

# Isaiah 07 - The Book of Immanuel: Isaiah Sent to King Ahaz

## I. Prophecies of condemnation (Is 1:1–35:10)

- (1) Condemnation of Judah (Is 1:1–12:6)
  - (B) Book of Immanuel (Is 7:1–12:6)
    - (a) Sign of Immanuel (7:1-25)
      - (i) God gives the sign to unbelieving Ahaz (7:1-16)
      - (ii) Imminent desolation of Judah by Assyria (7:17-25)

## Isaiah 7

- (B) Book of Immanuel (Is 7:1–12:6)
  - (a) Sign of Immanuel (7:1-25)
    - (i) God gives the sign to unbelieving Ahaz (7:1-16)

1 Now it came about in the days of Ahaz, the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Aram and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not conquer it.

1 Now it came about in the days of Ahaz, the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Aram and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not conquer it.

1 During the reign of Jotham's son Ahaz, Uzziah's grandson, king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and Remaliah's son Pekah, king of Israel, approached Jerusalem and waged war against it, but they could not mount an attack against it.

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.

2 When it was reported to the house of David, saying, "The Arameans have taken a stand by **Ephraim**," his heart and the hearts of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake from the wind.

2 When it was reported to the house of David, saying, "The Arameans have camped in Ephraim," his heart and the hearts of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake with the wind.

2 When it was reported to the house of David, "Aram has joined forces with Ephraim!" the heart of the people of Ahaz trembled like forest trees in a windstorm.

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.

- "...Ephraim" (and "Israel") are frequently used as collective nouns for the entire Northern Kingdom established from Jeroboam's rebellion

— The capital was Samaria (1 Kings 21:1) and they were ultimately taken captive by Assyria in 722 BC (2 Kings 17:1-6)

— Note: the "house of David" is in view; this will be significant when we get to v13ff

**3** Then the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and your son **Shear-jashub**, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, on the road to the fuller's field,

**3** Then the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway to the fuller's field,

**3** So the LORD told Isaiah, "Go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool that proceeds along the highway to Launderer's Field.

**3** Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field;

- "...Shear-jashub" - "a remnant shall return"; a symbolical name for the son of Isaiah the prophet

4 and say to him, 'Take care and be calm, have no fear and do not be fainthearted because of these two stumps of smoldering logs, on account of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah.

4 and say to him, 'Take care and be calm, have no fear and do not be fainthearted because of these two stubs of smoldering firebrands, on account of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah.

4 Tell him, 'Be careful, be calm, don't be afraid, and don't lose heart because of these two smoldering stumps of torches, that is, because of the fierce anger of Rezin, from Aram, and Remaliah's son.

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.

- Rezin and Pekah (the son of Remaliah) would not succeed with their coalition...

5 Because Aram, *with* Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has planned evil against you, saying,

5 Because Aram, *with* Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has planned evil against you, saying,

5 Aram, Ephraim, and Remaliah's son have plotted this evil against you:

5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying,

6 "Let's go up against Judah and terrorize it, and take it for ourselves by assault and set up the son of **Tabeel** as king in the midst of it,"

6 "Let us go up against Judah and terrorize it, and make for ourselves a breach in its walls and set up the son of Tabeel as king in the midst of it,"

6 "Let's go attack Judah, let's terrorize it, and let's conquer it for ourselves. Then we'll install Tabeel's son as king!""

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:

- "...Tabeel" - the object of speculative conjectures by most commentators... an encryption reveals a subtlety...

— There is also a play on words: by only a slight alteration, Tabeel, the puppet-king, can mean "Good-for-nothing."

7 this is what the Lord GOD says: "It shall not stand nor shall it come to pass.

7 thus says the Lord GOD: "It shall not stand nor shall it come to pass.

7 'But this is what the Lord GOD has to say: "'It won't take place. It won't ever happen.

