

Who Will You Trust?

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[0:00] Isaiah chapter 7, verse 1. When Ahaz, son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, the king of Judah, king Rezan of Aram, and Pekah son of Remiel, king of Israel, marched up to fight against Jerusalem, but they could not overpower it.

Now the house of David was told, Aram has allied itself with Ephraim. So the hearts of Ahaz and his people were shaken as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind.

Then the Lord said to Isaiah, Go out, you and your son, Shurjushub, to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the upper pool on the road to the washerman's field.

Say to him, Be careful, keep calm, and don't be afraid. Do not lose heart because of these two smoldering stubs of firewood, because of the fierce anger of Rezan and Aram and the sons of Remiel.

Aram, Ephraim, and Remiel's son have plotted your ruin, saying, Let us invade Judah. Let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves, and make the son of Tabil king over it.

[1:18] Yet, this is what the sovereign Lord says. It will not take place. It will not happen. For the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is only Rezan.

Within 65 years, Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people. The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is only Remiel's son. If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.

Again, the Lord spoke to Ahaz, Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights. But Ahaz said, I will not ask.

I will not put the Lord to the test. 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?

Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin will be with child, and will give birth to a son, and will call him Emmanuel.

[2:22] He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right. But before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

The Lord will bring on you and on your people and on the house of your father a time unlike any since Ephraim broke away from Judah. He will bring the king of Assyria.

In that day the Lord will whistle for flies from the distant streams of Egypt and for bees from the land of Assyria. They will all come and settle in the steep ravines and in the crevices and the rocks, on all the thorn bushes and on all the water holes.

In that day the Lord will use a razor hired from beyond the river, the king of Assyria, to shave your head and the hair of your legs and to take off your beards also.

In that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two goats. And because of the abundance of the milk they give, he will have curds to eat. All who remain in the land will eat curds and honey.

[3:28] In that day in every place where there were a thousand vines worth a thousand silver shekels, there will be only briars and thorns. Men will go there with bow and arrow, for the land will be covered with briars and thorns.

As for all the hills once cultivated by the hoe, you will no longer go there for fear of the briars and thorns. They will become places where cattle are turned loose and where sheep run.

This is the word of the Lord. Well, we began our study of this book of Isaiah by starting with chapter 6, the call of Isaiah to this ministry.

And then we went through the first five chapters that formed an extensive introduction and summary of the book with its lessons.

And especially we got to see the sad spiritual state of Judah as a nation. And we now come to the next section in this book, chapters 7 through 12.

[4:44] They belong together. Sometimes these six chapters are called the book of Emmanuel because in them they reveal so many wonderful things about the Lord Jesus, our Emmanuel, our God with us.

Now today we come to chapter 7. King Ahaz is on the throne in Judah. He was just 20 years old when he became king.

So he's a young man and it was as a young man that he faced a crisis in his life that was just as defining, even more defining to the nation of Judah than 9-11 was to us.

He faced as a young man a crisis that would prove to be the ultimate test of his faith. Who or what would he trust in?

God or man? And that always is the question forced upon us by our trials. Will we trust in God or will we lean upon men?

[5:57] It's always the most important thing about our trials. James tells us trials come to test what? Our faith. Our faith.

Trials come threatening some loss in our life. It may be the loss of a relationship, the loss of a loved one, the loss of money, of security or safety, maybe the loss of comfort and ease, the loss of a dream, the loss of a desire.

But these trials threaten the loss of something in our lives. And they expose the weakness found within us.

They expose our insufficiency to deal with it. They reveal our inability to cope with it, to control our lives and to create life as we want it.

They make us feel our need for help. And so these God-ordained tests are ever bringing us to this most basic question, to whom will we go for our needed help?

[7:10] Well, by nature we trust in man. By nature we lean on our own understanding. We devise human strategies of self-rescue. But by grace we trust in God.

By grace we rest in His promises and rely on His love. Now I'm going to tell you a story about a king, Ahaz, and his trial and his crisis of faith.

But I don't want you to lose sight of your trials and the ultimate issue of where are you leaning for help in your trial.

Well, we begin with the threat. What was the problem? What was the thing that was threatening King Ahaz and Judah? Well, it was an invasion of two stronger kingdoms from the north.

Aram, also called Syria, and Israel, those ten tribes that broke away from Judah, the northern kingdom. Those two kingdoms, Aram and Israel to the north, were threatening and were invading Judah.

