

The Battle between Belief and Unbelief

Text: Isaiah 7:1-9

Date: 8-9-20 Outdoor Service @ 10:30 am

Ahaz: He began to reign when he was 20 years old and ruled for 16 years (II Kings 16:2). He was a wicked king that followed the ways of the Israelite kings of the northern kingdom. He offered his own children as burnt sacrifices in the valley of Hinnom (Molech – II Chron 28:3). II Kings 16:5 tells us that Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel attacked him. In the battle with Pekah, 120,000 were killed in one day (II Chr. 28:5-6). This led Ahaz to ask the king of Assyria to help him in battle and form an alliance. Ahaz went to Assyria to pay tribute to the king and that is where he saw an idol he liked. He told Uriah the high priest to build a replica back home. See II Kings 16:10-16. He then cut up the Temple's articles and closed its doors (II Chron. 28:24). During Ahaz's reign, the last king of Israel, Hoshea, ruled. He made graven images for Baalim. II Kings 16:1-20; II Chron. 28:1-27

I. The spiritual crisis of Judah's day (Isaiah 7:1-2).

King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah of Israel (North) banded together to wage war against Ahaz the king of Judah. II Kings 15:37 tells us the siege started during the reign of Jotham, Ahaz's father. What was the purpose of this battle? Apparently, these 2 kings wanted to gain Judah's help in the battle against Assyria (II Kings 15:29)., However, Kings Rezin and Pekah did not have enough strength to overcome King Ahaz. Instead, Ahaz appealed to the King of Assyria, otherwise known as Tiglath-pileser. He sent messengers (II Kings 16:7) in order to ask T.P. to help him in the battle with Syria and Israel.

This fearful attitude never would have been said of Isaiah or Uzziah, men of faith in the Lord, for they did not believe that the strength of Israel and Syria could compare to the power of God. "Perfect love and trust cast out fear, but Ahaz and the people had neither" (Hailey 80).

II. The simple encouraging word from the Lord. (Isaiah 7:3-9).

When the king was about to make foolish decisions, God sent Isaiah to counter with help and hope from Jehovah. The prophets in the OT often faced royalty that were about to make sinful choices. They came armed with words from God intended to point them to the revealed will of God.

While Ahaz was concerned for the physical well-being of the city; God was far more concerned about the nation's spiritual situation.

These two men were spiritually going in opposite directions. Isaiah came boldly and courageously while Ahaz was trembling and fearful. I do not want to discount that this was a fearful situation. But when God says to not fear, there is nothing to fear. Prov. 3:25-26. **Ahaz's trembling was the consequence of fear, and his fear was a direct result of unbelief in God.**

Principle one: When the truth is known and reinforced by the word of God, what seems fearful is turned into faith in the known. "The dangers which he thought were present were really not present at all" (Young 272). "What seemed like a terrible menace to Ahaz in reality was only a passing dark cloud" (Buksbazen 147).

Faith in Jehovah removes fear from our heart. This does not mean that we won't have serious problems of fearfulness to contend with, but it does mean that God will meet that fear with promises from His word. **Faith in God leads to a diminished fear of man.**

By 732 BC both opposing kings were dead. The reason is clear why this would happen. The leaders of the 2 nations were mere men. But standing against God meant they could not stand at all. Within 65 years Ephraim (Israel's largest tribe and representative of the whole nation) would no longer be a nation. Assyria conquered Israel in 722 BC and many Israelites were deported. "In 669 many more foreigners were transferred to **Samaria** by Ashurbanipal (Ezra 4:10), king of Assyria (669–626). This "shattered" Israel, making it impossible for her to unite as a nation ("a people)".¹

Principle 2: Faith equals stability. Isaiah presents a quiet confidence of faith in God even amidst conflict. Isaiah recognized that a "quiet, fearless faith in Jehovah gives victory, for it puts one on God's side" (Hailey 83).

Application: The Lord God gave counsel, was alone omnipotent to fulfill His word, and would be able to carry out His plans. God's plans never fail. The Lord God raises and brings down human leaders. Graciously, God gives future insight to the fearful king. And this isn't just any old vision; this is the perfect revealed Word of the Lord God. **God is good to Ahaz. God gives the king the reason for the outcome. God's plans are much deeper than our plans. Will the king believe God?**

How does Isaiah 7:1-9 apply to me?

1. While trusting God is not easy, the example of Isaiah's quiet confidence is on full display for each of us.
2. God truly does call us to believe on His words despite the storms of life.
3. Because we have God's words and promises written down, all we need to know is contained in the truth of the Bible.

When the truth is known and backed by the word of God, what seems fearful is turned into faith in the known.

Faith equals stability. Isaiah represents a quiet confidence of faith in God even amidst conflict.

What does this passage reveal about the character and nature of God?

1. God's truth must be our foundation in an unstable world.
2. God's promises continue despite man's best efforts to circumvent them.
3. God's word should always be enough to calm our minds and free our souls.

What are some "call to action" truths from Isaiah 7?

1. We must face our fears in the light of the victory God has already won for us.
2. We must determine to obey God's word because it always promotes our victorious path.
3. Trusting God will never lead to a place of lifelessness.

¹ Martin, J. A. (1985). [Isaiah](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1047). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.