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Isaiah 7 - 8



Isaiah - Steve Gregg

Isaiah 7-8 is a well-known passage, but it's also one of the most misunderstood passages in the Bible. In this recording, Steve Gregg breaks down the chapter and provides valuable insight into its meaning. He discusses the importance of trusting God rather than earthly sources of security, the prophecy of a child being born who will bring an end to threats from other nations, and the significance of the seal of God. Gregg's interpretation sheds light on the deeper meaning of this chapter and how it still applies today.

Transcript

Let's turn to Isaiah chapter 7 where we have what is one of the best known and perhaps one of the most misunderstood passages in Isaiah, the famous passage about the Virgin and her Son. The setting for that is in a conversation between Isaiah and the king Ahaz who was not one of the good king of Judah. And Ahaz was afraid.

He was afraid of two things. One, as king of Judah he was threatened by Assyria which was basically conquering and annexing all the smaller countries in that region and therefore Judah was in danger of being conquered and swallowed up too by Assyria. On the other hand there was something else more immediately to fear and that was that the kingdom of Israel to the north and the kingdom of Syria which were adjacent small kingdoms to the north of him were conspiring together to start a pact to resist Assyria by their combined forces and not thinking themselves adequate with just the two of them they wanted Judah to get involved in this pact too.

Well apparently Ahaz was not confident that joining that pact would form a strong enough alliance to really resist someone as big and powerful as Assyria and might just bring the wrath of Assyria upon them as Assyria would hear that this group of nations, puny little nations really, was forming to resist Assyria's aggression. I think he felt like joining the pact would probably just hasten Assyria's attack on them and they'd be wiped out so he was resisting this joining of the alliance. But the members of the alliance who had already joined, Israel and Syria, were now conspiring to come down and forcibly breach the walls of Jerusalem, take Ahaz out of office and replace him with somebody

else.

That somebody else is referred to in verse 6 as the son of Tabeel which may be an actual name but Tabeel means a good-for-nothing and so it may simply be a derisive nickname given to the man that they want to put in the place of Ahaz. He's a good-for-nothing and yet he would be more compliant with the wishes of those who are trying to start this larger Confederacy against Assyria. So Ahaz apparently had already determined to resist the pressure from Israel and Syria and he was up examining the water supply of the city because he was apparently expecting a siege and when you have a siege you don't want to run out of food or water in the walled city so he's apparently examining the city's water supply in anticipation that they may be besieged and he gets news that Syria and Israel are actually deployed against him and it's at this point that Isaiah is sent to speak with him and to urge him to not worry about those two nations nor even about Assyria but to worry about pleasing the Lord and to and to trust in God.

Now Ahaz was not of that mind he was not one to trust God and he was not responsive to Isaiah and in the context of this conversation Isaiah makes the prediction that we have come to associate with Christ due to its use in the New Testament. In verse 1 it says now it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham son of Uzziah king of Judah now by the way this is skipped over from Uzziah's death to that of the reign of Ahaz skipped over Jotham's reign although in verse 1 of chapter 1 we are told that the prophecy of Isaiah spanned Jotham's reign as well whether we have any samples of his prophesying during Jotham's reign or not we're not ever told but this was now Ahaz the grandson of Uzziah whose reign it is this is between 735 and 720 BC and it happened that during that reign that reason the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Ramalialah the king of Israel went up to Jerusalem to make war against it but could not prevail against it and it was told to the house of David meaning Ahaz who is the sitting king of David's dynasty saying Syria's forces are deployed in Ephraim so his heart and the heart of his people were moved as the trees of the woods are moved with the wind as he's frightened then the Lord said to Isaiah go out now and meet Ahaz you and Shir Jashub your son at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field now Shir Jashub is the first son of Isaiah there will be another in chapter 8 Shir Jashub means a remnant shall return and perhaps Isaiah was asked to take his son along because the name of his son is a part of his message and so he's going to meet Ahaz by the aqueduct where the water supply is and no doubt Ahaz is up there checking out the levels and say to him take heed and be quiet do not fear or be fainthearted for these two stubs of smoking firebrands for the fierce anger of reason in Syria and the son of Ramalialah because Syria Ephraim and the son of Ramalialah have taken evil counsel against you saying let us go up against Judah and trouble it and let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves and set a king over them the son of Tabeo thus says the Lord God it shall not stand that is the conspiracy against Judah will not stand nor shall it come to pass for the head of Syria is Damascus that's the capital of that country and the head of

