

# The Book of the Prophet ISAIAH

## Chapter 7

**Theme:** God gave Ahaz and Judah comfort, but they rejected Him for Assyria, which would ruin them.

### Outline:

- 1-9 Fearful Ahaz Comforted by God
- 10-16 Profane Ahaz Promised the Messiah
- 17-25 Wicked Ahaz Punished by Assyria

**Preparatory Reading:** II Kings 15:27 – 16:20; II Chronicles 28:1-27.

### Related Links:

- A. *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah (outline)* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/isaiah-introduction.pdf>.
- B. *Overview of O.T. Prophets (slides)* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/old-testament-prophets-slides.pdf>.
- C. *Chronological Table and Notes for Prophets* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/prophets-table-with-notes.pdf>.
- D. *The Prophets of God (sermon outline)* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/prophets-of-god.pdf>.
- E. *Commentary of Proverbs 8:36* ... [http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/proverbs/commentaries/08\\_36.php](http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/proverbs/commentaries/08_36.php).
- F. *Jehovah and Jesus as King of Kings* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/king-of-kings.pdf>.
- G. *David and Saul's Character Compared* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/david-or-saul.pdf>.
- H. *Belly Worshippers* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/practical/belly-worshippers-2/sermon.php>.

### Introduction:

- A. There is more to this chapter than the prophecy of a virgin giving birth to Immanuel – God with us.
- B. Observe in this chapter, like much of Isaiah, fabulous jewels interspersed with warnings of judgment.
- C. Isaiah chapters 7-10 should be read together, for they form a section about Assyria against both houses.
  - 1. Isaiah 6 is relatively unrelated to Assyria for its other considerations, and so are chapters 11-12.
  - 2. Assyrians are specifically named eight times in these chapters (Is 7:17-18,20; 8:4,7; 10:5,12,24).
- D. We call this section (6-12), *Book of Immanuel*, for His name and emphasis (Is 7:14; 8:8; 11:1 – 12:6).
  - 1. Here is a gospel prophecy, Messiah jewels, and Messiah details (Is 7:14; 8:14,18; 9:6; 11:1 – 12:6).
  - 2. The previous section (1-5) was all about judgment; the next section (13-24) is about other nations.
- E. There are over 16 years between chapter six and chapter seven, but it is seldom read in any such way.
  - 1. The 16-year reign of Jotham is completely passed over between these two chapters (Is 6:1; 7:1).
  - 2. There were no chapter divisions (or even verse numbers), so Isaiah 6:13 is next to Isaiah 7:1-3.
  - 3. Shearjashub might easily have been 15-20 years of age; there is no reason to think him an infant.
- F. Review nations and kings that are in play in this and the following chapters for ease of understanding.
  - 1. Review four nations ... Judah (Jerusalem), Israel (Samaria), Syria (Damascus), Assyria (Nineveh).
  - 2. Four kings ... Ahaz (Judah), Pekah of Remaliah (Israel), Rezin (Syria), Tiglathpileser (Assyria).
  - 3. Assyria was a large and powerful empire greater than Syria and Israel and comparable to Babylon.
  - 4. Most know little of Assyria since Daniel did not mention it, because he lived under the Babylonian.
  - 5. Kings of Assyria after Tiglathpileser are Shalmaneser, Sargon, Sennacherib, and then Esarhaddon.
  - 6. Kings of Judah of Isaiah's life – Uzziah (52 years), Jotham (16), Ahaz (16), and Hezekiah (29).
  - 7. Their character was Uzziah (good), Jotham (good), Ahaz (very bad), or Hezekiah (very good).
- G. America is fearful, profane, and wicked comparable to Ahaz, so they should expect similar judgment.

