

God's Plan through Immanuel

Text: Isaiah 7:10-14

Date: 8-16-20 Outdoor Service @ 10:30 am

In today's passage we find the following about God in Isaiah's day:

- 1) God was still at work.
- 2) When all hope was lost, God gave an amazing promise.
- 3) God was at work even as the wicked king tried to bypass Him.
- 4) God's plans will not be thwarted.

Principle 1: When the truth is known and backed by the word of God, what seems fearful is turned into faith in the known.

Principle 2: Faith equals stability. Isaiah presents a quiet confidence of faith in God even amidst conflict.

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?**

I. **God graciously offers a Sign to King Ahaz (Isa. 7:10-16).**

Was Ahaz tempting (testing) God? No, he was clearly not believing or obeying God. While he may have thought it was a sin to test God (Deut. 6:16); this wasn't a sin when God had clearly told him to ask for the sign. He was more likely faking respect for the law, but he was not tempting God when it was God who commanded him to ask for a sign.

The king was in effect not just rejecting Isaiah (men), but he was rejecting God. Ahaz represented the *house of David*, and through him this whole nation was involved in this sign. When Ahaz refused to ask for a sign, he turned down an opportunity for himself and those ruling with him to see proof that God was still with them.

Truth: We must not come to a place in our lives where we find the enemy more appealing than God. We must not come to the place in our lives where we find the word of God to be nothing more than a suggestion.

The sign would go down as the greatest sign in human history. This sign would impact every single person that has ever or will ever live. The sign was the birth of the Christ-Child, the Savior of the world. The sign was that of a virgin conceiving, birthing a son, and giving Him a name called *Immanuel*.

- 1) **Born of a virgin** – The Hebrew word (*almah*) presents some interpretation issues. The word refers to a *young woman, one of whose characteristics is virginity; someone who is mature sexually; maid or newly married*. The word is derived from *alam* which means *to hide or conceal*.

In the OT we find *almah* used of Rebekah, the future bride of Isaac (Gen. 24:43). We find it used in Ex. 2:8 of Miriam, Moses' sister. In Ps. 68:25 we find it is used of *damselfs* playing instruments. In Prov. 30:19 the word is *maid* and in Song of Solomon we find the word translated *virgins* (1:3; 6:8). Over and over in other sources the word refers to a virgin or unmarried woman. The other word often used in Hebrew for virgin (*bethulah*) is sometimes used of a married woman (Joel 1:8). See Deut. 22:19.

Bible scholars generally have 3 views on this word:

- a. The boy that Isaiah mentions here was conceived shortly after the words were written, therefore the word is referring to someone that was a virgin at the time. That young woman was a virgin, then married, and had a baby. Virgin at the time of the writing, but eventually had sexual relations and conceived a son. Some say this refers to Isaiah's own son or one that was born to him. But, Isaiah's wife already had a son so she couldn't be a virgin at this point. Also consider that the 2nd son born to Isaiah was not named Immanuel.
 - b. This verse is only Messianic in the future and doesn't have any immediate fulfillment. Jesus' birth then fulfilled this prophecy since Joseph and Mary didn't consummate the marriage until after Jesus' was born (Matt. 1:18, 25). Some of the issues with this view are that it doesn't account for what is found in the rest of the prophecy in this passage, things that could not have been fulfilled in Jesus' day.
 - c. The third view sees both an immediate fulfillment and a future fulfillment. "When the Aram-Israel alliance was broken the boy would still be young. Centuries later the Holy Spirit led Matthew to quote Isaiah 7:14 as a statement that was also true of a virgin birth (i.e., a birth to a woman who was still a virgin). This is the first of many prophecies about the Messiah given by Isaiah".¹
- 2) If God waited to give the sign until centuries later, it would not have affected the situation at hand. But God did give the sign now. Therefore, we can be confident that there is an immediate fulfillment and a future one.
 - 3) The person that is mentioned here, so clearly exalted and personified in the Lord as our Redeemer, points then to the future Person of Jesus Christ. Unpacking the book of Isaiah makes it abundantly clear that Isaiah wrote of no mere mortal child. While Isaiah didn't understand all of what he wrote about the Messiah, this doesn't change the truth that remains: this was primarily a reference to the future Immanuel.

