

ISAIAH 7

The Sign of Immanuel

Ahaz's Faith Tested

1 In the days of Ahaz¹ the son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah² the son of Remaliah the king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not yet mount an attack against it.³ 2 When the house of David⁴ was told,

Syria is in league with Ephraim,

the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.⁵ 3 And Yahweh said to Isaiah,

Go out to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-jashub [“A Remnant Shall Return”] your son,⁶ at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field.⁷ 4 And say to him,

Be careful, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint⁸ because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remaliah. 5 Because Syria, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has devised evil against you saying,

¹ Uzziah, Ahaz's grandfather, died in 739 bc, and Syria and Israel came against Judah in 734. So there is exactly five years between Is 6 and Is 7. We don't learn much about Isaiah's activity during Jotham's reign. He definitely was a young man when he received the vision of Is 6.

² With the help of Gileadites, Pekah murdered Pekahiah, successor of Menahem, at Samaria (2 Ki 15:21ff). He then seized the throne and reigned as king of Israel from 737 to 732 bc. Pekah adopted an anti-Assyrian policy and allied himself to Rezin of Syria. Together they brought pressure on Jotham of Judah, probably to join them (2 Ki 15:37)(D. J. Wiseman, “Pekah,” *NBD*, 892).

³ Their aim was to form an anti-Assyrian front, but in fact they drove Ahaz into alliance with Assyria. In 732 bc, Tiglath-pileser III captured Damascus, killed Rezin, and invaded northern Israel (A. R. Millard, “Rezin,” *NBD*, 1019). Hoshea, son of Elah, conspired against Pekah and slew him, also in 732 bc (D. J. Wiseman, “Pekah,” *NBD*, 892). **2 Ki 15:37** 37 In those days Yahweh began to send Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah against Judah. **2 Ki 16:5** 5 Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to wage war on Jerusalem, and they besieged Ahaz but could not conquer him. **2 Ki 16:9** 9 The king of Assyria marched up against Damascus and took it, carrying its people captive to Kir, and he killed Rezin.

⁴ See *The Davidic Covenant*.

⁵ Ahaz fails to practice the faith-rest drill. He proceeds into panic palace. We don't know whether he was a believer. But regardless, the crisis he faced and the decisions he made best correspond today to the situation of believers in phase two. See *Phase Two Faith*.

⁶ **Is 8:18** 18 Behold, I and the children whom Yahweh has given me are signs and portents in Israel from Yahweh of hosts.

⁷ **Is 36:2** 2 The king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field.

⁸ **Ex 14:13** 13 Moses said to the people [Israel], Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of Yahweh that he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.

6 Let us go up against Judah and terrify it, and let us split it open for ourselves, and set up the son of Tabeel⁹ as king in the midst of it.

7 Thus says Lord Yahweh (יהוה): It shall not stand, and it shall not come to pass. 8 For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin. And within sixty-five years [669 bc] Ephraim will be shattered from being a people. 9 And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you [pl.] are not firm in faith (אמן), you [pl.] will not be established (אמן).¹⁰

Sign of the Virgin Birth of Messiah

10 Again Yahweh spoke to Ahaz:

11 Ask a sign (אֵימֹתַי) of Yahweh your [pl.] God. Let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.

12 But Ahaz said,

I will not ask, and I will not put Yahweh to the test (בִּטּוֹתַי).¹¹

13 And he [Isaiah] said,

Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you [pl.] to weary men, that you [pl.] weary¹² my God also? 14 Therefore Yahweh himself will give you [pl.] a sign. Behold, the virgin (עַלְמָה)¹³ shall conceive and bear a son (בֵּן) [Messiah]¹⁴ and shall call his name Immanuel.¹⁵ 15 He shall eat curds and honey [with the remnant (v. 22)] when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.¹⁶

⁹ It is unknown who the “son of Tabeel” was.

¹⁰ “If you will not believe, you surely shall not last” (NASB). “If you do not stand firm in faith, you shall not stand at all” (NRSV). **2 Ch 20:20** Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in Yahweh your God, and you will be established. Believe his prophets, and you will succeed.

¹¹ Usually this would be a good answer, but here it is a very bad answer. God wants Ahaz to ask for a sign so that his faith may be strengthened. It is not a bait and switch. Ahaz is already testing God. See *Testing God*.

¹² **Is 43:24** 24 You have burdened me with your sins. You have wearied me with your iniquities.

