that He's taught me about fear, and I want to share those with you, starting with Number 1: Fear is a liar.

Fear is a Liar. Do you know, and there are studies to bear this out, that most of what we worry and fear about never even happens? I know I've shared this in the past; this is probably as good of a time as any to share it again.

The year was 1995, I was in business. I had just started a business about three years prior. And I was closing out my year and doing my books and getting ready for the New Year and kind of doing some projections. And part of that process was to look over my prayer journal, my prayer list for that year. And so I'm going through my prayer list. Have you ever done this? And you're looking at what you prayed for.

And you look at that, and you go -- you almost find yourself: Lord, I'm sorry I pray for that. What was I thinking? You weren't. I was worried about that? I mean, I'm petitioning the Throne about that? I mean, I lost sleep over that? And then it's almost like a righteous anger sets in when you realize it didn't even happen.

It was -- it -- and then those things that do happen, by the way, very small percentage. I mean, we're talking about like 90% of that which we worry about and fear will happen does not happen.

Now some of you who are prone to this are going, "Okay, let's talk about the other 10% because, you know, okay, I'm fine with that, but what about the 10% that does happen?! That's why I'm so worried!" You ready for this, and you're gonna bear witness with this. The Lord gives you the grace to deal with it.

And why? Because God is with us in it and will get us through it. He can't not. He's made us that promise. And God cannot break His promise! God has given us His Word! God cannot go back on His Word! It's impossible! It's inconsistent with who He is! He can't do it!

Sorry if I'm yelling, I just... this is a very passionate thing for me. I know this is -- welcome to my world! Man, if I could get back all those nights that I was tossing and turning and freaking

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

out and praying and listening to worship music and listening to Bible studies, and oh, I know how I'll go back to sleep: I'll just read the Bible. You know how that is, right?

Oh, it doesn't take very long. You start reading the Bible, and your eyelids are like, all of a sudden, just out of nowhere -- I mean, you're wide awake before, you start reading the Bible, those eyelids: you can't even keep them open.

Well, the fear was so great that even that didn't work. Let me just share one thing real quick with you. Thanks for your patience with me on this. There were times in my life; again, I'm being very open with you, I hope it's not too uncomfortable for you.

But there were times in my life when I was so gripped with fear that I would have my Bible open and I would -- I was weeping, praying, fasting, and then I would read a verse and that would just get me through the next 10 minutes. And then I had a little peace, a little calm, and then here comes back again.

I go right back to the Word, and then I would just be calmed. I would go back to prayer, sometimes I would combine the two. I would pray the verse, particularly in the Psalms. You ever done that? That's a very good thing to do. Pray the Word. You take a Psalm and you turn it into a prayer, and you cry out to the Lord. And that would get me through for about another 20 minutes.

And then over a period of time, just the intervals got greater and greater. And then finally there was a breakthrough where I mean, you keep praying, and how long do you pray? Until the peace comes in, that peace that surpasses human understanding of the Apostle Paul talks about in Philippians Chapter 4.

Number 2: Fear is Unnecessary. I've heard it said like this: "One minute spent in fear is one minute wasted." You can't get that back. You know, it's been said of worry, and the same thing goes for fear: "It's like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere."

Isn't it true that when you worry and fret and fear, you think like you're doing something, you're doing nothing. I'll tell you what you are doing: You're destroying yourself from the inside out physically, psychologically. They have statistics and research now that has proven that worry and fear and anxiety affects the digestive system, certainly the cardiovascular system, the nervous system. It affects your hair, your teeth, every part of your body. When you worry, it affects you physically. It can destroy your health physically.

Number 3: Fear is Dangerous. Let me expound on this one. It's dangerous because you're prone to make decisions in the moment of fear that you would not otherwise make. And we, to our own peril like with Ahaz -- don't be too quick to say what a wicked, wicked, evil king.

No, there's an Ahaz in all of us, and we do err greatly when, like Ahaz, instead of trusting God, we take matters into our own hands. I mean, we want to do something about it, throw money at it, call Assyria about it. But we don't call upon the Lord in it, and to do so is to our own peril, and especially men.

Can I just talk to you guys just for a second here on this one? Can we talk? We need to talk because we gotta fix it, right? (Grunting) "We're men, I'll take care of it, I got this, I got this under control."

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

"No, you don't."

"No, but I'm gonna do this and that, and okay, so we're gonna maneuver and strategize and, you know, plan."

"Oh, okay, Ahaz, how's that working out for you?"

This was, in all fairness, it was a brilliant strategy, and it worked. But that's the problem. It was his strategy, not the Lord's. This is what he planned. He put his trust in his own savvy, his own strategy, and not in the Lord.

Number 4, this is a biggie -- they all are, but stay with me on this one: Fear is Demonic. Here's how I get there. We know this to be true. "But God has not given us a spirit of fear." But we need to flip that around. The devil has given us a spirit of fear.

Do you know why? Because he knows that if he can get us in the grips of fear, we will not trust the Lord. We will not believe the promises of God. We will not believe the Word of God, and he's all about that, by the way. It's to put doubt in our hearts, plant that seed of doubt that will germinate and sprout in our minds. God's not going to get you out of this; you're on your own, kid. You better come up with a plan because this won't end well if you don't. God's not going to get you, come on. It's God's fault that you're in this position in the first place.