[8:27] Now I'm going to talk about four different nations right up front so we don't get them confused, all right? So the threat to Judah, you've got Aram to the north, Israel in the middle, and Judah in the south.

And the threat to Judah was these two northern kings. You say there was a fourth nation. Yes, there was Assyria to the east.

And Assyria was the growing superpower in Isaiah's day. It was expanding in strength and in land holdings and in power. Over here it was growing.

And Aram and Israel could read the handwriting on the wall that they are going to go westward and swallow them up. So rather than having Assyria come and just devour them like dominoes, first Aram and then Israel and then Judah, Israel and Aram formed an alliance.

Let's stand together and we'll fight against Assyria together. We'll be stronger together than if we stayed apart. So they formed an alliance of the two nations.

[9:42] But they wanted Judah as well to join that alliance. So the whole Palestinian western side of Palestine would be joined together in this alliance. And Judah resisted.

And she refused to join in the anti-Assyrian alliance. And that's why Aram and Israel were attacking Judah.

They were seeking to force them to join in their alliance. And so they invaded Judah. They inflicted heavy casualties and losses. But they could not overpower Jerusalem, its capital, and force them into joining their anti-Assyrian alliance.

You can read about that. Verse 1 refers to it. You can read more about it in 2 Kings 16 and 2 Chronicles 28. That's the background of this threat.

But now, in verse 2, the troops of Aram and Israel were swarming to make a second invasion down into Judah and to finish the job on her.

[10:52] Now, to rightly understand this threat, we need to remember God's covenant with David way back in 2 Samuel chapter 7.

There, God promised that he would build a house for David, a dynasty of kings. He said, So by the time of Isaiah, David's throne had been established for about 275 years.

That's more than we've been a nation. And for all those years, David and then his descendants, his offspring, had been seated upon the throne of David, ruling in Judah.

Ahaz is now the 13th king sitting on David's throne. But would he be the last? Well, if the two neighbors to the north had their way, he will be the last.

He will be the last. We hear Aram and Israel plotting his ruin in verse 6. They say, Let us invade Judah. Let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves and make the son of Tabeel king over it.

[12:29] Now, whoever this son of Tabeel is, he's no king of David. That's the important thing. He's not one of the descendants of David.

We've had 13 kings after David. And son of Tabeel is not a king from David. So we see they're not just plotting Ahaz's destruction.

Aram and Israel to the north are out to destroy the very line of David once and for all from reigning in Judah. God's own promise is at stake here.

His great purpose for the world, that he would bring forth this king, this son of David, who would save his people and would save them from all the nations of the world.

That great promise is being threatened here. Now, verse 2 tells us that this threat from the north had the hearts of Ahaz and his people shaken by fear, just like the trees of the forest shake, are shaken by the wind.

[13:40] You look outside and see the trees swaying. That's the way it was inside in King Ahaz's heart and in all Judah. Paralyzing, panic, controlling fear.

Now, it's the Lord's kindness that is seen next in sending Isaiah and his son on a faith-building mission to King Ahaz. Trembling Ahaz.

Ahaz, do you know, my friend, that the Lord knows your trials? The Lord knows your threats. The Lord knows your fears. And he comes to you with faith-building words.

Isaiah is to find the king where? Well, at the end of the aqueduct, by the upper pool on the road to the washerman's field. You say, what's so significant about that place?

Well, that's the most vulnerable place of the city of Jerusalem. It's her water supply. And Ahaz is clearly worrying about how Jerusalem will fare when the enemy comes and besieges her.

[14:49] How will we get water? He's nervous. He's worried. Now, why did Isaiah take his son along? Well, because of his name. And so he comes to King Ahaz there by the aqueduct, the pool, the upper pool, and says, Ahaz, have you met my son?

Here he is. The remnant will return. That's why he's there, because of his name. That's what his name means. The remnant will return. Every time you said his name, you said the remnant will return.

So he's there. And he's there as an object lesson to King Ahab. Both of God's judgment, the population's going to be reduced to a remnant, but also of God's grace, the remnant will return. And so he takes his son with him. The remnant will return. And he brings this word, faith-building words. He's to say to Ahaz, be careful, keep calm, and don't be afraid.

Verse 4. Be careful, keep calm, and don't be afraid. Here we see in the second place the real danger. Because you see, the real danger is not Aram or Israel, nor Assyria for that matter.