Damascus is the king there reason within 65 years Ephraim will be broken so that it will not be a people the head of Ephraim is Samaria and the head of Samaria is Ramaliah's son if you will not believe surely you shall not be established that is if he doesn't trust in God but he trusts in some other source of security he will be removed from office he will not be established on term but if you trust in God that will be different now the 65 years would take from if this is at the beginning of a has raised as is generally believed 65 years from then would be the year 670 BC and in fact by 670 BC as or hadn't the Assyrian had come to Israel the northern kingdom which had already been defeated they were defied it defeated by an earlier Assyrian king in 722 BC by by Sargon the second but a later Assyrian king came much later and devastated and repopulated the northern kingdom so he brought in captives from other areas to be the population there he took out Israelis and so the region was basically intermixed there was no longer a people of Israel in the northern kingdom they they intermarried they became what were called the Samaritans in the New Testament and they were they were not a distinctive bloodline anymore they were mixed and so within 65 years Ephraim was broken so that was not a people anymore of course this Ephraim was broken and defeated within like 13 years of this but it wasn't immediate that the Israel race ceased to exist as a people but it did within 65 years of that now verse 10 moreover the Lord spoke to Ahaz saying ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God ask it either in the depth or in the height above now apparently he's graciously saying I realize that what I'm saying you probably would like to see some evidence of it and God's volunteering he's volunteering to give you some supernatural evidence of it if you wish any kind of a sign that you may ask for God will give it to you just ask now a has said I will not ask nor will I test the Lord his response was that of something like you know mock piety like I don't want to test God but but it was God who's home to do it now this is a very interesting thing when God tells you to do something and you do it you're not testing God if God doesn't tell you to do something and you do it you might be testing God as when Satan told Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the temple because the scripture had said that God has given his angels charge of you to keep you in all your ways and in their hands they'll bury you up lest you dash your foot against the stone so Satan said well the scripture promised that why don't you just jump and Jesus said you should not test he said he's written you should not test the Lord your God or not put your God to the test what was testing God then I mean God made a promise that the angels would give were given charge but God wasn't telling Jesus to jump off there there are promises that God makes to his people when they're obedient to him but you can't just do what you want to do without instruction for God then ask God to come through supernaturally to help you out God's supernatural power is available to those that are obedient to him and his promises apply to those who obey what he says if you are not acting in obedience to God but you're expecting God to do miraculous things to bail you out of the stupid situation you put yourself in that's testing God but when God commands you to you're not testing God and Ahab was commanded by God to ask for sign no I don't want to test the Lord by asking for a sign so Isaiah is a little impatient with him he says here now Oh house of David is it a small

