

## **AHAZ: A FAULTY KING & THE FUTURE MESSIAH**

Monday, October 2

Reading: 2 Kings 16; Isaiah 7

**Isaiah 7:11** "Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights." **12** But Ahaz said, "I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test." **13** Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also?"

King Ahaz does not follow God as his father Jotham and grandfather Uzziah had done. He worshipped idols and even sacrificed his own children to these false gods. Up north, the Assyrians are becoming a major threat and Aram (Syria) and Israel join forces against them. They try to force Ahaz to join their alliance but he refuses so they attack Judah and God allows them to be victorious. The Lord is using these attacks to call Ahaz back to Himself but instead Ahaz turns for help to Assyria (2 Kings 16).

God sends Isaiah the prophet to encourage the king that he need not fear the kings of Aram and Israel. "If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all" (7:9). God is promising victory if only Ahaz will obey. The Lord gives Ahaz a "blank check" to ask for any sign he wants. But in a false sense of piety, the wicked king refuses.

Since Ahaz refuses to accept God's offer, God Himself gives the king a sign - the sign of the coming Messiah (7:14). For Messiah to be born through the family of David (of which Ahaz was a member) it would have to survive this present crisis. The Child to be born is named Immanuel, which means "God with us." God is promising His presence with His people both now and in a greater way when Christ comes in a physical body to live among us.

Isaiah then uses the image of a child growing up to picture God's judgment. Before a newborn child could come of age (around 13) both Israel and Aram would be no more (7:15-16). This was literally fulfilled when Aram fell to Assyria 3 years later and Israel was destroyed about 12 years later. However, since Ahaz refused to trust God the Assyrians would come and invade Judah as well (7:17ff).

Ahaz's failure to trust God brought devastating results. While his two current enemies would be destroyed, God would bring in the very one he had turned to for help to judge the nation - the king of Assyria (7:17). Someone has said that it was like a mouse (Ahaz) attacked by two rats (Israel & Aram) squeaking for the cat (Assyria) to come save him. The cat did! But the mouse ended up as dessert.

### **POINTS TO PONDER:**

1. Who do you sometimes turn to for help instead of first turning to the Lord? When has a failure to trust God been costly in your life?
2. Too often we seek God as our last resort when all our plans and efforts fail. God needs to be our FIRST recourse at all times. Everything we do must be bathed in prayer and guidance from His Word. The key to this is IMMANUEL. If we have trusted Christ as Savior then "God is with us" – through the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and convicts, guides, and strengthens us in our daily lives.