[16:06] The real danger to Ahaz is Ahaz himself. What he is to watch out for, what he's to be careful of, is not the enemy, nations to the north.

He's to watch out for himself, for his own fear and unbelief. Lest he act out of that fear rather than acting out of faith in God.

That's his real danger. And friends, you know, that's the real danger we have in our trials. It's not your threatening health problem.

It's not your threatening relationship problem, your financial problem, your situation, whatever it is. It's you. You are your greatest danger in trials.

It's your fear. Fearful times are dangerous times. We don't think straight when we're fearful. And paralyzed with fear.

[17:05] We're in danger of sinful responses. We're in danger of responding in the many ways that our own fears and unbelief would suggest to us. And it's frightening to see what our own unbelief is capable of producing in our lives.

We'll see what it produces in Ahaz's life. Controlled by fear, Ahaz will lean on his own understanding. He will lean on his own strategies and God replacements instead of trusting God and His promises.

He'll look to other nations and other gods for help. But he will not look to the Lord. Be careful. Keep calm. And don't be afraid. We need to hear that. That recurring call to us in our trials lest they carry our minds and hearts away into leaning on something other than the Lord Himself.

Don't be afraid. You know that's the most repeated command in all of Scripture. We must have a problem with fear. Fear must be fairly common.

[18:22] It must get us into a lot of trouble. Yes, it does. And that's why God keeps saying over and over, fear not, fear not, fear not. And if God ever says to you, dear Christian, fear not, then there's every reason not to fear.

And there's no reason to be afraid. Fear makes us forget certain realities that would drive out fear. And so we come in the third place to God's promises. That's what drives out fear. The Lord's promises. He says at the end of verse 4, do not lose heart.

Don't fear, don't lose heart. Why? Because of these two smoldering stubs of firewood. So what is Aram and Israel together?

What are these two angry nations to the north, really, that are causing so much panic in Judah?

Well, there are two smoldering stubs of firewood.

[19:23] So you've had a bonfire and it's over and the flames have died out. And all that's left is just a couple sticks and the stick ends.

The rest has all been consumed. But out here in the end, there's just a couple sticks and they're smoking. Scary, isn't it? No. No, it's just a couple smoldering, burnt ends of firewood.

That's all Aram and Israel is, God's telling Judah. They're spent. Their power is gone. They're on their way out. There's nothing here to be afraid of.

God says through Isaiah, oh, I know that they've plotted your ruin and I know what they're saying about you. They're saying, let's attack. Let's invade Judah. Let's tear it apart.

Let's divide it among ourselves and make the son of Tabeel king over it. Yes, I've heard what they say but now let me tell you what I say. I, the sovereign Lord, say, verse 7, it will not take place.

[20:31] It will not happen. Aren't those comforting words? The very thing that's threatening them. It will not happen. God tells Ahaz.

These mighty kings after all are only men whose breath is in their nostrils. Of what account are they? They're just two smoldering stubs of firewood and I can snuff them out at any moment.

In fact, within 65 years, they will not, Ephraim will not even be a people.

They will be too shattered to be a people. Ephraim being Israel, one of the neighbors to the north. Israel will be shattered. They'll no longer be a people. They're on their way out so don't be afraid of them.

What they plot will not happen. What you fear is not going to take place. What are human threats in the face of divine promises, brothers and sisters? Whatever your threat, what are they in the face of divine promises?

[21:39] When man's plans collide with God's plans, who wins? Well, it's not even a competition.

The psalmist says in Psalm 33, 11, the Lord foils the plans of the nations but the plans of the Lord stand firm forever. So, don't be afraid.

these nations are on their way out. God sends this encouraging word to build the faith of Ahab, King Ahaz, I mean, and to drive out his fear and unbelief.

And brothers and sisters, our times of fear and our times of trials are times when we need a serious dose of God's promises. promises. We need to come to something that will feed our faith and will drive out fear and that's the word of God.

It's the promises of God. I wonder, have you memorized any of these faith-feeding promises for your present trials? Are you reviewing them?

[22:47] Are you meditating on them? When fear and worry come into your mind, do you push it out with a promise? Do you have them? Are they on your tip of your tongue? Are they in your mind?

Are they hidden in your heart? That you might not sin against God by worry and fear. Brothers, we can't afford to be without the promises of God in our trials.