Well, that sounds like the garden with this serpent to Eve. "Hath God said?" Come on, who are you kidding? The devil is a liar, the father of lies, and fear is demonic. And that's why because Satan knows he's got you when he's got you in fear.

And lastly, Number 5: Fear is a Sin. I wanted to end with this one for this reason; this is a good thing. It is? You just said fear's a sin. It is, but here's the good news. If it's a sin, and it is, the good news is, is that God forgives sin. And not only does He forgive sin, He delivers us from all of our fears if we would but confess it as such. But we don't.

We don't see fear as a sin, we don't see worry as a sin. Because it's a sin against God because of our distrust of God, and it's an offense to God. Think about it as a parent with your children. How offended are you, how disrespected are you when your children don't believe you, don't trust you? I mean, they're sinning against you.

How much more our Heavenly Father? You ever thought of it like that, that fear is a sin against God? But as soon as we acknowledge it and confess it and bring it where it belongs, to the cross, it was paid for.

And 1 John 1:9, "If we would but confess our sins." That's all we have to do: Just confess. He'll do two things: He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us, deliver us from that sin, if we would but confess.

I have to confess that one of the biggest breakthroughs for me in this area in my life that really brought about the victory in my life, and I am walking in victory I want you to know that, by the grace of God, was when I acknowledged it: Lord, how must I grieve your heart when I do this? I think about Jesus, and I'll end with this -- did I say "one last thing" yet? I haven't, so this is the last thing right here.

I think about Jesus in Matthew 6; I would have loved to have been there. We've been to the site, those of you that have been to Israel with us there, on the side of what we affectionately

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

refer to as the Mount of the Beatitudes overlooking the Sea of Galilee in the springtime man, the flowers, it's so beautiful, and here's Jesus teaching the Sermon on the Mount, as we call it.

And He uses the birds in the air and the flowers in the field as object lessons to teach His disciples that that flower is not as valuable as you are. That flower: You see it here today, tomorrow it's gone, you know. And yet your Heavenly Father clothes that flowers so beautifully, splendidly, spectacular, more so than Solomon in all of his splendor, that flower. How much more is He going to take care of you?

And then how about that bird? It's kind of humorous; I know God has a sense of humor. I'm reminded of that every day when I look in the mirror, just like God, you've got a sense of humor. But it's almost like humorous in a sanctified way. He's saying, you guys, have you ever seen a bird bike getting worms and packing them into a barn to hedge against the future because they're worried about next month's worm rent?

Again, I know that's a silly way to say it, but that's basically what he was saying.

"Look at the birds of the air. Your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they are? Why are you worried? Why are you in such fear?"

"What am I gonna wear, what am I gonna wear? "

"Look at the flower, beautiful color."

"Yeah, that's not my color; I wore that last week. What am I going to wear, I don't know? "

"The birds of the air."

"How am I going to make this month's bills?"

"I think the bird's pretty well taken care of. How much more is he going to take care of you? Do not be afraid."

Okay, one last thing, this is the last, last thing. Actually, let's have the worship team come up as I'm sharing, why don't you guys stand, and I'll end with this. If you're here tonight or watching online and this is you, nobody else needed to come tonight. Nobody else needed to watch this; this was for you. I mean, fear; here's your picture, underneath, one word: Fear, that's you. Yeah? You're in good company.

Now listen to me. I want to encourage you and leave you with this: How about Joshua? Just reach Joshua Chapter 1 tonight. You can read that before you go to bed. Don't read 2 Kings 16; Joshua 1 you can.

So many times, I mean, he's replacing Moses. There are some very big sandals to fill, right? And he is so afraid. And what does God say to him? "Don't be afraid, be of good courage, do not be afraid." I think about the Apostle Paul. We've gotten to know him, haven't we, in our study through the epistles, I mean, Wow, what a guy, right?

You know, in Acts Chapter 27 --man, I'm really pushing my memory envelope tonight -- but he's in that storm. Not his first rodeo, by the way. I mean, he's a pro at this, he has a PhD in shipwrecks. Here he is on this ship, that it. There's one very interesting detail in the account. It says, Luke writes by the Holy Spirit; Luke was there with him. "We had all lost hope."

Isaiah 7-- March 11, 2021
When You're Filled with Fear
JD Farag

We, that means Paul. Yeah, he said this is it, this is how it's game-over, I ain't gonna make it out of this one. And an angel of the Lord appears to Paul, and what does he say to Paul? "Do not be afraid." Paul!

How about the disciples, how many times Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid"? What's my point? My point is this: If you're full of fear, you're in good company. Many men and women mightily used of God that came before you had those times in their lives where they were so full of fear, "But God."

Do not be afraid. Trust the Lord. Let's pray, Father in heaven, thank You so much. Lord, thank You for Your Word. It's Your Word, Your promise to us. You don't only tell us not to be afraid, You tell us why, and it's because of who You are, and Your Word to us. Lord, I pray for anyone tonight that's fearful, worried about what's going to happen, what's coming, especially with everything that's happening in the world today.

Lord, I just pray that You'll reveal Yourself in a fresh way, in a new way, in a real way to them just Your goodness, and give them that peace, settle their hearts. Lord, You've done that in my life, and I could never this side of glory ever thank You enough for what You've done in those times when I've been so fearful, so Lord, thank you, in Jesus' name, Amen.