¹³ An unmarried woman of marriageable age, always a virgin in Jewish society.

¹⁴ Is the child Jesus, a child of Isaiah’s day, or both? Is the child of Isaiah’s day a type of Messiah? Was there a virgin birth in the Old Testament? If the birth isn’t a virgin one, what’s the sign?

¹⁵ **Mt 1:22-23** 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel (which means, God with us). **Is 9:6** 6 To us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

¹⁶ This phrase, repeated twice by Yahweh, indicates there is an age of accountability for every person. See *Age of God-Consciousness*.

Four In That Days

16 For before the boy (הַנְּעָר) [Isaiah's son Shear-jashub] knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.¹⁷ 17 Yahweh will bring upon you, upon your people, and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!¹⁸

18 In that day Yahweh will whistle¹⁹ for the fly that is at the end of the streams of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. 19 And they will all come and settle in the steep ravines, in the clefts of the rocks, on all the thornbushes, and on all the pastures.

20 In that day Yahweh will shave with a razor that is hired beyond the River—with the king of Assyria—the head and the hair of the feet, and it will sweep away the beard also.

21 In that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep, 22 and because of the abundance of milk that they give, he will eat curds, for everyone who is left in the land [the remnant] will eat curds and honey [ultimately with Messiah (v. 15)].

23 In that day every place where there used to be a thousand vines, worth a thousand shekels of silver, will become briars and thorns. 24 With bow and arrows a man will come there, for all the land will be briars and thorns. 25 And as for all the hills that used to be hoed with a hoe, you will not come there for fear of briars and thorns, but they will become a place where cattle are let loose and where sheep tread.²⁰

¹⁷ This aspect of the sign concentrates on the speed with which Assyria will conquer Syria and Israel.

¹⁸ This is very, very bad news. Assyria is much worse than a Syria-Israel coalition.

¹⁹ **Is 5:26** 26 He will raise a signal for nations far away, and whistle for them from the ends of the earth. And behold, quickly, speedily they come!

²⁰ This has happened where we live at Otokia.

Biblical Worldview

1. Isaiah at a Glance.

- a. Is 1-5 is an introduction of the anthology which is our *Isaiah*. It has no time indicators.
- b. By contrast, Is 6 and Is 7-12 are very specific regarding time.
 - (1) “They deal with a particular historic occasion and the implication of that occasion in both the near and the distant perspectives” (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:173).

2. Is 7 happens five years after Is 6. Syria and Israel are invading Judah.

- a. **Is 7:1** 1 In the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah the king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not yet mount an attack against it.
 - (1) Uzziah, Ahaz’s grandfather, died in 739 bc, and Syria and Israel came against Judah in 734 bc. So there are exactly five years between Is 6 and Is 7.
- b. Ahaz.
 - (1) We learn from 2 Ch 28 that:
 - (a) He was 20 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 16 years (2 Ch 28:1).
 - (b) He did not do what was right in the eyes of Yahweh (2 Ch 28:1).
 - (c) He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel (2 Ch 28:2).
 - (d) He made metal images for the Baals (2 Ch 28:2).
 - (e) He burned his sons (the seed of David) as an offering, just as the Canaanites did (2 Ch 28:3).
 - (f) He worshipped idols on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree (2 Ch 28:4).
 - (g) He made Judah act sinfully (2 Ch 28:19).
 - (h) Yahweh humbled Judah because of him (2 Ch 28:19).
 - (i) Rezin of Syria defeated him and took captive many Judahites to Damascus (2 Ch 25:5).
 - (j) Pekah of Israel struck him and killed 120,000 Judahites in one day (2 Ch 25:6).
 - (k) Zichri of Ephraim killed his son and top officials (2 Ch 25:7).
 - (l) Israel took captive 200,000 Judahites (2 Ch 28:8).
 - 1) After Oded and four chiefs of Ephraim confronted Israel, these captives were returned (2 Ch 28:9-15).
 - (m) The Edomites invaded and defeated Judah (2 Ch 28:17).
 - (n) The Philistines raided Judah, took villages, and settled in them (2 Ch 28:18).
 - (o) He sent to Tiglath-Pileser for help (2 Ch 28:16).
 - (p) Tiglath-Pileser came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him (2 Ch 28:20).
 - (q) Ahaz took from from the temple to give tribute to Tiglath-Pileser, but it did not help him (2 Ch 28:20).
 - 1) Assyria hardly needed to be urged and paid a great sum to do what she had been planning all along (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:197).
 - (r) In distress he became more faithless to Yahweh (2 Ch 28:22).