Ahaz has brought a promise of God and here he is in this test of faith. Would he believe the promises of God?

Would he rely on him to save Judah from her enemies? Or would he trust in man, himself or others? Would he commit, in other words, to salvation by works or salvation by faith?

How he responds will carry huge circumstances, not only for him but for the whole nation, the whole house of David. We see that at the end of verse 9. If you do not stand firm in your faith, you won't stand at all.

[23:54] There's only one way to stand and it's by faith. And so if you stand firm in the faith, you'll stand. But if you put trust in someone other than God, the Lord, you won't stand.

You simply won't stand. There is no salvation by works. There is only salvation and deliverance by faith. And so Calvin says we must believe the promises of God or it is vain for us to expect salvation.

That's the third point, the Lord's promise. We come then to Ahaz's unbelief, number four. Because Ahaz did not believe the words of God.

He continued on in his unbelief. So verse 10 tells us again the Lord spoke to Ahaz. Christ. Is it not a great kindness in God that when we do not believe his promise that he would stoop to our weakness and bring us another one?

That he would speak again to us? When we've already offended his truthfulness by I can't trust that promise, he comes again in grace and speaks another word of encouragement to our faith.

[25:14] He knows our frame. He knows that we're just dust. And so again the Lord spoke to Ahaz. And this time he says through his prophet Isaiah, verse 11, ask the Lord your God for a sign whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.

The Lord comes and he's willing to stoop down to the depths of Ahaz's unbelief. He stoops to his weakness and he's willing to give him a sign to strengthen and confirm God's promise that doesn't need confirming.

Amazing kindness to King Ahaz. So ask the Lord for a sign. You choose. He had done this with Gideon, with Moses, with others of his servants, and he lets Ahaz choose the sign, whether in the heights, the highest heights, or the lowest depths.

God is willing to move heaven and earth to confirm faith in Ahaz's heart, to help him to believe.

Ahaz's son, Hezekiah, will later be king, and he will have a sign given to him in which God literally does move heaven and earth, for he made the sun's shadow go backwards ten steps on the sundial.

Well, that's what a sign is. It's a phenomenal thing. It's a phenomena. It's a supernatural thing that, wow, God will do what he says.

[26:54] So he offers such a sign to King Ahaz. Now, it's a command. It's not a suggestion. Ask is an imperative. Ask the Lord for a sign, and you choose what it will be.

He must obey it. He must ask, but Ahaz refuses to ask, showing he didn't want to believe the promise. He didn't want help believing, and he tries to hide his unbelief in pious-sounding words.

Verse 12, I will not test the Lord. I will not ask. I will not put the Lord to the test. Well, it's not putting the Lord to the test when he commands you to ask him for a sign.

That's called obedience. Faith is always seen by its fruit of obedience. Unbelief is seen by its fruit of disobedience. Ahaz is not really concerned about putting the Lord to the test.

All you need to do is read 2 Kings 16 and 2 Chronicles 28, and you'll learn there that this man worshipped the Baals. Evidently, he wasn't concerned about offending God.

[28:04] God, he caused his sons to pass through the fire and sacrificing them to the gods. He worshipped on every high hill, built altars to other gods, and led Judah astray.

And yet here this hypocrite pretends to be too holy to ask God for a sign. I will not put him to the test. And then he turns around and he justifies what he's just done.

He leans on his own understanding. He will not trust in God. And then he tries to call evil good. The evil of his unbelief he calls not putting the Lord to the test.

You see. Well, God is not fooled. He is tempting God by not asking for a sign, by disobeying God.

And listen to the harsh word he receives in verse 13. Here now, you house of David, not just you, King Ahaz, but the whole of you, the whole house of David, are in the same condition.

[29:14] Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also? Do you know our disobedience tries God's patience?

God's need to do you know our God's God's What Ahaz did was to trust in Assyria, the growing superpower, Instead of trusting in the Lord.

You can read of it in 2 Kings. This is all about his unbelief, point four. He sent messengers over here to the king of Assyria, this growing superpower. And he says, I am your servant and vassal. Come up and save me out of the hand of the king of Aram and the king of Israel who are attacking me. And he emptied the treasuries of the palace and of the temple to pay him off and to hire him to come over and attack his neighbors to the north and thereby relieve the threat that they were posing upon invading him.

Well, Assyria agreed and came and attacked Aram and destroyed its capital, deported its people and killed its king. And then they came on down south into Israel and destroyed Israel and took them into captivity and they became no more of people.

