

# ISAIAH: GOD'S DIRECTIVE TO THOSE TROUBLED AT GOVERNMENTAL APOSTASY

## Part VI: God's Salvation From Intimidating Government Forces

(Isaiah 7:1-25)

### I. Introduction

- A. Even ethical government officials are tempted at times to yield to political pressures from constituents or to other influential officials when doing what is right contrasts with the will of these parties.
- B. The prophet, Isaiah was sent by God to minister to Judah's king Ahaz who faced such intimidation to godless pressures, and we can learn from his message how to address such pressures in our era as well:

### II. God's Salvation From Intimidating Government Forces, Isaiah 7:1-25.

- A. King Ahaz faced a personally life-threatening crisis if he refused to heed godless pressures of officials:
  1. King Pekah of the Northern Kingdom of Israel had joined king Rezin of Syria to rebel against the tributes exacted by the growing dominion of Assyria.
  2. They wanted to press Ahaz of Judah into joining in their opposition to Assyria, and were minded to attack Judah, assassinate Ahaz and set up their own puppet king in his place were Ahaz to refuse to join in their league, cf. 2 Kings 16:5-8; 2 Chronicles 28:5-21 with Isaiah 7:5-6.
  3. When news of this plan came to Ahaz and the people of Judah, he and his people were terrified: they were left either (a) joining Syria and Israel to rebel against the powerful Assyrians and incur almost certain war, or (b) joining the Assyrians in opposition to the Mosaic Law (cf. Deut. 7:2) and suffering reprisals from God, Syria and Israel, or (c) just trusting in God by faith for their welfare, Isaiah 7:2!
- B. God thus sent the prophet, Isaiah to king Ahaz with a helpful plan out of Ahaz's dilemma, Isaiah 7:4-11:
  1. Through Isaiah, God urged Ahaz to stay courageous by thinking in **God's way** of thinking:
    - a. Isaiah called upon Ahaz to **be careful** not to act rashly in dread apart from God's will and Word out of fear from the words of his threatening opponents in Pekah and Rezin, Isaiah 7:4a NIV, ESV.
    - b. Isaiah called upon Ahaz to **stay quiet, calm** with God's words through Isaiah, Isa. 7:4b NIV, ESV.
    - c. Isaiah urged Ahaz to **avoid** being **afraid**, Isaiah 7:4c.
    - d. Isaiah told Ahaz to remain **courageous** through heeding Isaiah's prophetic oracle, Isaiah 7:4d.
  2. God's way of thinking included the prophetic oracle through Isaiah that Syria was headed by a mere and doomed man in Resin (7:7a-8a with 7:4), and that Israel was headed by a mere and doomed man in Pekah (7:8b-9 with 7:4), making their threat to topple Ahaz for not submitting to their plan to rebel against Assyria an empty one, Isaiah 7:5-6, 7. [In 65 years, God revealed Israel would be so shattered it would no longer be a people; this prediction was fulfilled when Assyria invaded and deported many Hebrews only to replace them with Gentiles, cf. Bible Knowledge Commentary, O.T., p. 1047.]
  3. Isaiah also claimed Ahaz should not disbelieve this oracle or he would suffer defeat as a king, 7:9b.
  4. Finally, God offered Ahaz the opportunity of asking for a supernatural sign to bolster his faith in God's prophetic oracle through Isaiah, Isaiah 7:10-11.
- C. Yet, Ahaz decided to join with Assyria instead of trusting in the Lord (implied through the prophecy of Isaiah 7:17-25). Ahaz accordingly refused to ask God for such a faith-bolstering sign, Isaiah 7:12.
- D. In grace, the Lord through Isaiah gave such a sign **anyway**, Isaiah 7:14-16:
  1. Isaiah predicted a virgin would have a child, but that before the child would mature, both Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Syria would be gone from power, Isaiah 7:14-16.
  2. I hold that this prediction contains a **double** fulfillment: (a) A virgin in **Isaiah's** day would wed, have a son, and the boy would be still young when Pekah and Rezin would be killed; indeed, in three years, Tiglath-Pileser II destroyed Damascus in 732 B. C., Ibid., p. 1048. (b) The prediction anticipates the **virgin conception and virgin BIRTH** of Christ, "God with Us," Jesus Christ, cf. Matt. 1:18-21, 22-25.

***Lesson:*** When faced by godless, threatening pressures from government officials, the believer should (1) **AVOID** making **RASH** reactionary decisions, (2) **but RATHER** (a) stay calm and (b) courageous (c) and **HEED SCRIPTURE** for **GOD'S** richest blessing!

***Application:*** Overcoming intimidating forces in government arises from **HIDING** in the **INFINITE POWER** and **INSIGHT** of **ALMIGHTY GOD!** Since God is **BIGGER** than government officials, we must rely upon **HIM** and **HIS INSIGHT** for the confidence and direction we need at such times!