

THE 7 SONGS OF ISAIAH

3 Immanuel Songs and 4 Servant Songs

Recap

6:1

Their king has died, but a hope for a better king is presented

6:5

Isaiah's sin is Judah's sin

6:7

An opportunity for spiritual healing is presented, bringing hope

6:8

The Word from God presents a challenge

Isaiah rises up to that challenge

Isaiah 7

7:1,2

Judah is under the threat of war from an alliance between Syria (King Rezin), and Israel (under King Pekah). This caused King Ahaz and the people great fear

7:3-6

God instructs Isaiah and his son Shear-Jashub to go to the above-ground water supply to meet Ahaz there. He is to inform him that this alliance will not succeed.

7:7-9

Note the structure of the verses

A

B

C

A'

B'

C'

Conclusion: Ahaz was to learn as much from what Isaiah said as from what he didn't say.

The head of Judah is Jerusalem, and the head of Jerusalem is the line of David.

This will be demonstrated in the sign that follows.

7:10,11

Note the extent of the offer for a sign (How high and how low)

7:12

An unfaithful heart disguised as piety

Psalms 81:7 – for God testing us

Psalms 95:9 – for man testing God

7:13,14

A biblical sign comes in the form of a miracle

The word used for 'virgin' in Hebrew here is 'almah', which could mean simple 'a young woman'.

'Bethula' more literally means virgin as we understand it.

Here is an example of the frustrations that this causes...

Headline writers are having fun with stories about a new translation of the Bible, which has been in the works since 1994 and will finally be released on March 9 (Ash Wednesday): "[Bishops boot 'booty' from revised Bible](#)," "[Booty Recall: Bishops Drop Word from Bible](#)."

Sure, *spoils* is replacing *booty* in the forthcoming edition of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) *New American Bible* — which, being a 21st century update, already has its own [Facebook page](#) — but that's hardly the most intriguing adjustment. Read further in [USA Today's](#) article, and you'll come across this tidbit:

One change may set off alarms with traditionalists, in a passage many Christians believe foreshadows the coming of Christ and his birth to a virgin. The 1970 version of Isaiah 7:14 says "the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel."

The 2011 text refers to "the young woman" instead. It elaborates that the original Hebrew word, *almah*, may, or may not, signify a virgin.

Details, details.

It's one thing to change *booty* to *spoils*, and bring the text more into line with today's language, but doesn't changing *virgin* to *young woman* have some pretty weighty implications?

"The effort in this translation was to be as faithful to the original Hebrew as possible," says the USCCB's Mary Elizabeth Speers. "It doesn't mean the bishops are changing their mind on the virgin birth of Jesus or the perpetual virginity of Mary. That doctrine stands, and will probably stand until the end of time."

Speers points out that references to the virgin birth remain unchanged in the revised edition's New Testament; she says the Gospel of Matthew quotes the Greek translation of Isaiah, which used the Greek word for virgin, and so in Matthew, *virgin* it is. "We need to say what he [Matthew] said," says Speers, who notes further that Luke 1:34, "which is actually the very strong warrant for the birth of Jesus," has not been altered. As for Isaiah, "We are merely translating what the Hebrew says." Speers cites the [Divino Afflante Spiritu](#), the 1943 encyclical, as the reason for such faithful translation to the original.

But if Hebrew should have been the source for translations since 1943, why didn't the [1970 New American Bible](#) use *young woman*? The word's true meaning is hardly a new discovery. "I think they didn't want to court this controversy," Speers says, acknowledging, "there's a level where it's a scary change." Retranslating *almah* was not undertaken lightly. No less than 15 people "had a hand on that particular word," according to Speers, who adds that it was then reviewed by five bishops and approved by a committee of many more.

Jarring as the change may seem, "it's not surprising," says Michael Coogan, who had worked on the Book of Job for the revised version, and is editor of *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*. "Most translations now follow that," he says, "because the Hebrew word means *young woman*; it doesn't say anything about her sexual experience." Coogan, who is also the author of *God and Sex*, notes that a precise word for virgin is used elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.

Still, *virgin* persists in various translations of Isaiah. (One can compare several different versions of the relevant passage, and the rest of the Bible, on the [American Bible Society's website](#)).

"Each of these translations has its own sort of sponsoring group, and some are more conservative, evangelical than others," Coogan says. "The more conservative and evangelical, the more likely they are to have 'virgin' instead of 'young woman.'"

While the USCCB has embraced *young woman* in its revised *New American Bible*, that text is only intended for study and personal prayer. Catholics attending Mass will still hear *virgin* when Isaiah is

read, since this new translation has not been approved for liturgical use. It may one day, but change, God knows, can be slow.

Note **Matthew 2:27** and **Luke 2:12** here

Isaiah 9:1-7

9:1,2

See **Matthew 4:12-17**

9:3-5

The joy the Savior will bring

9:6,7

Note references to Samson and David

11:1

Compare with **verse 10**. Jesus is both a Shoot from and Root of Jesse

Shoot from means He will be born from Jesse, and Root means He comes before Jesse.

11:2

The 7 Spirits of **Revelation 1:4** and **5:6**

11:3-10

Either a picture of the Millennium or of the New Jerusalem

:1-9

A poem of the King

:12-16

A poem of His rule

:10,11

A description of this King