[30:38] But looking to Assyria for help would come back to bite King Ahaz. As one commentator put it, to make an alliance with Assyria was to take a tiger by the tail.

World empires don't have allies. They have only puppets that they exploit for their own purposes. So when Ahaz sought his help, the king of Assyria came to him, but scripture says he gave him trouble instead of help.

In the time of his trouble, Ahaz trusted in other nations and other gods, but not in the only one who could help him, the Lord himself. And this misplaced trust in man would be his downfall and the downfall of the nations as we'll see in a moment.

Now through his unbelief, Ahaz sold off the Davidic kingship in Judah. Though kings would still reign in Jerusalem, they would not be true kings reigning in sovereignty over their nation like David did.

They'd be puppet kings, pretend kings, who themselves are only able to reign by the permission of the great Assyria or Babylon or Persia or Greece or Rome or whoever the conquering power would be.

[32:05] But from this day on, Ahaz is the last of the sovereign, reigning kings of David. He sold off the kingship by trusting in man rather than trusting in the Lord.

And though Ahaz's unbelief brought true Davidic kings to an end, God's sign, which is to follow, shows how that he will now himself undertake to restore the kingship to David's line and bring salvation to Judah himself.

So we come to the Lord's sign, the Lord's sign, familiar words, therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign, since you won't choose a sign in obedience to my command, the Lord himself will give you a sign, the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Emmanuel. That's the sign of God. The whole house of David is here spoken to and they're told that this is the sign.

And it's specifically designed to assure Ahaz and Judah that the line of David cannot and will not be terminated. Now the NIV unfortunately drops a word here that is behold.

[33:26] The Lord himself will give you a sign, behold, the virgin will be with. What I'm about to tell you, this sign is an amazing thing to behold. Now all kind of and the sign is a virgin will be pregnant, a virgin will give birth to a son, and the virgin will call him Emmanuel.

Now all kinds of efforts have been made to try to take the supernatural out of this verse. To say, oh the word doesn't really mean virgin, it just means a young married woman will have a baby.

But what's so amazing about, no offense Sarah and Barry's, it is an amazing thing, I understand that whenever any child comes into the world, it's amazing, but it happens all the time.

What's the big deal? What's the big sign if all it is is that a young married woman will have a baby? No, if a virgin, if a virgin as a virgin has a baby, that's something to stop and behold.

That's an amazing sign. That's moving heaven and earth to do something as a sign to confirm faith. So, this is a one-of-a-kind birth.

[34:46] It's a supernatural birth. And that's just the sign suited to the circumstances Judah was facing. Two nations were threatening to cut off the Davidic kings in Judah.

And the sign shows how committed God is to his promise to David. he will use any means, even supernatural means, to maintain and fulfill his promise.

He will even cause a virgin to conceive in order to raise up a son to David who would reign on David's throne. There's nothing to fear. From the northern alliance of nations, God will do whatever it takes, even making a virgin have this supernatural birth.

And then secondly, we're told of the supernatural son to be born. He's no ordinary son either, no ordinary birth, no ordinary son. He'll be called Emmanuel, which means God.

No, it means God. Think of that, God with us. And again, scholars have tried to take God out of that. [36:00] It's just a prayer, a hope that God will be with us in some abstract way. No, no, the sign is a supernatural birth and a supernatural son who is none other than God with us.

He himself is God. And so in him being with us, God is with us. Two chapters later, Isaiah will tell us more about this child.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God.

Mighty God. God wasn't kidding when he said this son will be God with us. He will be Mighty God, the name for God himself. He will be God.

And he will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom forever. So 700 years later, the New Testament opens with a birth of Mary's baby.

[37:10] And after the description of the birth, Matthew says, quoting from Isaiah, all this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet.

The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, which means God with us. There is no question what the sign was.

The virgin was Mary. Indeed, Matthew goes on to say that she had no union with, that Joseph had no union with her until she gave birth to a son.

It was a supernatural birth and it was a supernatural son. It was God with us because Jesus is God. And so his presence brings God to his people in a unique one-of-a-kind way.

The eternal God, the eternal word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He's with us to save us.

Now this birth of the virgin born son who is God is the sign that is given to take away all fear of these two nations who are threatening to bring the Davidic line of David to an end in Judah.