thing for you to weary men but will you weary my God also I'll notice the transition from your God in verse 11 to my God in verse 13 he said they has asked a sign for yourself from the Lord your God but it's clear that he has is not being obedient to God so Isaiah just refers to God as my God maybe he's not your God after all therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel curds and honey he shall eat that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good for before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings now this is a complete prophecy the prophecy goes a slightly different direction from this point on there is a reference to a child being born and apparently at some not greatly advanced stage in the child's age before he knows good from evil before he reaches a what we call an age of accountability the threat to Judah will have been evaporated the land of Syria and the land of Israel which were which a has was dreading will be abandoned by both their kings in fact within about three years of this time that was true in 732 BC 10 years before Samaria fell Syria fell Damascus and reason the king there fell to the Assyrians within three years of this time if this this prophecy is uttered no no later than three than 735 when 732 just three years later a Syria conquered Syria and that was the end of reason and Syria and they're part of this threat but there is still Israel Israel didn't fall for another 10 years after that so from Isaiah's conversation with a has on it was maybe 12 or 13 years till Israel fell but he didn't say anything about Israel falling he said the Kings would be removed and Pekah the king of Israel was assassinated the same year that Syria fell so within three years both kings were removed Syria by the defeat of this country that is reason king of Syria defeat it was removed because his country was defeated by a Syria and Pekah was simply assassinated by one of his countrymen and so both kings were dead within three years now the prophecy was there's gonna be a child born and before that child reaches the age where he knows right from wrong these kings will be gone obviously the child in question must be one that was gonna be born soon thereafter and yet we of course associate verse 14 with Christ who was not born for another 700 and something years and this confuses some people because it's very clearly quoted that is Isaiah 714 is quoted by Matthew as being fulfilled in the virgin birth of Christ in Matthew 123 when it speaks of Mary the Virgin having a son it says that it might be fulfilled which was spoken in the prophet Isaiah and it quotes this verse behold the Virgin shall bring forth shall conceive bring forth a child and you should call his name Immanuel so the verse clearly has application to Jesus but most of the rest of the surrounding context raises questions about its application to Jesus because it says first of all that this child's birth is to be assigned to King Ahaz a sign of what a sign that God's prophecy was true that that Syria and Israel would not conquer Judah and God doesn't give a has a sign about that a child is gonna be born and before that child reaches much of an age at all these kings will be gone well a child that was born let's say shortly after this utterance would certainly fulfill that prediction because within three years of this time the child those kings were gone so it looks like it's a prophecy about something that's about to happen and to understand this we have to take into consideration

chapter 8 although we've not yet taken all of chapter 7 but I want to show you that in chapter 8 at the beginning it says moreover the Lord said to me take a large scroll right on it with a man's pen concerning my harsh allow hush buzz and I will make I will take for myself faithful witnesses to record Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jebarek I then I went to the prophetess and she conceived and bore a son obviously Isaiah had relations with this woman then the Lord said to me call his name my hair shall al-hashbaz for before the child shall have knowledge to cry my father and my mother the riches of Damascus that's the capital of Syria in the spoil of Samaria that's the capital of Israel will be taken away before the king of Assyria we can see this is essentially the same prediction a child is going to be born and before the child reaches much of an age in chapter 7 before he knows to choose the good and refuse the evil and in chapter 8 it's before he knows how to say mama or papa before he's before he can even announce his first words these kings will be gone these this threat will be gone a hab I mean a has will will not have anything to fear within a short time after the birth of this child that's the prediction and it's predicted about Isaiah's child my hair shall al-hashbaz which by the way is a name that means speed the spoil hasten the booty now there was a prophecy given after that in chapter 8 well apparently spoken to the child at its birth you might think that's strange why would you speak to a child that can't even understand it's just a manner of doing things as Zacharias the father of John the Baptist did the same thing when John the Baptist was born he uttered a prophecy and directed it to the child to the child couldn't understand it it's more for effect Isaiah then seems to give a prophecy to his child and the child is told that a Syria is going to come into the land and in verse 8 speaking of a Syria this is chapter 8 verse 8 Isaiah says he will pass through Judah he will overthrow and pass over he will reach up to the neck and the stretching out of his wings will fill the breadth of your land Oh Emmanuel now he's speaking to his child apparently and he calls his child Emmanuel so we have some interesting things to sort out here Isaiah in chapter 7 predicted to a has a child is going to be born in the very early stages that child's life these two kings are going to be ceased to be a threat and the child will be called Emmanuel now Emmanuel means God with us or alternately God is with us the Hebrew form can allow either translation God is with us or God with us obviously to say when this child is born his name will be called God with us or God is with us means that the birth of this child is the sign that God is still with Judah and and so Isaiah's son is born in the next chapter and the same things are said about him there's a couple of problems though one is that we're told in the New Testament that Isaiah 7:14 is about Jesus yet if you do not have the New Testament to tell you that any thinking person reading chapter 7 and then reading verse 8 chapter 8 would say oh okay prediction in chapter 7 fulfillment chapter 8 Isaiah's son and the parallels are you know that there be a woman who'd conceive us and bear a son his name we called Emmanuel and in his infancy these two kings will be removed both things true of both sons but there's a couple of things that kind of stick in the throat here for the Christian anyway maybe not for the original Jewish readers but for the Christian who has come to associate this with Jesus and the virgin birth we got two problems one is it says in verse