***1 And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it.***

- A. Pekah associated and conspired with Rezin, pagan king of Syria, against God's Judah.
  - 1. Record of this conspiracy and war is found elsewhere (II Kgs 16:5; II Chr 28:1-6).
  - 2. Though their intentions were to overthrow Judah, they were unable to achieve such.
  - 3. However, they did wreck great damage to Judah with a great number of men lost.
  - 4. However, even then God favored Judah for Immanuel for prisoners (II Chr 28:7-15).
  - 5. Pekah was a son of a captain of king Pekahiah of Israel, but killed him for his throne.
- B. Much harm already done (II Chr 28:1-6 cp 28:7 cp 28:8-15 cp 28:16-19 cp 28:20-25).
- C. Question: How did Pekah die in Jotham's 20<sup>th</sup> year, for he reigned but 16 (II Kgs 15:30)?
  - 1. Believing Bible study never questions God's words, only our understanding of them.
  - 2. Before introducing Ahaz, the inspired scribe dated Pekah from Jotham's era or reign.
  - 3. If you have trouble with this inspired discrepancy for faith, consider also II Kgs 17:1.
  - 4. *Ahaziah's Age* for revelation ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/scripture/ahaziah-contradiction.php>.

***2 And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.***

- A. News arrived in Jerusalem to king Ahaz that Syria and Israel were joined against him.
- B. Ahaz was filled with fear at the prospect of fighting so great a combined military force.
- C. Bad news will come in your life – not if, but when – it is your duty to prepare for it now.
  - 1. David had lots of bad news, but God delivered him from all his troubles and fears.
  - 2. Fear is not antithetical to faith, as long as your response to fear is right (Psalm 56:3).
  - 3. Remember Jehovah for Who and what He is for perfect peace in danger (Is 26:3-4).
- D. Why was Israel (the ten tribes) here called Ephraim? Ephraim was only a tribe of Israel.
  - 1. Joseph was given a double inheritance through his sons, but Jacob exalted Ephraim.
  - 2. In fulfillment of Jacob's prophecy, Ephraim became the great tribe of the ten tribes.
  - 3. After the division of the nation under Rehoboam, Ephraim became a name for Israel.

***3 Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field;***

- A. God told Isaiah to take his son to meet king Ahaz at a place where God knew he was.
  - 1. No one would know the king was in such a place to avoid an assassination attempt.

2. But God knew, and He sent His prophet to meet him with evidence of divine wisdom.
- B. Shearjashub's name had prophetic value, much like Isaiah's next son documented well.
1. *Shearjashub* = the remnant shall return; a powerful promise about God's holy seed.
  2. *Mahershalalhashbaz* = speed to take prey and spoil; Assyria the hunter (Is 8:3-4).
  3. *Shearjashub's* name was a living reminder of God's prophecies of a remnant that God would save to return (Isaiah 1:9; 6:13; 10:20-22; 11:11,16; 37:4,31-32; 46:3).
  4. His name looked backward (Is 6:13) and forward (Is 10:20-22) in Isaiah's preaching.
  5. His name is likely a living reminder of Isaiah 6:13 (they had no chapter divisions).
  6. There are 16+ years between chapters 6 and 7, but the scroll's text had them together.
  7. Any effort to make this boy any more meaningful cannot honestly be in Isaiah 7-10.
  8. It is a shame some want to speculate and invent purposes for God sending him also.
  9. There is no reason to think this boy was an infant or child than to think a teenager.
  10. The prophecy in Isaiah 7:14-16 does not need him more than it needs a milk cow.
- C. What a kindness by God to show mercy to the wicked Ahaz. You better listen to God.
- D. This location, likely for consultation about the city's water supply, had value (Is 36:2).