[38:36] You don't need to be afraid. If need be, God will raise up a son. Indeed, he will and he'll do it through a virgin and he will be God with us. Again, Isaiah says these threatening two kings will not be around for long.

He's called them two smoldering sticks of firewood. Now he says the time it takes for this future son who is to be born, the time it takes in his childhood development from birth to the point where he discerns good and evil.

You parents know that doesn't take very long before your kids know what no means. From the time of his birth to the time when this child will know the good from the evil and choose the good and reject the wrong.

He uses that time as a measurement how long these two kings will be around. In verse 16, even before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

It's a very short period of time and indeed within two to three years these nations were decimated! They were by Assyria who came over as being paid off to come over and they came and they decimated!

[39:56] Israel and Aram ending that threat to Judah. Now Ahaz might have thought that his hiring the king of Assyria was a success because he came and he indeed removed the threat of Aram and Israel to the north.

They're no longer going to invade me. They're history. But if he thought that he was mistaking because verse 17 says the Lord will bring on you Ahaz and on your people and on the house of your father at time unlike any since Ephraim broke away from Judah he will bring the king of Assyria.

When he hired the king of Assyria he unleashed a whirlwind. He had the tiger by the tail and Assyria would not be content to just merely come over and devour up Aram and devour up Israel.

No he would continue southward and devour Judah as well. you wanted Assyria you shall have Assyria but not as the hope for a savior you thought she would be but as your own destroyer your

own destroyer.

Ahaz had chosen the king of Assyria as his trust and now he learns that the result would be not security but disaster. 200 years earlier the house of David lost 10 of the 12 tribes to the northern kingdom of Israel.

[41 : 39] That was a devastating disaster to the house of David. To lose 10 twelfths of your kingdom. But what's going to happen next will be a greater disaster than that.

you will lose the sovereignty of rulership altogether as you go into captivity and as you become the subjects of mightier nations.

And what we find is that the God substitutes that men trust in becomes the things that destroy them. They thought Assyria would save them. In the end Assyria destroyed them.

The things we trust in to get us out of help become the things that harm us. When they pull us away from trust in the only helper there is.

There is no salvation by works that does not lead to judgment. And so the rest of the chapter takes up this coming disaster under Assyria. Four times it mentions in that day this will happen.

[42 : 40] And it speaks about the land and the people of Judah and how it will be completely and totally occupied and devastated. The land occupied by all these Assyrians.

The Lord will just whistle and in they will come like bees and they'll fill every nook and cranny. There will be no safe hiding place anywhere. And the people will be humiliated by the Assyrians.

They're a hired razor and the Lord will use this razor to just shave every bit of hair off of their bodies. that was a sign of disgrace. The one they sought to save them from disgrace would be the instrument God would use to disgrace them.

We always are brought to disgrace when we trust in anything other than the Lord. But whoever trusts in the Lord will never be brought to disgrace and shame.

So the people would be humbled, humiliated, impoverished. Indeed, just a small, just a few animals will be enough to feed everyone.

[43 : 57] The population will be so depopulated that just a couple animals will keep them alive. So the land and the people decimated by the coming Assyrian disaster.

all because Ahaz failed the test. He chose to trust in Assyria rather than in the Lord. He chose wrong and he reaped and his nation reaped the consequences.

I want to imply this as we conclude. So God has come to us in our trials today. He's met us this morning with all of our fears. We all have them.

Things that are being threatened in our life. And he comes to meet us with faith strengthening words. Isn't he kind?

He knows our trials. He knows what we're wrestling with. He comes to help us. He's found us worrying, feeling our weakness and helplessness.

[45 : 01] Well who will we turn for to help today? Today. In dealing with my problem today. This week. Will I lean on God or man?

That's the real issue in chapter 7. Can God be trusted to do all that he said he would do? All that he promised to do? And can he be trusted in your trial?

Even when circumstances seem to say no. Can you trust him? Is God in his grace sufficient for you? Well the Lord answers us in Isaiah chapter 7.

We have a God who if needs be will take our humanity and be born of a virgin in order to fulfill his promise and save his people.

That's how committed he is to his promise. That's how unfailing his love is for his people. He's all in on this.

[46 : 03] All that he is will be exercised to see that it's done even if it means a virgin's womb. He doesn't need favorable circumstances to fulfill his promise.