14 the virgin will conceive and bring forth a child Isaiah's child was not born of a virgin certainly it specifically says he went into her and she conceived which obviously means that they had sexual relations now commentators say this was this was Isaiah's wife well probably was if she had not been before she probably became his wife before this conception took place he might have gone and married this woman because he already had a wife or had had one because he had a son already named sure Jason though we know nothing about sure Jason's mother maybe she had died you know maybe I say it was a single man and he may have married a new woman and this was their first child there's certainly no suggestion of anything immoral going on here but it is clear that Isaiah went to this prophetess it's interesting he doesn't say go to your wife but rather maybe God instructed him to marry this prophetess and have a child with her who a woman who was not yet married and yet she certainly was not a virgin when the conception took place because Isaiah and she had normal relations and my hair shallot hush buzz was born conceived and born in the natural means so on this some people have argued various ways some have said that virgin here the word Alma in the Hebrew doesn't mean a woman who's who's pristine and sexually inexperienced so much as it just means a young woman of marriageable age very common for commentators to bring this up that Alma doesn't necessarily mean what we mean when we use the word virgin in the Hebrew it doesn't have the quite the same narrow range of meaning it just means any woman who's of marriageable age she may be sexually pure or not but if she's not married and has never been married she's called an Alma so it is argued this would suggest then that Isaiah's wife could be the the virgin in question the Alma she was of course not a virgin when she conceived but she was a young woman of marriageable age in favor of this view scholars who put it forward say there's another word for virgin in the Hebrew language is Betula or Betula but Betula they say means a virgin a woman with no sexual history whereas Alma is more generic for a young woman of marriageable age and they say that this passage uses the word Alma not Betula so it's not specifically indicating what we call a virgin and therefore Isaiah's wife could qualify here now by the way another objection that Christians sometimes would raise to this suggestion is that this child's birth is supposed to be a sign the Lord will give you a sign ahaz and therefore you know how could it be a sign if a baby is born in a natural way you know we almost want a sign to be a supernatural event however that objection falls to the ground because a sign doesn't have to be a supernatural event just has to be a predicted event an event that is predicted and then takes place it doesn't have to be supernatural and if you look later in chapter 8 of Isaiah verse 18 Isaiah is speaking he says here am I and the children whom the Lord has given me that would be sure Jaseb and my hair shall hush buzz he says we are for signs and wonders in Israel who Isaiah and his children are signs so there's certainly no objection to saying that my hair shall hush buzz birth was a sign Isaiah himself says so and so it doesn't have you a supernatural sign so in other words if we didn't have the New Testament identifying this with Jesus many scholars say we would not be looking for a literal virgin birth miraculous virgin birth it doesn't have to be miraculous to be assigned and the Alma doesn't have to