***4 And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.***

- A. God told Ahaz – Pay attention and do not be afraid of these two mere smoking sticks.
1. **Firebrand.** A piece of wood kindled at the fire.
  2. A firebrand, if blazing and flaming, could be very dangerous, but these only smoked.
  3. All they had left of their firebrand fury and plans were the tails, just the stick ends.
  4. They had had fierce anger and their plans were ferocious, but they were then smoke.
- B. When God tells us not to fear – or we handle fear poorly – we rebel and disrespect Him.
1. Fear is not antithetical to faith, if we put our trust in the Lord when afraid (Ps 56:3).
  2. The LORD Jehovah is our salvation and strength (Is 12:2-3; 26:3-4). Trust Him!
  3. The N.T. tells us the same – do not fear what men might think to do (Heb 13:5-6).
  4. This is a precious jewel to be learned and applied – *do not worry, fret, or despair*.
- C. Why were these two potent kings not to cause any concern to Ahaz? It is explained next.
1. There are two sentences here, and the second starts with *because* to explain the first.
  2. God through Isaiah elaborated with insider information Ahaz likely did not know.

***5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying,***

- A. God had Isaiah plainly identify a justifiable cause of kingly fear – confederacy for war.
- B. Syria was a powerful neighbor to the north; Ephraim (Israel of the ten tribes) was potent.
- C. They had come together, so their military might now greatly exceeded that of Judah.
- D. Did God reveal more here than Ahaz knew (son of Tabeal) to encourage Ahaz's faith?

**6 *Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal:***

- A. They were confident they could overwhelm Judah and establish their own king in Judah.
- B. They were so confident they had already picked the man for the job – king of Judah.
  - 1. We do not know anything about Tabeal or his son other than their choice as puppet.
  - 2. He could have been a traitor in Ahaz’s government or a general of theirs or anyone.

**7 *Thus saith the Lord GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.***

- A. Here is stated clearly why Ahaz should not fear the rumor of an alliance against him.
- B. This text should be one of your favorites. What a glorious God Jehovah as our Father!
  - 1. The combination of words here are Lord (Adonai) and GOD (Jehovah). Enjoy them!
  - 2. The Hebrew word here is a variation of Jehovah; it is translated GOD 304 times.
  - 3. The name JEHOVAH only occurs four times (Genesis, Psalms), but twice in Isaiah.
- C. If the Lord GOD is for you, no one and no conspiracy can touch you. Believe! Rejoice!
  - 1. The next chapter will have more about the impotence of associations (Isaiah 8:9-15).
  - 2. What a wonderful message from God through Isaiah to Ahaz, but he rejected truth.
- D. How do you respond to news, fake news, sensational news, or “insider information”?
  - 1. Many Christians actually worry about government that they cannot influence at all.
  - 2. They waste precious time hearing or reading conservative pundits that know nothing.
  - 3. There is no knowledge to help you ... except one fact ... God is with us (see Is 8:10).

**8 *For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people.***

- A. God identified the capital and king of Syria – the capital of Damascus and its king Rezin.
  - 1. These were facts well known and already recorded here (Is 7:1). What is the value?
  - 2. Damascus would be the only capital of Syria, not Jerusalem, the capital of Judah.
  - 3. Rezin would be king in Damascus, not Jerusalem, for it already had its king, Ahaz.
- B. Concerning the other rabid enemy, ten tribes, God promised their total ruin as a people.
  - 1. God gave a lengthy, timed prophecy to Isaiah for Ahaz, beyond the short-term ones.
  - 2. Not only did God limit Rezin to Damascus and Syria, He told of Israel’s total ruin.
  - 3. The nation of Israel – the ten tribes – also called Ephraim – would be fully destroyed.
- C. When was this 65-year prophecy fulfilled? When did the time begin? When did it end?
  - 1. Pekah died in Ahaz’s fourth year, and by other events, this was early in Ahaz’s reign.
  - 2. The Bible indicates these conspirators had started against Jotham (II Kgs 15:36-38).
  - 3. If Ahaz’s first year was 660 B.C. as we believe, then Israel was ruined in 595 B.C.
  - 4. We know Samaria fell in 640 B.C., or the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Hezekiah (II Kings 18:9-12).
  - 5. What happened another 45 years later even more significant than Samaria’s fall?
  - 6. The Assyrians hit Israel as early as Pekah’s reign by Tiglathpileser (II Kings 15:29).