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. 1048). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

4) This Divine Deliverer was the answer for Ahaz's day, the day that He came, and our day. You may say, well why wouldn't the virgin be applicable to Ahaz's day? It was, but the fulfillment was yet future to a time that even Isaiah did not know. But, that doesn't mean that it didn't apply to Ahaz. Looking at the prophets before Ahaz, then Isaiah and others, and then into the future, it becomes readily apparent that the Redeemer had been promised and Ahaz should have known that. Isaiah confirms it. But, in his wicked state, he rejects the sign. Ahaz's rejection of the sign proved he was living in unbelief and in effect that he was stubbornly rejecting the very covenant that God had given to His people. God's covenant promise was that of a Deliverer through the house of David. Instead of believing that, Ahaz cast it aside. Syria and Israel would not stop God's covenant word. But in God's grace, Isaiah gave Ahaz a sign that again reiterated that a Deliverer would come to this earth and the Messiah would bring about true salvation.

A. The meaning of Immanuel.

The name *Immanuel* means *God is with us*. One of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible is that God has always been present with His people. In that we have the truth that God protects, governs, cares, and truly desires what is best for His people. God was with the Patriarchs (Gen. 15:1; 26:3; 28:15; 39:2-3), Moses (Ex. 3:12), His people as a whole (Ex. 3:16; 33:15-17), Joshua (Josh. 1:5), and David (I Sam. 18:14; Ps. 139). See also Ex. 14:24-25.

The Tabernacle and later the Temple were a material and physical symbol of the very presence of God with the nation. Through the cloud by day and the pillar of fire at night, God's presence was manifested to the nation of Israel (Ex. 40:34-38). The very root word for the tabernacle (*miskan*) is *sakan* which means *to dwell, to abide, to settle down, or to rest*. The word *shekinah* is also derived from this root word. While that word doesn't appear in the Bible, the concept of the Shekinah glory of God certainly does. "The Jewish rabbis coined this extra-biblical expression, a form of a Hebrew word that literally means "he caused to dwell," signifying that it was a divine visitation of the presence or dwelling of the Lord God on this earth" (<https://www.gotquestions.org/shekinah-glory.html>).

What Isaiah was now doing was prophesying the birth of someone so special that He would be born in a unique way, would be the visible manifestation that God is truly with His people, and that God Himself in flesh and blood would dwell among this world. This would make the very presence of God a much more intimate and personal truth than either the Tabernacle or Temple. John 1:14. This Person, who would both be God and man, would necessitate a special entrance into this earth.

B. The need for Immanuel

The sign proves without a shadow of a doubt that God desired to have His Presence dwell among His people. "It was this certainty of the Presence of God among His people which allowed Isaiah to defy all the hostile forces of the nations assembled against Israel" (Buksbazen 153). The proof that Ahaz would not be defeated then is found in the very truth that God promised to dwell among His people. See Isa. 8:10.

For Isaiah would go on to make this prophecy the foundation for the future restoration of the nation. Isaiah's confidence then was in this truth: the Messiah would come to this earth and restore Israel. The words here prove the future truth.

Conclusion:

From this passage can we see these truths?

- 1) **So, is God still at work?**
- 2) **Do you believe in God's promises even when it appears all hope seems lost?**
- 3) **Is God still at work even as wicked kings tried to ignore and disobey Him?**
- 4) **Will God's plans be thwarted?**

How does Isaiah 7:10-14 apply to me?

1. The Messiah, Immanuel, will have worldwide impact including on every person in this audience (me personally).
2. Isaiah's belief in God stands in stark contrast to Ahaz's trust in man. In the end the sign given to Ahaz saved the world from sin.
3. God kept His original promise in Gen. 3:15.

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

1. God's promises continue despite man's best efforts to circumvent them.
2. God sovereignly controls the events of mankind, and they center on this promise in Isa. 7:14.
3. God is Present among His people.

What are some "call to action" truths from Isaiah 7:10-14?

1. The voice of God demands our attention. In other words, God's revealed Word should capture our undivided attention.
2. Our lack of listening to God's Word demonstrates that we do not trust God.
3. In the end, we can either live like Isaiah and trust God or live like Ahaz and trust man.