be a virgin and therefore everything about the passage works out fine for it to be Isaiah's wife in question now an important thing that is often missed in this discussion is that it does not say a virgin will conceive says the virgin will conceive what does the phrase the virgin mean there is a specific person or entity that is called the virgin rather than a generic a virgin will conceive who would Israel who would a has have taken to be the virgin well the answer that may be found in Isaiah chapter 37 Isaiah 37 in verse 22 where Hezekiah is encouraged by Israel to send a message to the besieging Assyrian king Sennacherib with this message this is the word which the Lord has spoken concern him the virgin the daughter of Zion has despised you laughed you to scorn the daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head behind her back your back excuse me shake your head behind your own back so in other words you are being mocked Sennacherib by this little girl Jerusalem now little girl virgin would suggest of course the most unimpressive the most unimposing sort of person a child female child here's Sennacherib the big tough guy in the block and he's threatening the city and the city is like a little child a little girl compared to him but she's mocking him on purpose because God is going to protect her and yet notice how he calls he calls it the virgin so Isaiah earlier said the virgin will conceive and bring forth a son but here the virgin refers to Jerusalem or the population of Jerusalem a child is to be born in Jerusalem in Revelation chapter 12 the opening verses we see the remnant of Israel represented as a woman pregnant to bear a son and her son is to rule the nations with a rod of iron this is of course the birth of Jesus he's said to be born from this woman but the woman is really not a real woman she represents Israel Jesus was a product of the Jewish race the Jewish people produced Jesus as it were biologically it's not speaking of his specific mother Mary but rather personifying the nation or the remnant of the nation that produced Jesus as a woman pregnant so in Isaiah's day he could speak of his own child who was born in Jerusalem was a child of Jerusalem the virgin Jerusalem produced a child and that child's significance was that his birth spelled the near end of Syria and Israel and so the virgin here could refer to Jerusalem rather than to Isaiah's wife or to any woman in particular one objection that could be raised to this is that in Isaiah 7:14 virgin is the word Alma or as in chapter 37 verse 22 the cross-reference I gave you the virgin is the betula different words but words that have a similar range of meaning when Isaiah was translated into Greek in the Septuagint virgin in both passages was translated the same word Parthenos Parthenos is the Greek word for a literal virgin and the Septuagint translators translated virgin in both places with the same Greek word Parthenos though in the Hebrew is Alma in one place in betula in the other the Greek the Greek scholars apparently took those words as essentially equivalent synonyms they could use the same Greek word to translate them both and so it is that even though a different Hebrew word is used the imagery of a virgin as the virgin not a virgin the virgin which Judah is called or Jerusalem is called in chapter 37 could be the virgin referred to in Isaiah 7:14 as well in any case all objections to Isaiah's child being the child prophesied seem to be easy to deal with even if we wish to take the Virgin's Isaiah 7:14 as a literal virgin in the English sense of the word the sense of the of our English word virgin a woman who had never had sex it's

possible that when Isaiah spoke these words his future wife the prophetess was in fact a virgin but then he married her and she conceived and had a son if say the virgin will conceive could be saying a woman who is at this moment a virgin and therefore is clearly not yet pregnant will at some point in the future not necessarily while remaining to be a virgin but she's the virgin who is now a virgin will conceive and bear a son meaning this will happen to a woman who isn't even on the way to having a son yet she's a virgin at the moment but she will soon conceive and will have a son and the birth that son will be such and such I don't think it is a reference to Isaiah's wife though I think it's a reference to Jerusalem as the Virgin in any case there is no reason why a Jew without the New Testament while reading this would have to apply to the Messiah or would have to apply it to anyone other than the son that is born in Isaiah chapter 8 however remember with reference to the Apostles of Christ when he rose from the dead and met with them in the upper room he opened their understanding so that they might understand the scriptures that is they saw in the scriptures things that others didn't see things the Jews would not see things the rabbis didn't know if the scriptures contain no meanings other than those that the rabbis already knew there's no reason for Jesus to have to open their understanding to understand them because they could listen to the rabbis anytime they wanted to they could get the meaning from them but clearly there were meanings in the Old Testament that the rabbis had not and could not apprehend this apparently being one of them because Matthew of course quotes Isaiah 7:14 as fulfilled in the virgin birth of Christ now in doing so in all likelihood Matthew is doing so the same way he saw out of Egypt I've called my son as having a fulfillment in the in the youth of Christ out of Egypt I've called my son in Hosea 11:1 one is a statement about Israel but the Apostles saw Israel as a type of Christ and so what was true of Israel was also true of Christ it is very probable that Matthew also by inspiration having his eyes open his understanding open so he'd understand the scriptures properly he saw that my hair so I'll hush buzz likewise was a type of Christ and how significant indeed it was that the wording of the passage about my hair birth mentioned a virgin although it might have meant it in a very different way than Matthew meant it nonetheless just like Sun was meant differently in Hosea 11:1 then the way Matthew used it in Matthew chapter 2 the words had different meanings but the statement as it stands is a statement of the same of this new fact the new fact is there's a real virgin not just a symbol for Jerusalem being called a virgin but there's an actual virgin woman who conceives to have a son and his name is called Emmanuel certainly God with us is a proper nickname for Jesus and in its own way apparently a proper nickname for Isaiah's son too he was the indicator that God was with Judah but how much more when Jesus is born is that an indicator that God is with us in other words there's type and antitype going on here probably and I imagine that's how Matthew understood it and if we say well it sounds like a stretch maybe it is a stretch for us if we were speculating Matthew's not speculating he's inspired by the Holy Spirit and therefore we see that though there may indeed have been a fulfillment and maybe the only fulfillment that the Jews ever expected in Isaiah's own son yet they didn't expect enough they didn't know what to

