

Isaiah 7:10-16 –The Sign: Offered and Declined

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Before the days of GPS's, when you were lost while driving and badly needing direction, what a good thing when you finally saw a road sign...maybe an arrow...or a sign that said: "Twenty kilo meters to where you are going. That sign confirmed that you were on the right path and you would get where you are going. More than that, that sign 记号 also confirmed that you should not have taken that other road that you might have thought about taking 30 minutes before that would have led you astray. That good sign reminded you that you were safe and could proceed.

God knows that the Jews needed spiritual road signs to enter and stay in his kingdom. He gave them one. On this sign was written: Jesus – the way to God. He was the way of safety and peace – the way to remove worry.

Our headings are: **God's Offer of a Sign, Ahaz's Rejection of the Sign, and God Gave the Sign anyway.**

Our goals are: **That you will see God's love for you in his sending his only Begotten Son 独生子 into this world so you will bow your knees, your head, and your heart to him, and you will not wander after other gods.**

God's offer of a Sign

10 Moreover the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, 11 "Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above."

1. Ahaz was a wicked king of Judah. He went to Tiglath Peleser for help. Tiglath Peleser was a detour 弯路 – a trap, a false sign given by the Devil. God wanted Ahaz to go to him for help against the wicked kings of Israel (Pekah) and the king of Syrian (Rezin), not the Assyrian king. God knew that the Assyrian king was like a bear. If Ahaz keep feeding it, it would want more. And if Ahaz had no more food, he would become the bear's food. But Ahaz ignored all the previous warnings God had given them about making alliances 联盟 with the wicked. He kept feeding the Assyrian bear, hoping that he would help him destroy Pekah and Rezin, whom God called two stubs of smoking firebrands.

2. Because God loved his covenant people, even though their ruler was wicked, he offered Ahaz a sign so that Ahaz would keep his faith in him, rather than trust in the Assyrian Bear, Tiglath Peleser. God is always willing to strengthen the faith of the weak. For example: Gideon had asked for a sign from the Lord graciously gave a sign to strengthen his faith. Furthermore, God gave many signs and promises in the past, again and again, to keep Judah as his Bride and redeem her.

Hebrews 6:17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise 承受应许的人 the immutability of His counsel 他的旨意是不更改, confirmed it by an oath,

3. And notice the greatness of God's offer. God asked Ahaz to ask for a sign in the heaven or on earth - anything. And if Ahaz had asked and God fulfilled it, that easily would have confirmed and strengthened his faith to trust in God and not to trust in Tiglath Peleser.

Ahaz's rejection of the Sign

12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!"

1. Ahaz rejected God's generous offer of a sign to strengthen his faith in his promises to preserve Judah. Instead, Ahaz kept his alliance with the king of Assyria. But if God offered a sign it was not wrong for Ahaz to accept it. (God gave us the signs of baptism 洗礼 and the Lord's Supper 圣餐 and to reject them would be sin.) It was not wrong for Ahaz to test God. In Malachi 3, for instance, God urged his people to test him and prove he was faithful. What's the difference between tempting and testing? Your motive. (Tempting God is wanting him to do wrong. Testing God is for him to do what he has promised.) Don't demand a sign from God, but accepts if he offers a sign.

2. So why would Ahaz reject the sign that God offered him?

a. Ahaz rejected the sign that God offered because he trusted in the Assyrian king, Tiglath Peleser, the Assyrian army, and the Assyrian gods to help him in his troubles. He thought that they were more able to help than Jehovah.

b. Ahaz rejected the sign that God offered because he lacked 缺乏 real faith in Jehovah. He knew if he asked for a sign from God he would have to believe that sign and trust in God, but his heart was elsewhere. God had his name, but Tiglath Peleser had his heart. Ahaz did not care if God were insulted.

3. But in his rejection of God, Ahaz doesn't clearly say that he was rejecting God and that he had no interest in God. That would have been bad for business-he might have lost his kingship. (Sounds like modern leaders who pretend to be Christians) Instead, Ahaz chose to act – pretend that he was pious 敬虔 (Like someone might say: "I don't follow any

religion. I am spiritual.” “I am a Christian, but I am not fanatical 狂热” It sounds pious, but that is wrong.) He was being foolish. Ahaz showed contempt 鄙视 and ingratitude. But Ahaz’s way is the way others today reject God.

God Gave the Sign Anyway

13 Then he said, "Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you **to weary men**, but will you weary **my God also**?

1. God became angry at the king’s refusal and spoke harshly through Isaiah. The king and his advisers trusted man, horses, and chariots 战车, instead of God. They rejected God’s place of safety... a haven 避风港 from troubles. So God directed harsh words to not only the king, but also to all who supported the rejection of Jehovah.

2. Isaiah accused Ahaz of wearying men and also trying to weary him. How did Ahaz weary men? Ahaz wearied men by sinning and causing God to judge the whole nation. They suffered though innocent. How did Ahaz weary God? He wearied God by useless talk, false promises, and vain worship. Ahaz wearied men and God in the sense of making them “fed up.” God never gets tired. (Isaiah 40:28 – [He] neither faints 不疲乏 nor is weary...)

Malachi 2:17 You have wearied the LORD with your words; Yet you say, "In what way have we wearied Him?" In that you say, "Everyone who does evil /s good in the sight of the LORD, And He delights in them," Or, "Where is the God of justice?"

Do you weary God with your meaningless words or by insincere worship? Do you weary God by him having to constantly remind you to pray or constantly reminding you to work to bring others into his kingdom? On the other hand, what would stop you from wearying God? Depend on him!