7. And Esarhaddon, the son of Sennacherib, was still doing so much later (Ezra 4:2).
8. Therefore, we believe that in 595 B.C. the last of the Israelites were carried captive.
9. Anstey (using George Smith) confirmed it by the Assyrian cuneiform Inscriptions.
10. The prophecy intends much more than Ephraim's king deposed and capital taken, but rather a destructive process that removed all semblance of a people as a nation.

***9 And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.***

- A. God identified the capital and king of Ephraim – the capital of Samaria and king Pekah.
  1. These were facts well known and already recorded here (Is 7:1). What is the value?
  2. Samaria would be the only capital of Israel, not Jerusalem, the capital of Judah.
  3. Pekah would be king in Samaria, not Jerusalem, for it already had its king, Ahaz.
- B. God challenged and warned Ahaz by Isaiah to believe the promised ruin of his enemies.
  1. Read the sober warning, which this profane and wicked king ignored to great evil.
  2. Ahaz only lived 36 years. He was not established. He was cut off in the prime of life.
  3. Because he did not believe, God brought on Judah the king of Assyria (Is 7:17-25).
- C. What should happen to you for ignoring God's great promises, spiritually and naturally?
  1. When you do not believe God, you make Him either a liar, incompetent, or impotent.
  2. God loves His people trusting Him, and He does His greatest works for such people.
  3. When we sanctify God Himself and fear Him, He will be our sanctuary (Is 8:13-15).

\*\*\*\*\* *Profane Ahaz Promised the Messiah – Verses 10-16* \*\*\*\*\*

***10 Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying,***

- A. The first section of Isaiah 7 (1-9) was to encourage and challenge Ahaz to trust Jehovah.
- B. The second section here (10-16) was to rebuke Ahaz for profanely disrespecting God.

***11 Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.***

- A. God in complete sincerity offered Ahaz a sign to confirm His prophecy against his fears.
  1. God promised Gideon victory, and He kindly gave Gideon several confirming signs.
  2. God promised Hezekiah fifteen more years and confirmed it by the sun (Is 38:5-8).
- B. He knows our frame; in gentleness for fear and weakness He may offer encouragement.
  1. Moses feared a return to Egypt, so God gave a burning bush, name, rod, leprosy, etc.
  2. Do you fear honoring imperfect parents? God promised huge rewards for doing so.
- C. *Three Witnesses for Hope in God ...* <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/reversal-of-fortune.pdf>.

## **12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.**

- A. This response sounds good, if you had nothing else to go by, but God hated his response.
  - 1. Context is our master in all places, including here, to rightly judge these pious words.
  - 2. He had rejected God's offer, and he feigned respect for Jehovah's character and law.
  - 3. It can be true that asking for signs when God has spoken can sinfully tempt Him.
  - 4. We should be eager and willing to accept God's word and not need confirming signs.
- B. While not immediately apparent, his irreverent folly here can be proven several ways.
  - 1. God immediately rebuked Ahaz for these words by simply reading ahead (Is 7:13).
  - 2. He was terrified, which the context clearly declares, so he needed a sign (Isaiah 7:2).
  - 3. He had already chosen a life of sin against Jehovah and his fathers (II Kgs 16:1-4).
  - 4. He had already chosen another source of help – appeal to Assyria (II Kgs 16:5-8).
  - 5. Not only did he chose the arm of flesh for his help, he paid him with Jehovah's gold.
  - 6. After God stated a sign, He promised judgment on the rebellious hypocrite (Is 7:17).
- C. His rejection of tempting God is hypocrisy; he chose human help over God's promise.
  - 1. When God offers a sign, there is no sin of tempting God by accepting His offer.
  - 2. If he intended compliance with God's law by not doubting God, he was a hypocrite.
  - 3. If he intended compliance by using natural means, he rebelled against God's word.
  - 4. The wicked, including so-called Christians, will use scripture to justify their sins.
  - 5. Never listen to a man use scripture that rebels at His word – he is a liar and blinded.
- D. Ahaz did not want proof Jehovah was the true God; this idolater had decided otherwise.
  - 1. After two good kings, there would have been many followers of Jehovah in Judah.
  - 2. A sign fulfilled publicly could have turned Judah against his idolatry and alliance.