expect the Holy Spirit sees something else in this a secondary fulfillment this is one of the few times in the Bible that we actually have identified for a secondary fulfillment of prophecy where there's actually a fulfillment recorded in the Old Testament and then another fulfillment recorded in the new there's more than one of these but not many more it's it's pretty unusual but I think that that's what we're looking at here and that would explain why after it talks about the birth of the child in Isaiah 7 15 says curds and honey shall he eat that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good for before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good the land which you dread will be forsaken by our Kings now a couple things questions arise first of all why is the child called Emmanuel Jesus was never called that his name should be called Emmanuel if that's referring to Jesus well that's not what he was called he was called Jesus not Emmanuel but of course we have to realize that to the Hebrew the expression his name should be called is simply a way of saying his identity shall actually be it's not talking about what he'll actually be called by people but really who he really is just as two chapters later in Isaiah says his name should be called wonderful counselor the mighty God the everlasting father the Prince of Peace that's also his name should we call but he was never called any of those things it means that's who he really is he is God with us he is wonderful council the mighty God in in Jeremiah it says his name should be called Jehovah Tzadkanu which means the Lord our righteousness speaking of Christ his should we call that I think it's Jeremiah 23 5 and 6 so lots of things Jesus name is said to be is not really what his proper name was not it's not the name on his birth certificate it's actually a reference to who he actually is when you see that man who you are seeing is God with us when you see that man who you're seeing is the mighty God the everlasting father you're seeing Jehovah our righteousness and so forth and so it is the Hebrew wording should not be mistaken to be a prediction that Jesus actual proper name will be Emmanuel or any of these other names that are given to him in the Old Testament but what's this curds and honey business why is that going to be eating curds and honey well as we see as we'll go through the remainder of this chapter that because of the devastation coming on the land there will be little to sustain the population the remnant that are there will have to live on curds which is a dairy product that you they could they could get from if they happen to nurture a young cow I mean have a little bit of livestock left and honey is something you could you know harvest from nature I mean the bees do that you go get the honey from them in nature you know it's stuff that you can get without farming there's not much food to be had if you happen to have a goat or a cow you can make some curds get a little protein you need carbs you go out and find some honey in a honeycomb somewhere but that's how people will survive for a while because there won't be really agricultural produce because of the perhaps because the siege but in any case we see for example in verse 21 it shall be in a day in that day that a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep so it will be from the abundance of the milk they give that he will eat curds for curds and honey shall everyone eat who is left in the land so to say the child we curse him just means he'll be living during the same period where everybody's eating curds the child is going to be suffering the same deprivation as the