Isaiah 40:29 He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, 31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles 像鹰一样展翅上腾. They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

3. In contrast to Ahaz who ignored his Redeemer, look at the kind and gentle way the prophet speaks of God. Isaiah (whose name means “Jehovah has saved”) calls him “my God.” He and God had a close personal relationship 亲密的个人关系

14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, **the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son**, and shall call His name Immanuel.

4. God then said to the **House of David**: “You may not want a sign, but I’m going to show you my faithfulness and **give a sign anyway.**” God never abandons his covenant people; even when they are foolish he still encourages them.

Romans 3:3 For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?

5. What was the sign? A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son... a Son who would save the world. Throughout history 历史 God had already told Israel that Messiah would be born to save his people and later he said that he would be born specifically in Judah.

Genesis 49:10 The scepter 权杖 shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

But could Judah find hope in this sign while facing imminent danger in the 8th century BC? Yes. God was pointing out that **Judah and Jerusalem had to be preserved and not be destroyed** for his promise to be fulfilled. God was binding 约束 himself to keep Judah alive. Yes, everything was falling apart in Judah. Israel was about to be taken into captivity... but God wanted to show Judah that Messiah would come and rescue his people from their troubles. He confirmed the future by adding more details to the universal expectation of the Messiah. Sadly, the fullness of the sign Ahaz and his people would not see. **They refused the sign so they did not see it.**

6. Consider the real sign that the faithful would see:

a. Messiah would be **born of a virgin** (not “young lady”)— literally on who is “covered” or “hidden.” This would have been a mind blowing sign, so utterly amazing that only God could do it. If God were referring to a “young lady” instead of a “virgin” it would not be a sign. It would be normal.

b. The virgin will name her child, showing the Son had no earthly father. Fathers normally named their children. Remember Zacharias?

c. Her Son would save his nation.

d. The miraculous conception 怀孕 meant that **sin would not be passed on to this child** so he would be fit to save.

e. This sign would show God’s infinite power. If God could make a virgin give birth, the Syrians were nothing.

f. The child would be called Emmanuel: God with us... God in our nature 我们的本性. He would be God and man! This was a sign of hope – which came true.

Matthew 1:21 "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save

His people from their sins." 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." 24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, 25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

This was the greatest sign possible because it prefigured their spiritual deliverance. God would save his people.

1Tim 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness 敬虔的奥秘真伟大啊·这是众人所公认 God was manifested in the flesh 他在肉身显现, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles 被传于列国, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Hebrews 7:3 without father, without mother, without genealogy 族谱 having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

15 "Curds 乳酪 and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

6. What about the fact that the child would eat "butter (curds) and honey?" Does this mean that Jesus will be of a rich family?

No, it simply means that he will eat like other people. Jesus, while he was God, he was also a real normal man – with a normal body and soul. Curds and honey were normal foods. Jews put curds and honey in the mouths of children as soon as they were born...even before they were nursed. Jesus had to be born and to grow normally.

Hebrews 2:17 ...in all things He had to be made like His brethren弟兄们, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God 要在神的事上, to make propitiation赎罪 for the sins...

Lk 2:40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature 身量, and in favor with God and men.

16 "For before the (a) child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken弃绝 by both her kings.

7. In this verse Isaiah came back to his main point from the beginning of the chapter: That Ahaz had unfounded fears of the Syrian and Israelite leaders. And in one other slap against Ahaz, God said that before the time that a child would grow up (maybe Isaiah's son) to know right from wrong, these wicked kings would be gone. And shortly hereafter, Hoshea conspired 串谋 against Pekah (king of Israel), and killed him. And Tiglath Pileser, the Assyrian king, killed Rezin, king of Syria. Both kings died. The Isaiah's son's name was Shear-Jashub, which meant "the remnant shall return." And they did. About 200,000 captives whom Pekah and Rezin had carried away, were brought back, not by might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. God was teaching Ahaz that he had no reason to go after Tiglath Peleser for help.

8. This same promise had to be applied after as well.

Isaiah 11:13 Also the envy of Ephraim shall depart, And the adversaries 敌视 of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, And Judah shall not harass 敌视 Ephraim.

God's people could also expect comfort.

Isaiah 8:10 Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; Speak the word, but it will not stand, For God is with us."

Isn't the fact that the Jesus is with you to protect you and to destroy your enemy Satan the greatest comfort of all?

Conclusion:

Matthew Henry wrote: Nothing is more grievous 严重过 to the God of heaven than to be distrusted 不信任. And yet, that is what Ahaz did. He distrusted God and refused God's offer to strengthen his faith. Instead, he turned to the Assyrian Bear, Tiglath Peleser, to help him. In doing this, Ahaz worked against God's plan of redemption 神的救赎计划.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Look at God's great love in sending his Son into this wretched 败不 world – a world that wants to overwhelm 淹没 and destroy you - to save a wretch like you – one who did not love or care for him! The sign the was fulfilled. May you bow your knees, your head, and your heart to him daily. May you live for his glory.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, you might be looking to science to save you...but it won't. You might be looking at your wealth to save you...but it won't. You might even be thinking your great education or some other thing might save you, but it won't. Only Jesus Christ will. Only the one who was born of a virgin and lived and died for you can save you. He obeyed and suffered for the sins of the world. Would you ask God to count his work as yours 求神算他的工作为你所做的, or do you want to die and face the future in hell?