## **13 And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?**

- A. The LORD ripped Ahaz's response as trying Isaiah the prophet, by rejecting his word.
- B. He then blasted Ahaz further as trying Jehovah as well by rejecting His sincere offer.
- C. The house of David, terminology already used, was for the biological seed of David.
  - 1. The distinction between Israel and Judah was that Judah was ruled by David's sons.
  - 2. Note earlier that *house of David* was used for Ahaz as the single king (Isaiah 7:2).
  - 3. But with the plural pronoun *you* here, we understand Isaiah including his counselors.
  - 4. No one else properly represented the house of David beyond the reigning son of his.
  - 5. David, a prophet, knew his house was evil, but he thanked God for Jesus (II Sa 23:5).
  - 6. Whether Ahaz had courtiers that were David's sons or not, the throne was David's.
- D. Let us guard very carefully our responses to every word of God lest we weary Him also.
  - 1. If you have chosen your own way in any matter, then you are like this wicked Ahaz.
  - 2. If you play with scripture to justify yourself while also rejecting it, you are like Ahaz.
  - 3. If you bring less than your best to Jehovah, then you are like Ahaz (Malachi 1:6-14).
  - 4. If you claim ceremonial compliance, you are worse than Ahaz (Is 1:10-15; 58:1-7).
  - 5. God hates hypocrisy more than He hates passion or outright rebellion (Rev 3:14-16).

**14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.**

- A. It seems strange to have this prophecy of Jesus our Lord here, but there is good value.
1. Isaiah has inserted gospel era prophecies and promises often (1:25-27; 2:2-5; 4:2-6).
  2. Consider context – Ahaz refused a sign Judah would be saved – so God gave one.
  3. He Himself designed this sign, adding to its integrity, and He Himself would do it.
  4. Instead of a sign as modest as moving the shadow, God committed His own integrity.
  5. The promised seed of the woman, of Abraham, of David was known by believers.
  6. God had a covenant need to save Judah, Jerusalem, throne ... for Shiloh (Gen 49:7).
- B. *Behold!* The sign God promised deserves our best attention and affection. *It is glorious!*
1. Virgins do not conceive. It is impossible, as Mary, wise girl, knew (Luke 1:34-35).
  2. Not only would she conceive, but she would have a man child to take David's throne.
  3. Not only would she conceive a son, but she would call him Immanuel (Matt 1:23).
  4. Immanuel = *God with us* = by virtue of *im* (with or among) and *el* (form of Elohim).
  5. The next chapter will provide a connection proving this meaning (Is 8:8 cp Is 8:10).
  6. The great mystery of godliness begins ... God was manifest in the flesh (I Tim 3:16).
  7. John's glorious declaration of Jesus begins ... the Word dwelt among us (Jn 1:1,14).
- C. We despise the RSV (1952) and versions like it that replace virgin with young woman.
1. This profound corruption of scripture was instrumental in the Bible version debate.
  2. Westcott and Hort had perverted the Revision Version (1881) in secret, but this vile corruption of the RSV aroused the attention and contention of many pastors.
  3. If there is one subject we will fight for – it is Jesus the Son of God as *God with us*.
  4. The modern corrupt versions have also corrupted I Timothy 3:16 to get rid of God.
- D. What use of this sign does the Holy Spirit inspire Isaiah to draw from His incarnation?
1. The event is far away – about 655 – so how does it fit with this debate with Ahaz?
  2. What relationship do the following two verses have toward Ahaz and/or our Lord?
  3. Spiritual truth like this, hidden from sinners like Ahaz, angers them more than helps.