An unpromising womb of a virgin will do just fine. This is your God brother. This is your God sister. You can safely trust him. That's what Isaiah is telling us in chapter 7. He's willing to do something new. He's willing to have this supernatural birth to bring this supernatural son God with us to fulfill his promises of salvation.

Now here's the thing that hits me between the eyes. If the very announcement of this sign to those people in Ahaz was to be enough to drive out fear and to anchor their trust in God's promises.

What should it be for us who live on this side of the sign actually happening? The sign has come to pass.

[47:15] The virgin has conceived. She has brought forth a son. And that son is none other than God with us. He's come. And if the announcement of it was meant to chase every fear from their heart, why should my fears not be driven out with the accomplishment of this sign?

God will do even more if need be.

If in order to keep his promise to save, he needs to humble himself and go to the cross, bearing our sin and our disgrace and our judgment to save his people from their sins according to his promise, then he will do it.

And we've seen him do that as well, haven't we? He literally went from the highest height to the lowest depth.

What a sign to us to assure us that his promises to save his people will be fulfilled. To save you in that trial.

[48:37] To help you there to live by faith and not by works or by sight. And if he needs to, he'll come back from heaven.

First, if he needs to, he'll raise his son from the dead and he'll enthrone him on high where he'll send grace to his people and if need be, he'll come back from heaven to destroy all of his and our enemies and to raise our bodies from the dust to fulfill his promises.

So that everything will be just as he said it was. We have a God who will stop at nothing to keep his promise. He'll punish his own God with a son.

He'll condemn him to save us in order to keep his promise. And Paul says if he did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, is that not enough to drive out all fear of whether or not God will give me enough in my trial today to persevere in hope and faith and trust in my Savior?

Oh, be encouraged by this sign, brothers and sisters. Be encouraged by this Savior who has come. He is God with us. Yes.

[50:00] The very spirit of the God with us man is in us. We who are believers have in a most unique way God with us.

The fullness of the deity dwells in him. Yes, and he dwells in us by his spirit. This is the ultimate ally. Who do you want as your ally against life's threats?

How about God, the ever-present ally? How about the God who lives in you? And so there's this ever-present ally for all of your needs, this fullness of grace that's found in him.

So if God be for us, know if God be with us, know if God be in us, who can be against us?

So be gone, all fears. Be gone, all misplaced trust in man. Be done looking for substitute saviors and human strategies of self-rescue.

[51:07] We have the living God. We have the King of kings whose word shapes the destinies of men and nations. And he's the one who's committed to never stop doing us good, to never stop loving us, to never stop caring for us in all of our trials.

Shall we right now bring our fears to him? Shall we right now lay them before his throne and abandon all of our self-trust and ways we've leaned on our own understanding?

Shall we cast ourselves afresh upon the Savior this morning, right now? Let's pray. You do it there in your seat, I'll do it here in my pulpit. what a Savior.

Let's bring him our fears and let's cast ourselves afresh upon him. You pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Lord, we've seen your kindness in coming to doubting people, coming with words of faith and signs to encourage and confirm that faith.

And we thank you for the way you've met us again this day with a word from heaven to encourage us. Thank you for this wonderful, amazing sign that you gave. Thank you for the amazing person.

[52:49] who is that sign and who fulfills that sign. But God with us, Christ, Emmanuel. Forgive us for our unbelief.

Forgive us for leaning on the arm of the flesh. Forgive us for our foolish fears and make him more real to us today and make more real to us your commitment to do whatever it takes to keep your promise to save us.

May you be our all and only trust for we need no other. We ask in Jesus' powerful name. Amen. We sing our response to this text in number 420.

420. Stand with me as we sing. blessed Lord in thee is refuge safety for my trembling soul.

Power to lift my head when drooping midst the angry billows roll. I will trust thee.

[54:17] I will trust thee. I will trust thee. All my life thou shall control.

All my life thou shall control. In the past too unbelieving midst the tempest I have been.

And my heart has slowly trusted what my eyes have never seen.
blessed blessed Jesus blessed Jesus blessed Jesus teach me on thine arm to lead teach me on
thine arm to lead!
Oh for trust that brings the triumph when defeating strangely near!
[55 : 38] Oh for faith that changes fighting into victory's ringing cheer!
Faith triumphant, faith triumphant, faith triumphant, knowing not defeat nor fear, knowing not defeat
nor fear.
That's true because of who he is. Let's go on worshiping and speaking of him today. Amen. Amen.
Amen.