7 Thus saith the Lord GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

8 For the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin (now within another sixty-five years Ephraim will be broken to pieces, *so that it is* no longer a people),

8 For the head of Aram is Damascus and the head of Damascus is Rezin (now within another 65 years Ephraim will be shattered, *so that it is* no longer a people),

8 Because Aram's head is Damascus, and Rezin is its king, within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered as a people.

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.

- Within 65 years, Esarhaddon replaced colonists ending the national existence of Ephraim (2 Kings 17:24ff; Ezra 4:2,10)

9 and the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you will not believe, you certainly shall not last."""

9 and the head of Ephraim is Samaria and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you will not believe, you surely shall not last.””

9 Furthermore, Ephraim’s head is Samaria, and Remaliah’s son is its king. If all of you don’t keep on believing, you’ll never remain loyal.””

9 And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah’s son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

**10** Then the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying,

**10** Then the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying,

**10** Later on, the LORD spoke to Ahaz again:

**10** Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying,

11 “Ask for a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; make *it* deep as Sheol or high as heaven.”

11 “Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; make *it* deep as Sheol or high as heaven.”

11 “Ask a sign from the LORD your God. Make it as deep as Sheol or as high as heaven above.”

11 Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.

12 But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, nor will I put the LORD to the test!”

12 But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!”

12 But Ahaz replied, “I won’t ask! I won’t put the LORD to the test.”

**12** But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.

13 Then he said, “Listen now, house of David! Is it too trivial a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well?

13 Then he said, “Listen now, O house of David! Is it too slight a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well?

13 In reply, the LORD announced, “Please listen, you household of David. Is it such a minor thing for you to try the patience of men? Must you also try the patience of my God?”

**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?

- The pseudo-pious sound is simply very stubborn unbelief. [It is not simply Deut 6:16 being applied.] Isaiah cuts through the sham and pretense.

— The “thy God” of v11 becomes “my God” of v13: with this refusal Ahaz has severed the last bond that still tied him to the God of his fathers...This is not addressed to faithless Ahaz, but to the whole “House of David,” which accounts for the instant assent of Mary (Luke 1:38).

14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the **virgin** will conceive and give birth to a son, and she will name Him Immanuel.

14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.

14 "Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign. Watch! The virgin is conceiving a child, and will give birth to a son, and his name will be called Immanuel.

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.

- "...virgin" - *almah*, virgin, young woman, untouched (Cf. Gen 24:43; Ex 2:8; Ps 68:25; Song 1:3)

-- Some argue that the Hebrew *Bethulah* should have been used for a virgin: however, *Bethulah* can refer to a betrothed or married woman (Joel 1:8)

-- In later Aramaic incantation texts, the Aramaic equivalent of *bethulah* refers to a married woman

-- Using *bethulah* would have left us in confusion. *Almah* is the only term for an unmarried woman. Isaiah's term was deliberate.

### **The Virgin Birth**

- (1) "The Lord Himself": a sign divinely given
- (2) You (plural) = addressed to the House of David
- (3) A miraculous sign (v11)
- (4) Concerned on the continuation of the House of David
- (5) The virgin: the definite article
- (6) "Immanuel" = "God with us" = the Incarnation
- (7) Truly human, as other children

15 He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows *enough* to refuse evil and choose good.

15 He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows *enough* to refuse evil and choose good.

15 He'll eat cheese and honey, when he knows enough to reject what's wrong and choose what's right.

15 Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

- Indicating the simplicity of life in which the young Immanuel should be brought up? (vs. unhappy childhood: Psalm 69:7-12)

- (Designating a period not usually exceeding 2 or 3 years...)

- The infancy period (2-3 years) was made the measure of the time that Judah will be in danger from her two enemies.

16 For before the boy knows *enough* to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be abandoned.

16 For before the boy will know *enough* to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken.

16 However, before the youth knows enough to reject what's wrong and choose what's right, the land whose two kings you dread will be devastated."

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.