- (s) He sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that had defeated him (2 Ch 28:23).
 - (t) He cut in pieces the vessels of the temple (2 Ch 28:24).
 - (u) He shut up the doors of the temple (2 Ch 28:24).
 - (v) He made altars in every corner of Jerusalem (2 Ch 28:24).
 - (w) He made high places to other gods in every city of Judah (2 Ch 28:25).
- (2) From 2 Ki 16 we learn:
- (a) **2 Ki 16:1-11** 1 In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And he did not do what was right in the eyes of Yahweh his God, as his father David had done, 3 but he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even burned his son as an offering, according to the despicable practices of the nations whom Yahweh drove out before the people of Israel. 4 And he sacrificed and made offerings on the high places and on the hills and under every green tree. 5 Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to wage war on Jerusalem, and they besieged Ahaz but could not conquer him. 6 At that time Rezin the king of Syria recovered Elath for Syria and drove the men of Judah from Elath. And the Edomites came to Elath, where they dwell to this day. 7 So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria saying, I am your servant and your son. Come up and rescue me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are attacking me. 8 Ahaz also took the silver and gold that was found in the house of Yahweh and in the treasures of the king's house and sent a present to the king of Assyria. 9 And the king of Assyria listened to him. The king of Assyria marched up against Damascus and took it, carrying its people captive to Kir, and he killed Rezin. 10 When King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, he saw the altar that was at Damascus. And King Ahaz sent to Uriah the priest a model of the altar, and its pattern, exact in all its details. 11 And Uriah the priest built the altar.

3. Ahaz, as the current representative of the house of David, utterly fails the faith test.

- a. **Is 7:2** 2 When the house of David was told, Syria is in league with Ephraim, the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.
 - (1) The use of the phrase “house of David” instead of “Ahaz” is highly significant.
- b. See *The Davidic Covenant*.
- c. See *Unbelief*.

4. A comparison of Ahaz and Hezekiah is intended as a case study in faith.

- a. **Is 7:3** 3 And Yahweh said to Isaiah, Go out to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-jashub [“A Remnant Shall Return”] your son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field.
 - (1) This pool was a reservoir that held water from the Gihon Spring near Jerusalem. Ahaz was there to inspect Jerusalem's water supply in anticipation of the coming siege by Aram and Israel.

- (2) Until Hezekiah’s tunnel was completed, Jerusalem had no completely dependable source of water within its walls, so this would have been a matter of considerable concern (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 198-99).
- b. Ahaz and Hezekiah were confronted with a test of faith in the exact same spot.
 - (1) **Is 36:2** 2 The king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer’s Field.
 - (2) Is 7-39 is united around the theme of trust—trust in the nations or trust in God.

Ahaz versus Hezekiah

Ahaz	Hezekiah
Threatened by Syria and Israel	Threatened by Assyria
Faces terrible odds	Faces terrible odds
Challenged by Isaiah at the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller’s Field (Is 7:3)	Challenged by the Rabshakeh at the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller’s Field (Is 36:2)
Trusts in human might and power	Trusts in God, though not completely

5. Crises in our lives are opportunities for us to exercise phase two faith.

- a. **Is 7:4-9** 4 And say to him, Be careful, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remaliah. 5 Because Syria, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has devised evil against you saying, 6 Let us go up against Judah and terrify it, and let us split it open for ourselves, and set up the son of Tabeel as king in the midst of it. 7 Thus says Lord Yahweh: It shall not stand, and it shall not come to pass. 8 For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin. And within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered from being a people. 9 And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you [pl.] are not firm in faith (יָמַס), you [pl.] will not be established (יָמַס).
 - (1) “If you will not believe, you surely shall not last” (NASB). “If you do not stand firm in faith, you shall not stand at all” (NRSV).
 - (2) Isaiah gave this prophecy in 734 bc, so 65 years later was 669. When Assyria conquered Israel in 722, many Israelites were deported by Assyria (2 Ki 17:24). This was only 12 years later. However, in 669 many foreigners were transferred to Samaria by Ashurbanipal (Ezr 4:10) (J. A. Martin, *BKC*, 1:1047). It is to this resettlement that Isaiah’s prophecy refers.
 - (a) **Ezr 4:10** 10 ...The rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River.
- b. Phase Two Faith.
 - (1) **Ex 14:13** 13 Moses said to the people [Israel], Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of Yahweh that he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.
 - (2) **2 Ch 20:20** 20 Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in Yahweh your God, and you will be established. Believe his prophets, and you will succeed.

