

“God Promises” - Isaiah 7:7-17

Ask - “Why are different types of signs important? How are they helpful to you?”

Background - The allied forces of Syria (Aram) and Israel attacked the southern kingdom of Judah, laying siege on its capital city Jerusalem, during the reign of King Ahaz (see also *2 Kings 16:1-6*). Isaiah spoke to the king, prophesying what would happen in the days ahead...

“The Enemy’s Attack” - Isaiah 7:7-9

(v7) What did the LORD clearly say pertaining to Syria and Israel’s plans to defeat Judah and displace her king? How might making such a prediction place Isaiah’s credibility on the line?

(v8a & 9a) What was the capital city of Aram (Syria)? Who was its king? What was the capital city of Ephraim (Israel)? Who was its king? (see verse 1)

(v8b & 9b) What would soon happen to Ephraim (Israel)? So also, Judah would not endure unless they did what? Discuss.

GOD PLAINLY STATED THAT SYRIA AND ISRAEL WOULD FAIL TO OVERTHROW JERUSALEM/JUDAH. INSTEAD, THEY THEMSELVES WOULD BE DEFEATED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

“Ask For a Sign” - Isaiah 7:10-13

(v10-11) What did the LORD encourage Ahaz to do? Although signs can be helpful and reassuring, what’s even better than seeing (see *John 20:29*)?

(v12) What was Ahaz’s response? Compare his reaction with the LORD’s command in Deuteronomy 6:16.

(v13) How was Judah trying the patience of God? Does this mean that the LORD sometimes wants to give us a sign? Does he still do this? Discuss.

GOD INVITED AHAZ TO ASK FOR A SIGN. WHEN AHAZ REFUSED, THE LORD EXPRESSED FRUSTRATION BECAUSE HIS GRACIOUS OFFER HAD BEEN DECLINED.

“Here’s Your Sign Anyway” - Isaiah 7:14-17

(v14) What sign did God give to Ahaz (and by extension to all believers)? What would this be a sign of (*answer: salvation from your enemies/the enemy*)?

(v15-16) Using this promised son's life as a timeline, how much longer would the adversarial nations of Syria and Israel remain?

(v17) Though the Syrians and Israelites would fail, what stronger nation would rise to bring difficulties to Ahaz and Judah in the days and years to come?

SYRIA AND ISRAEL FAILED TO OVERRUN JERUSALEM AND WERE SUBSEQUENTLY CRUSHED BY ASSYRIA. THE ASSYRIANS THEN PUT TREMENDOUS PRESSURE ON JUDAH.

Application - God promised to send a sign: "*Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.*" This is a prophetic reference to Jesus. Though neither Isaiah nor Ahaz saw this miraculous sign fulfilled during their lifetimes, the fact that Syria and Israel fell just as God predicted gave them assurance and hope that it would someday come to pass - and it did! How are you able to trust in God's promises for the long-term when you aren't seeing them fulfilled in the short-term?