**15 Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.**

- A. Immanuel – *God with us* – would have been nursed by Mary for the first year or two.
- B. Immanuel – *God with us* – would then eat the common food of children in that country.
1. Butter and honey here is obviously baby food by the context of these three verses.
  2. Butter may also be milk or cream by figure of speech (Judges 4:19; 5:25; Job 29:6).
  3. How do we know Jael and Mary did not both use buttermilk with honey for Jesus?!
  4. Breastmilk has 50% more fat content than cow milk, so cream with honey is perfect.
- C. Immanuel – *God with us* – would grow as others to acquire a conscience and conviction.
1. The Spirit confirmed this process of child growth about Jesus (Luke 2:40,52; 1:80).
  2. Conscience and conviction form at 3-5 years or so (Deut 1:39; Lev 27:6; Jonah 4:11).
  3. Butter and honey are no better than Gerber's strained prunes for forming conscience.

**16 For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.**

- A. Here is another sign, but it is rather to be seen as part of the sign for timing (Is 7:4,7).
  - 1. Do not read this as 655 years from now the virgin would bear her son Immanuel.
  - 2. Read it rather – in less time than it will take the virgin’s son to gain a conscience.
  - 3. Therefore, the time at stake here is five years or less, not 655 years or time like that.
- B. The land Ahaz abhorred was Israel and Syria, the two confederate nations against him.
  - 1. The context clearly shows the enemy at hand was those two kings (Is 7:1-2,5,8-9).
  - 2. How soon were the two kings destroyed? Pekah in Ahaz’s fourth year (II Kgs 15:30).
  - 3. How soon were the two kings destroyed? Rezin at about the same time (II Kgs 16:9).
- C. Therefore, God’s promise, for which Ahaz refused a sign, was done in only 2-3 years.
- D. Though not to Ahaz directly, Isaiah’s *Mahershalalhashbaz* confirmed timing (Is 8:1-4).
- E. There is no reason to force Shearjashub into these verses to compete with the Messiah.
  - 1. *Shearjashub* = the remnant shall return; a powerful promise about God’s holy seed.
  - 2. *Mahershalalhashbaz* = speed to take prey and spoil; Assyria the hunter (Is 8:3-4).
  - 3. *Shearjashub*’s name was a living reminder of God’s prophecies of a remnant that God would save to return (Isaiah 1:9; 6:13; 10:20-22; 11:11,16; 37:4,31-32; 46:3).
  - 4. His name looked backward (Is 6:13) and forward (Is 10:20-22) in Isaiah’s preaching.
  - 5. His name is likely a living reminder of Isaiah 6:13 (they had no chapter divisions).
  - 6. There are 16+ years between chapters 6 and 7, but the scroll’s text had them together.
  - 7. Any effort to make this boy any more meaningful cannot honestly be in Isaiah 7-10.
  - 8. It is a shame some want to speculate and invent purposes for God sending him also.
  - 9. There is no reason to think this boy was an infant or child than to think a teenager.
  - 10. The prophecy in Isaiah 7:14-16 does not need him more than it needs a milk cow.

\*\*\*\*\* *Wicked Ahaz Punished by Assyria – Verses 17-25* \*\*\*\*\*

**17 The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father’s house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria.**

- A. In the previous sections, God would destroy Israel and Syria by Assyria (Is 7:4-8,16).
  - 1. It might have concerned you that God would use the arm of flesh that Ahaz chose.
  - 2. But what you read here should settle your mind. Assyria would also punish Judah.
- B. The prophet saw past Tiglathpileser to Sennacherib, who fulfilled this harsh promise.
- C. Only the civil war with Israel would exceed the trouble the king of Assyria would bring.
  - 1. Ephraim departed from Judah for Solomon’s taxation and Rehoboam’s oppression.
  - 2. That evil calamity – ten tribes forming an enemy nation – occurred 243 years earlier.
  - 3. Isaiah continued this prophecy about Assyria in Judah in the next chapter (Is 8:8).
  - 4. The historical section of Isaiah will record what happened to Ahaz’s son (Is 36:1).