nation in general but not for very long because the threat will disappear when it when Syria and Israel disappear that is the immediate threat will now in verse 17 says the Lord will bring the king of a Syria upon you and your people in your father's house days that have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah and the Assyrian coming upon them is very possibly threatened against the northern kingdom although a has is in this picture and he's the king of the southern kingdom the Oracle could still be addressed against Israel and I think it probably is and that being so I think what Isaiah is saying is that the Assyrians are going to come against you Israel to the north just like when he speaks to Babylon or others that aren't really present to listen is even when he processed to a child who can't understand him it's a it's just a way of of expression that you you speak to somebody that that you know things that are pertinent to them whether they can hear you or not it's it goes on record and then we learn what he had to say to them but the Lord will bring a Syrian the king of a Syria against you I think it's starting a new section here verse 16 I think ends the prophecy that directly applies to a has but now because he's brought up the fact that the two kings of Israel and Syria will be removed he addresses them and says as if he says Oh a Syria Oh Syria Oh Israel the king of a series can be brought against you that's what I think is happening here and says these are things are going to come against you that are worse than anything that's happened since Israel separated from Judah in the days of Rehoboam the worst calamity Israel's had it should come to pass in that day that the Lord will whistle for the fly that is in the farthest part of the rivers of Egypt and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria and they will come and all of them will rest in desolate valleys in the clefts of the rocks and on all the thorns and all the pastures the same day the Lord will shave with a hired razor with those from beyond the river with the king of Assyria the head and the hair of the legs and will also remove the beard again Israel being compared to a man with hair and it's being shaved it's really he's just mowing down the population just like you mow down the hairs on your face when you shave it the people are being mowed down like hairs on a body it shall be in that day that a man should keep alive a young cow and two sheep so it'll be from the abundance of the milk that they give that he will eat curds for curds and honey will everyone eat who is left in the land it shall happen in that day that whoever there could be where that wherever there could be a thousand vines worth a thousand shekels of silver it will be for briars and thorns with arrows and bows men will come there because all the land will become briars and thorns and to any hill which could be dug with a hoe you will not go there for fear of briars and thorns and it will become a range for oxen and a place for sheep to roam now it's not evident why people would avoid hoeing a mound big for fear of briars and thorns unless it's saying the thorns and briars be so thick that you simply can't remove them without getting torn up yourself but it's possible that briars and thorns here is referring to evil enemies as seems to be the case in some other passages it's not clear here but he may be saying because the wicked the briars and thorns are inhabiting the area you won't be able to make use of the area it's hard to hard to understand some of this imagery how it's intended in terms of fulfillment then we read already chapter 8 verses 1 through 4 which was about

him going into the prophetess and having this child and verse 5 of chapter 8 says the Lord also spoke to me again saying in as much as these people refuse the waters of Shiloah that flow softly and rejoice in reason and Ramaliah's son now therefore behold the Lord brings up over them the waters of the river meaning the river like that always means Euphrates whenever it just says the river in the Bible means the Euphrates says they're refusing water from this pool of spring of Shiloah this was actually the only freshwater spring inside the walls of Jerusalem and so it was a water supply in the city that could hold up in times of siege it but it was obviously the water that God supplied for them supplied for the city and it's symbolic of just God's provision you refuse God's provision you refuse God's solutions the waters of Shiloah that flow gently things could go well for you it's a God would deal gently with you but instead you rejoice in someone else and so the waters of the Euphrates meaning Assyria is going to come up and that won't be gentle it'll be like a flood it says the waters of the river verse 7 strong and mighty the king of Assyria in all his glory he will go up over all his channels and go over all his banks as he's flooding outside his hit the banks of the river meaning he's flooding into other people's land and he will pass through Judah and will overflow and pass over he will reach up to the neck and the stretching out of his wings will fill the breadth of your land O Emmanuel now I believe that verses 6 & 7 are about Israel the northern kingdom they're the ones who rejoice in reason the son of Ramallah his son that is there they're in Confederacy with him and also with the but reason and Ramallah his son that is the two kings of Israel and and Syria the northern kingdom is rejoicing in them and they are the ones who are gonna be overrun but it says in verse 7 that that overflowing river that runs through Assyrian wipes it out will also flow into Judah and will cover that land except for the head that is except for Jerusalem it'll Judah is like a an animal or a person who's in a flood and only the head is above water the water has reached up to the neck and into Emmanuel's land into the land of Isaiah's son be shattered O you peoples be broken in pieces give ear all all you from far countries gird yourself and be broken in pieces gird yourself and be broken in pieces didn't you hear me the first time gird yourself and be broken in pieces take counsel together but it will come to nothing speak the word but it will not stand for God is with us which is another occurrence of Emmanuel in the passage now this is obviously addressed to Syria and Israel this prophecy is not against Judah although Judah is mentioned as also experiencing the overflow of that flood of Assyria but this is really about the destruction of those kings that are threatening Judah here and he says go ahead make your plans take counsel together it's not going to come to anything you're not gonna overcome this city because God is in this city God's with us and that's an amazing thing in view of the fact that the sea was so far from God but it was not God's will at that time to destroy it there was apparently a larger remnant of faithful people in Judah than there was in Israel and Israel's time had come Judah was not yet so God was going to preserve them at this time verse 11 for the Lord spoke thus to me with a strong hand and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people saying that's what God said to him do not say a conspiracy concerning all that this people call a conspiracy nor be afraid of their threats