- c. This could have been Ahaz's shining moment, but he hasn't built up the capacity for phase two faith.
 - (1) We aren't told for sure whether Ahaz is a believer or unbeliever. If he is an unbeliever, he of course cannot exercise phase two faith, because he is still in phase zero. If he is a believer, he is an immature one who has not developed phase two faith.
 - (2) "Unless Ahaz comes to the point where he can believe in God's sovereignty to the extent of entrusting himself and his nation to God, he is doomed to live in the shaky, panicky condition he now experiences (v. 2). He need not enter into the terribly risky covenant with Assyria, if he will but take firm hold of the covenant which God offers. Assyria will not offer the security Ahaz wishes. Only through trusting in the present and ultimate veracity of God is any real security possible" (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:202).

6. Normally one shouldn't test God, but this is different. God orders Ahaz to test him.

- a. **Is 7:10-12** 10 Again Yahweh spoke to Ahaz: 11 Ask a sign (אִתָּךְ) of Yahweh your [pl.] God. Let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. 12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put Yahweh to the test (נִסֵּי).
 - b. The "your" in v. 11 signifies Yahweh is addressing the entire house of David.
 - c. Usually Ahaz's answer would be very good.
 - (1) **Dt 6:16** 16 You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah.
 - d. But here Ahaz's answer is very bad. God wants Ahaz to perform a sign for Ahaz in order that his faith may be strengthened. So Ahaz is testing God by not testing God!
 - e. Ahaz has already concluded that alliance with Assyria is his only hope.
 - f. Some interpreters believe this exchange is a big deal in the history of Judah: "your God" switches to "my God" in the next verse. Perhaps it was at this point that the Babylonian captivity (605-586 bc) was inevitable.

7. God gives Ahaz a sign he doesn't ask for—the virgin conception of the Messiah.

- a. **Is 7:13-15** 13 And he [Isaiah] said, Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you [pl.] to weary men, that you [pl.] weary my God also? 14 Therefore Yahweh himself will give you [pl.] a sign. Behold, the virgin (עַלְמָה) shall conceive and bear a son (בֶּן) and shall call his name Immanuel. 15 He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.
 - (1) The plural "yous" continue to show the whole house of David is being addressed.
- b. Who's the "son" in v. 14?
 - (1) An עַלְמָה is "an unmarried woman of marriageable age" (J. A. Martin, *BKC*, 1:1048).
 - (2) Some argue this prophecy has to do with one of Isaiah's sons and nothing to do with Jesus. According to this view, the "virgin" is Isaiah's wife. עַלְמָה should be translated "young woman." Also, vv. 16-17 clearly refer to Ahaz's contemporary situation. It is a stretch to say the referents in vv. 13-15 and vv. 16-17 are different.
 - (3) However:

- (a) עַלְמָה is never used of a married woman in the Old Testament.
- (b) The LXX translates this word *parthénos*, “virgin.”
- (c) How would Isaiah’s wife, not a virgin, conceiving and giving birth to a son be a sign? Young married women give birth to sons all the time. For the birth to be a sign, it must be a virgin birth. Otherwise it’s not a sign.
- (d) Isaiah’s wife had already given birth to one child, and her second is called “Maher-shalal-hash-baz,” not “Immanuel” (Is 8:3).
- (e) Other chapters in “The Book of Immanuel” (Is 7-12) clearly refer to the future Messianic king.
 - 1) **Is 9:6** 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- (f) Matthew asserts Jesus is the referent of Is 7:14.
 - 1) **Mt 1:22-23** 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel (which means, God with us).
- c. The Virgin Conception of Jesus.
 - (1) Given the failure of the house of David, it will take virgin conception for the Davidic covenant to be fulfilled. There will have to be a God-man within the house of David. Only the virgin birth can make this possible.
 - (2) **Mt 1:8-16** 8 ...Joram the father of Uzziah, 9 and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, 10 and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh... 16 and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Messiah.
 - (3) **Lk 3:23-31** 23 Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph... 31 the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David....
 - (a) In this genealogy there is no mention of Hezekiah, Ahaz, Jotham, or Uzziah.
- d. The Age of God-Consciousness.
 - (1) The phrase “when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good,” repeated twice by Yahweh, indicates there is an age of accountability, or God-consciousness, for every person.
 - (2) It is when a person reaches the age of God-consciousness that he or she is responsible to personally trust in Jesus for salvation.

