

Anticipating Advent

A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God

Bright Hope in Dark Times

Isaiah 7: 1-16 & Isaiah 9: 2, 6

We are so familiar with Isaiah 7:14; we have heard it all our life: in songs and carols, pageants and plays, in greeting cards and sermons. We are not so familiar with the events surrounding the occasion of this majestic and amazing prophecy. It comes to King Ahaz of Judah in one of the darkest moments and is greeted with a dismal lack of faith. It is so skeptically dismissed that it might have been forgotten had not the Holy Spirit inspired Isaiah to write it down. Truly this prophetic word is a light shining in a dark place.

I. Judah Under Siege

- A. Coalition forces come against Judah
- B. As word comes to the citizens of Jerusalem, and to Ahaz the king, fear grips all the people
- C. Quaking in terror, Ahaz desperately seeks some kind of solution

II. A Word from God

- A. God sends Isaiah to the king with a very special message
- B. The enemies of Judah will soon be crushed by the Assyrians
- C. Ahaz is invited by God to ask for a sign from God to validate the prophetic word
- D. Under the guise of reverence, Ahaz refuses, an act of faithless defiance

III. The Prophetic Promise: Temporal, Futuristic, Eternal

Frequently, Biblical prophecy unfolds in stages. Sometimes it has a temporal application that is but a foreshadowing of the real prophetic meaning.

- A. Temporal promise fulfilled (Isaiah 8:1-4)—before Isaiah's son can talk, Assyria will overrun Damascus and Samaria
- B. Future Prophecy Fulfilled (Matthew 1:23)—the real, underlying prophetic message is the birth of the promised Messiah, the Mighty Deliverer from God
- C. Eternal Immanuel—the Son of God clothed in human flesh identifies with us now and forever, in all our troubles, as the Savior/Deliverer from God

IV. Joyously Draw Water from the Springs of Salvation (Isaiah 12:1-6)

- A. In Judah's dark hour a promise was made: a Son will be given Whose name will be called Immanuel—God in our midst
- B. After 400 years of prophetic silence, in a time of darkness and desperate longing for deliverance, a Child is born—Immanuel; Light shining in the darkness
- C. As human history draws to a close as we know it, when the governments of men and nations have run their course, in humanity's darkest hour—the King of Kings will suddenly appear, Jesus our Emmanuel, and reign among us for a thousand years
- D. In your darkest hour Jesus, Immanuel, is your hope. He is the Light shining in your darkness. You can say with confident faith:

*Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid;
for the Lord God is my strength and song and He has become my salvation.
Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation. Isaiah 12:2-3*

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. 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. 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, 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. Because Aram, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has planned evil against you, saying, "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," thus says the Lord God: "It shall not stand nor shall it come to pass. 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

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people), 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." Then the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; make it deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord!" 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? 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. He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good. For before the boy will know enough to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken.

Isaiah 7: 1-16 NASB

The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.

Isaiah 9: 2 NASB

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9: 6 NASB

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