

Behold the Sign of the Lord



Ms. Smallback

Isaiah 7 gives the account of King Ahaz of Judah. As Adam Clarke explains,

“At the time referred to, the kingdom of Judah, under the government of Ahaz, was reduced very low. Pekah, king of Israel, had slain in Judea one hundred and twenty thousand persons in one day; and carried away captives two hundred thousand, including women and children, together with much spoil. To add to their distress, Rezin, king of Syria, being confederate with Pekah, had taken Elath, a fortified city of Judah, and carried the inhabitants away captive to Damascus. In this critical conjuncture, need we wonder that Ahaz was afraid that the enemies who were now united against him must prevail, destroy Jerusalem, end the kingdom of Judah, and annihilate the family of David? To meet and remove this fear, apparently well grounded, Isaiah is sent from the Lord to Ahaz, swallowed up now both by sorrow and by unbelief, in order to assure him that the counsels of his enemies should not stand; and that they should be utterly discomfited.”

So it seems that King Ahaz of Judah was fearful of the alliance of the king of Aram and the King of Assyria, because the rumor was they allied together to destroy Judah. God, however, sent Isaiah to Ahaz to tell him what was really going to happen, and God started it by affirming what Ahaz had heard. “The rumors are true, Ahaz, Rezin and Pekah really are out to destroy you (and your country).”

However, it’s not going to happen.

And God said so, "It will not take place, it will not happen." And then God pointed out that the heads of these places are these key cities (Damascus and Samaria), but just wait – in 65 years they won't be standing. And God wrapped up this part of His message to Ahaz with, "If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all."

And I had to pause here as I read. It was as if the Lord Himself stilled everything. Conspiracies abound, (both personally against me and nationally in my place of citizenship). They may very well be true and my demise (personal or national) may indeed be plotted. But it's the word of the Lord I must wait for. His word is the one that matters. And in the face of such, my faith must stand firm. That is my directive. The actual circumstances are at the mercy of the Almighty God of Heaven and earth, regardless of what men may have planned. But my personal responsibility in this is: I must stand firm in my faith. My faith must not waver.

And then...THEN... God told Ahaz to ask Him for a sign! Can you imagine?? Ahaz refuses, as he feels this would be testing God, so God will give Ahaz a sign anyway. And this is the sign:

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right. But before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste."

Now if I have my math right, God gave that word to Ahaz through Isaiah about 700 years before it came to pass. Ahaz would not live to see its fulfillment. And here I am, close to 3000 years after that word was given, and the Lord is still speaking through it to me.

In fact, Matthew 1:20-23 (NASU) assures me this is the correct

interpretation of that sign:

"...an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, " Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."

The hope and promise for Ahaz was met and found in the birth of the Messiah, even though it was yet to come in about 700 more years. Just as the hope and promise for me was found in the Messiah born over 2000 years ago.

And there is a directive in there for me (and you) if we will but let the Spirit give it: Men plan and plot, but God. Always BUT GOD. And the sign for us that God will have His sovereign way is this: Christ. Whether He spoke it to the great men of old before Christ, or speaks it to us after Christ, the answer is the same. The Messiah is the sign to us that God has everything on this earth under His control. It is the sign for us that we need not despair. And our admonition is to stand firm in our faith, or we will not stand at all.

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