**18 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.**

- A. By God's providence here, we have learned about hissing to draw forth armies (Is 5:26).
- B. Isaiah condemned Judah for trusting in Egypt, like Ahaz did in Assyria (Is 30:1-2; 31:1).
- C. Egypt was an identified enemy to come (II Kgs 23:33-34; II Chron 35:20-24; 36:1-4).
  - 2. Egypt very easily could have joined the Assyrians or had defectors as mercenaries.
  - 3. But consider also the size of the Assyrian Empire, which at times included Egypt.
- D. But the main emphasis is on the king of Assyria (Is 7:17 cp Is 7:18,20; 8:4,7; 10:12).
- E. *That day* is the time of judgment and should not be limited to 24 hours or even decades.

**19 And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes.**

- A. The plural pronoun *they* refers to the combined flies and bees, Egyptians and Assyrians.
- B. No matter where the Jews sought to hide, the army God called forth would be there.
- C. Sennacherib brought a mighty host, took all fenced cities, and surrounded Jerusalem.
  - 1. His army was so great no one thought Jerusalem could be saved from Assyria.
  - 2. They occupied all Judah's land so that the agricultural effect was great (Is 7:20-25).

**20 In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard.**

- A. The matters of this verse and verses 21 and 23 are much more than one 24-hour day.
  - 1. This is a period or process of time, and the uses of the term connect these judgments.
  - 2. Judgment began by Tiglathpileser then Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, Nebuchadnezzar.
- B. The razor to shave here is the king of Assyria, and he was hired by Ahaz and by God.
  - 1. God considered national wealth that he gave kings as hire (Ezek 29:18-20; Is 10:6).
  - 2. Ahaz hired king Tiglathpileser, so it applies to him most definitely (II Kgs 16:7-9).
  - 3. But he hired the king of Assyria in general, so it can easily include others after him.
- C. God used this hired razor (a barber) to shave the metaphorical glory of Ahaz and Judah.
  - 1. This was not a periodic polling or shearing of the hair, but rather a shaving of hair.
  - 2. This left Ahaz and Judah totally naked in ways that were a great shame to the Jews.
  - 3. A man's head to be razor-shaved may fit America's MMA image, but not in Israel.
  - 4. Reference to hair of the feet is for a man's lower hair or inferior glory by metaphor.
  - 5. Beards to Jews and men in the Middle East are esteemed very highly (II Sa 10:4-5).
  - 6. When Assyria was done, Judah was cleanshaven of men, glory, money, power, etc.
  - 7. They had been reduced from top to bottom with great effect as in following verses.
- D. Judah was made *naked* by Ahaz (II Chr 28:19-21), distressed by Tiglathpileser, ravaged by Sennacherib, and utterly destroyed and taken captive by Babylonians (or Assyrians).

1. It is valuable to know Isaiah as prophet saw processes of judgment (Is 13:19-22).
2. Assyria used Babylon as capital at times; Babylon included Assyrian land/people.
3. The king of Assyria (Esarhaddon) took Manesseh to Babylon (II Chronicles 33:11).

***21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep;***

- A. The following verses describe how God brought Judah very low in poverty for Ahaz.
  1. Rather than *herds* and *flocks*, Judah's farmers were reduced to one or two animals.
  2. A farmer with just one young cow and two sheep has nothing for sale or for export.
  3. This may be understood individually of farms or as a picture of the nation's poverty.
- B. This judgment is best understood of Assyria by king Sennacherib, not Tiglathpileser.
- C. Such a description best fits the poor left to tend the desolate land after Nebuchadnezzar.