8. Returning to the present, Isaiah gives Ahaz a sign about Syria, Israel, and Assyria.

- a. **Is 7:16-17** 16 For before the boy (בֶּן־יָמִים) [one of Isaiah’s sons] knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. 17 Yahweh will bring upon you, upon your people, and upon your father’s house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!
- b. The “boy” in v. 16 is a different person from the “son” of v. 14. Is 7:14-16 involves two or three children (with Calvin).
 - (1) Is 7:14-16 is about the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant through a sinless son of David who is virgin born. Is 7:15-16 is about preservation of the Davidic line in Ahaz’s day.

- c. The immediate sign relates to the speed with which Assyria will eliminate the threat from Syria and Israel.
 - (1) Ahaz is worried about Syria and Israel, but the real threat is Assyria!
 - (2) Rezin will be the last king of Aram, and Pekah will be the next-to-last king of Israel. Both died in 732 bc, two years after this prophecy.
 - (3) This corresponds to Isaiah's son, Shear-jashub, who is with Isaiah as he stands before Ahaz. Shear-jashub won't know to refuse the evil and choose the good in the next two years.
- d. Unbelief.
 - (1) In the crisis (invasion by Syria and Israel), Ahaz turns to a human solution (alliance with Assyria), not a divine solution (neutrality under God). But the human solution will become a far greater crisis than the original crisis.
 - (2) "From Ahaz's point of view Syria and Ephraim constitute a major threat, but from God's point of view they are negligible and need not occupy the king's time. It is not always easy to gain the divine perspective. Yet, unless we seek it, we are always in danger of paying too much attention to the passing and paying too little attention to the significant" (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 196).
- e. When we fail to see long-range issues and only see the short-range, we pay for our short-sightedness.
 - (1) New Zealand's primary and secondary students are deeply concerned about global warming, but the real threat is New Zealand's lackadaisical attitude toward God and the resulting breakup of the New Zealand family.

9. Four "in that days" follow, summarizing what will happen when Assyria invades.

- a. The first "in that day" indicates Judah will be filled with Egyptian and Assyrian soldiers.
 - (1) **Is 7:18-19** 18 In that day Yahweh will whistle for the fly that is at the end of the streams of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. 19 And they will all come and settle in the steep ravines, in the clefts of the rocks, on all the thornbushes, and on all the pastures.
 - (2) This is very similar to Da 11, where the kings of the north and the kings of the south struggle back and forth over "the beautiful land."
- b. The second "in that day" indicates Judah will be put to shame by the king of Assyria.
 - (1) **Is 7:20** 20 In that day Yahweh will shave with a razor that is hired beyond the River—with the king of Assyria—the head and the hair of the feet, and it will sweep away the beard also.
- c. The third "in that day" indicates surprising provision for the Jewish remnant.
 - (1) **Is 7:21-22** 21 In that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep, 22 and because of the abundance of milk that they give, he will eat curds, for everyone who is left in the land will eat curds and honey.
- d. The fourth "in that day" indicates the breakdown of the Judean economy.
 - (1) **Is 7:23-25** 23 In that day every place where there used to be a thousand vines, worth a thousand shekels of silver, will become briars and thorns. 24 With bow and arrows a man will come there, for all the land will be briars and thorns. 25 And as for all the hills that used to be hoed with a hoe, you will not come there

for fear of briars and thorns, but they will become a place where cattle are let loose and where sheep tread.

- (a) The abundance of milk is not good. With many animals dying, the farmer's young cow and two goats would have no young to nurse, and so the milk (and curds from it) would be plentiful for the people. Honey would also be abundant because wild flowers would grow in the desolate fields and bee swarms would be more plentiful (J. A. Martin, BKC, 1:1048).
- e. The phrase "in that day" does not always refer to the end times. Often it refers to a short-term day of judgment that prefigures the ultimate, long-term day of judgment.

10. Is 7 is a fulfillment of Is 6. Ahaz rejects Isaiah's message, and his heart is hardened.

- a. Judah's decline in the latter half of 8th century bc is due largely to Ahaz's lack of faith (Oswalt, *NICOT*, 1:175).

Notes