

© 2013
Fellowship at Cross Creek
Isaiah 7:1ff
The Promise!
12.1.13

Series INTRO...

So what's our goal? To go back to the beginnings and explore, but now we are skipping forward some 1200 years in our exploring! And while I know that that is a lot, we want to examine the origins of prophecy that is vital to our faith—that Jesus was to be born of woman who had never experienced sexual intimacy with a man, thus making him not only human, but divine as well. This one truth affects everything, because if Jesus were just a man, while his death might have been a great example, it would not atone for the sins or mistakes of the entire world; on the other hand, if he was God, as he and the Scriptures maintain, then not only could he die, because he was man, but because he was God too, his death could accomplish the seeming impossible, the atonement of Man's sins, and in so doing, provide a way through trust in the Son for God's once-previous sin-stained children to be restored to him, righteous, holy, forgiven and loved forever. Don't kid yourself, the virgin birth is absolutely essential for our salvation.

Pray; read three times (perhaps just twice) **and ask questions...**

Isaiah 7:1 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.

So, the king of Judah is being assaulted by the kings of Aram and Israel? How is the king of Judah being assaulted by the king of Israel? Wasn't Judah one of the 12 tribes of Israel, and now Judah, one of the tribes finds itself fighting against the rest of the tribes? And isn't Aram one of the surrounding, pagan nations...situated within present-day Syria? So Syria has aligned itself with Israel against Judah, but is not prevailing? Why attack Judah and why aren't the two nations prevailing against the one?

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.

Wasn't Ephraim (along with Manasseh, Ephraim's brother) one of the 12 tribes of Israel because when Jacob blessed Joseph, he gave him two shares (representing Joseph's two sons) within the tribe of Israel, one of which essentially stands in for Joseph, numerically, and the other

substitutes for Levi, which had been given cities through the tribes, thus keeping the number of tribes constant at 12? And wasn't because Ephraim was one of the larger and more influential tribes it could be used as another name for Israel? So, the Arameans or Syrians are camped within Israel and ready to attack Judah, thus Judah, or the house of David, who was a descendant of Judah and ruled Judah before he ruled all of Israel, and before the tribes splintered into two nations, Israel and Judah, is frightened—an attack is imminent?

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, 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.

Who was Isaiah? A righteous prophet in the land? So Isaiah is supposed to go and meet King Ahaz and tell him that he is not to fear the other two kings?

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

Who was Tabeel?

7 thus says the Lord God: “It shall not stand, nor shall it come to pass. 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), 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.””

So, don't be afraid because in time both Aram and Ephraim or Israel will both be shattered? And if you don't trust, you will not last?

10 Then the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, 11 “Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; make *it* deep as Sheol or high as heaven.”

Ask anything for a sign that what has just been told to you will come true? Sheol...the place of the dead? Is this hell or just the earth? The dirt where bodies go to decay? In other words, your request cannot be too great?

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

But the LORD said to ask...is this NOT testing him by NOT asking when he has commanded us to ask?

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?

This is serious...

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

Does virgin here mean *not having sexual relations*? What does Immanuel mean...*God is with us*? Why is the curds and honey important...eating on his own besides taking from or substituting for his mother's milk? How old is enough to know to refuse evil and choose good?

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

So, before the boy knows enough to choose between bad and good, these two foreboding nations will be forsaken?

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.”

So, since the tribal split that created two nations, there will be such days with the coming of the greater king of the massive Assyrian Empire to the east?

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. 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.

A place of desolation...that is Ephraim or Israel? Does this include Judah as well?

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.

Does this mean humiliation in a land of body and facial hair?

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

Is this good? Within Judah?

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

Desolation?

Ask Questions...

Who?

Where?

When?

What?

Summary:

Why did God include this event in his record or what would we not know--about God, life, myself, others, etc.--if this story were not in the Bible?

So What?

Praise...

Struggle...

Truth...

Application...

Your application:

Biggest Struggle at the moment:

How does what happen here relate to you?

What about your kids?

Biggest Struggles (Imagine these or several--put yourself in their shoes--walk through a day with them at school, at home. What might they encounter?)

Now how does what happen here possibly relate/ (Remember this is only to give you a feel or an introductory hook or a reinforcing took; in there looking, they may come up with something entirely different.)

Remember to have fun, sense the Spirit's leading and develop a love for these kids.

As always, thanks!

Joe

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