***22 And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.***

- A. While blessed farming produced bread, meat, and wine, they ate baby food (Is 7:15).
- B. How could there be an abundance of milk? By virtue of few cows in large, open fields.
- C. The abundance of milk is not prosperity, for where is bread, meat, wine, raisins, figs?
  1. This is a verse describing a shaving by Assyria and desolation of a ravaging army.
  2. A milk cow can produce more milk than a family drinks but nowhere to sell extra.
  3. So they churned the extra and ate it, because they were reduced to these few foods.
- D. Honey is natural and could be found then without raising bees. Remember Jonathan.
- E. While Sennacherib did this to all fenced cities, Nebuchadnezzar did it to all of Judah.

***23 And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briers and thorns.***

- A. The matters of this verse and verses 21 and 23 are much more than one 24-hour day.
  1. This is a period or process of time, and the uses of the term connect these judgments.
  2. Judgment began by Tiglathpileser then Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, Nebuchadnezzar.
  3. Isaiah continued his warning of terrible desolation and poverty coming due to Ahaz.
- B. This is the only occurrence of silverlings, some coin or measure of silver (Gen 20:16).
- C. Solomon had a prosperous vineyard with vines for 1000 pieces of silver (Song 8:11).
- D. Such valuable property would be grown over for lack of capital, labor, or an economy.

**24 With arrows and with bows shall men come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns.**

- A. With fields, pastures, vineyards ruined by enemies, men would be reduced to hunting.
  - 1. The fields, pastures, and vineyards would be ruined by briers and thorns everywhere.
  - 2. Men would hunt, thus bows and arrows, for swords and staves are for self-defense.
  - 3. Bows and arrows can strike out and take game that is at a distance or seeking escape.
  - 4. Farming requires large amounts of capital and labor – they greatly lacked both.
  - 5. Hunter-gatherers, or foragers, as here (Is 8:21-24), describe third-world economies.
- B. The use of *thither* points back to the previous verse – the vineyards of prosperous men.

**25 And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.**

- A. Try to understand this verse by a dictionary! Try to grasp it by any means but context!
  - 1. The context is all about desolation, there is no comfort or consolation (Is 7:20-24).
  - 2. The context states clearly that there are briers and thorns everywhere (Is 7:23-24).
  - 3. The first poverty is few animals (Is 7:21-22), then destroyed vineyards (Is 7:23-25).
  - 4. The use of *thither* points to the previous verse – the vineyards of prosperous men.
  - 5. Context is our master, but especially here ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/slaves-to-context.pdf>.
  - 6. In places like this we practice believing Bible study, which is to justify God's words.
- B. The context leads us to an application of these clauses to describe ruin of fruitful hills.
  - 1. **Mattock.** An agricultural tool (similar to our hoe) with a hoe on one side and a pick.
  - 2. There is no mention of a plow, but rather the simple hoe for single plants, like vines.
  - 3. The use of *thither* points to the previous verses – the vineyards of prosperous men.
  - 4. Here is vineyards (Is 7:23-24), fertile hills with fences/hedges (Is 5:1-2,5; Mk 12:1).
  - 5. Fences or hedges of briers or thorns kept animals away (Pr 15:19; Hos 2:6; Mic 7:4).
  - 6. But now briers and thorns would be everywhere and the previous hedges destroyed.
  - 7. There would be no fear or restrictive hedges of briers and thorns to discourage beasts.
  - 8. Thus, the valuable plots would simply be trampled by oxen and lesser farm animals.

*Can you identify verses in this chapter for great comfort or warning to be better than Ahaz?*

- 1. *You do not need to fear ... 7:4 ... and God by Paul instructs us the same (Heb 13:5-6).*
- 2. *God will not let plans against you stand ... 7:7 ... again use Paul above (Heb 13:5-6).*
- 3. *But you better believe His glorious promises ... 7:9 ... as Paul warned (II Thess 1:7-9).*
- 4. *A virgin-born son named Immanuel is our Savior ... 7:14 ... as confirmed (Matt 1:23).*
- 5. *Your life can get worse – God can shave your glory ... 7:17,20 ... beware (Heb 10:31)!*