- A period not usually exceeding 2 or 3 years: suggesting the only remaining duration of their two kings

#### (ii) Imminent desolation of Judah by Assyria (7:17-25)

17 The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim separated from Judah—*the days of the king of Assyria.*"

17 The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house such days as have never come since the day that Ephraim separated from Judah, the king of Assyria."

17 "The LORD will bring to you, to your people, and to your ancestor's house such a time as has never been since Ephraim broke away from Judah—the king of Assyria will come.

17 The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria.

- We must be careful what we pray for: Ahaz had pinned his hopes on Assyria; and Assyria is what he will get.

### **The Invasion of Assyria**

18 On that day the LORD will whistle for the fly that is in the remotest part of the canals of Egypt and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

18 In that day the LORD will whistle for the fly that is in the remotest part of the rivers of Egypt and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

18 "At that time, the LORD will call for flies that will come from far away—from the headwaters of Egypt's rivers—and for bees that are in the land of Assyria.

18 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

19 They will all come and settle on the steep ravines, on the ledges of the cliffs, on all the thorn bushes, and on all the watering places.

19 They will all come and settle on the steep ravines, on the ledges of the cliffs, on all the thorn bushes and on all the watering places.

19 They will all come and settle in the steep ravines, in the rocky crevices, in all the thorn bushes, and in all the pastures.

19 And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes.

**20** On that day the Lord will shave with a razor, hired from regions beyond the *Euphrates* River (*that is*, with the king of Assyria), the head and the **hair of the legs**; and it will also remove the beard.

**20** In that day the Lord will shave with a razor, hired from regions beyond the Euphrates (*that is*, with the king of Assyria), the head and the hair of the legs; and it will also remove the beard.

20 At that time, the LORD will hire a barber to come from beyond the Euphrates River—that is, the king of Assyria—and he will shave your heads, your leg hair, and your beards, too.

20 In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard.

- Verses 20-25 describe the results of the invasion when there would be large grazing areas available but insufficient men to cultivate the fields.

- "...hair of the legs" - a euphemism for pubic hair

— Ahaz sent gifts to Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria, to hire him to come and deliver him from Syria and Israel; Tilgath Pileser takes Damascus, and Rezin two years after this prophecy, in 732 BC

### **Devastation of the Land**

**21** Now on that day a person may keep alive *only* a heifer and a pair of sheep;

**21** Now in that day a man may keep alive a heifer and a pair of sheep;

21 "At that time, a man will keep alive a heifer and two sheep,

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep;

22 and because of the abundance of the milk produced he will eat curds, for everyone who is left within the land will eat curds and honey.

22 and because of the abundance of the milk produced he will eat curds, for everyone that is left within the land will eat curds and honey.

22 and because of the abundance of milk that they give, he will have cheese to eat, since whoever remains in the land will be eating cheese and honey.

22 And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.

**23** And it will come about on that day, that every place where there used to be a thousand vines, *valued* at a thousand *shekels* of silver, will become briars and thorns.

**23** And it will come about in that day, that every place where there used to be a thousand vines, *valued* at a thousand *shekels* of silver, will become briars and thorns.

23 "At that time, every place where once there were a thousand vines worth a thousand shekels of silver, only briars and thorns will grow.

23 And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briars and thorns.

24 *People* will come there with bows and arrows, because all the land will be briars and thorns.

24 *People* will come there with bows and arrows because all the land will be briars and thorns.

24 "People will come there armed with bows and arrows, because the entire land will be nothing but briars and thorns.

24 With arrows and with bows shall men come thither; because all the land shall become briars and thorns.

25 As for all the hills which used to be cultivated with the plow, you will not go there for fear of briars and thorns; but they will become a place for pasturing oxen and for sheep to trample.

25 As for all the hills which used to be cultivated with the hoe, you will not go there for fear of briars and thorns; but they will become a place for pasturing oxen and for sheep to trample.

25 As for all the hills that used to be cultivated with a hoe, you won't go there, because you'll fear iron briars and thorns. Nevertheless, those hills will be reserved as a pasture where cattle will feed and where sheep will graze."

25 And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briars and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.