nor be troubled but Yahweh of hosts him you shall hallow him you shall fear let him be your fear in other words and let him be your dread he will be as a sanctuary same word that's used for tabernacle elsewhere but it means a safe place in this instance but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel and as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and many among them shall stumble they shall fall and be broken be snared and be taken now obviously there's some material here in these verses that is quoted in the New Testament this business about be not afraid of their threats or be troubled but let the Lord be your sanctuary or sanctify the Lord God in your hearts is brought up by Peter in first Peter 3 15 he quotes from this he quotes from this passage about not being troubled or not being fearful and he's doing it in the context of not being afraid of persecution as Christians when it says do not say a conspiracy and others don't don't cast your eyes on what man is planning to do no matter how powerful they are no how many of them join together those who join arm-in-arm against the Lord will not will not succeed and therefore if there is a conspiracy it's not a problem to you you just trust in God and obviously that's a relevant message to people who are concerned about conspiracies today because because there are conspiracies but you're not supposed to be focusing on that you can't do anything about him anyway just let the Lord be your sanctuary let him be your fear in who you dread now when it says he in verse 14 will be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense I'm sure you recognize that as a verse that's quoted from time to time in the New Testament not just once and it is applied to Jesus so he who in verse 13 is Yahweh is Jesus I mean the way the New Testament quotes verse 14 repeatedly it's always applied to Jesus and that being so Peter quotes it in first Peter 2 8 Paul quotes it in Romans 9 33 that Jesus is the stumbling stone but here it's Yahweh and the fact that the Christian writers would quote this about Jesus without apology means that they take it for granted that what is said about Yahweh and Isaiah is really about Jesus he is Yahweh and it's what he's saying is that God will do things in a way that the Jews as a whole would not probably appreciate and they may stumble at it when John the Baptist was not quite impressed with the way Jesus doing things and sent messengers say are you the one who's to come or not Jesus sent messengers back to John said well tell him what you see you know the blind see the lame are walking the deaf hear and the gospel being preached the poor he says and tell John this blessed is he who's not stumbled by me in other words I'm not doing things the way you want me to you could be stumbled don't be trust me I know what I'm doing blessed he is he who's not stumbled by me means trust me but if you don't trust me you're gonna be confused by what I'm doing it may stumble you it may make you fall you may lose faith that's the way God sometimes is and the way God's working in Isaiah in Israel and Judah here he says it'll stumble some people many will stumble it says in verse 15 and shall fall and be broken now verse 16 says bind up the testimony seal the law among my disciples and I will wait on Yahweh who hides his face from the house of Jacob I will hope in him here am I and the children whom the Lord has given me we are for signs and wonders in Israel whom the Lord of hosts who from the Lord of hosts who dwells in Mount Zion now bind up the testimony seal it with the law

among my disciples apparently means take these things that Isaiah has written wrap them up put a seal on him bind them up and commit them to the custody of faithful men the remnant in Israel who were following Isaiah and they would preserve it and apparently they did it's not likely that Isaiah alone preserved his writings he handed them over to his disciples and they preserved them Isaiah himself was later killed probably by Manasseh but his disciples apparently preserved his word so that we have them today and you bind them up and seal them basically because in all likelihood they would date them too so that it was given it was obvious since they were bound up that no one added to them and when you break the seal and see what's in there at a later date and see that what was written was fulfilled the fact that was bound up all that time in between shows that it was not written recently or added to it becomes a testimony to the veracity of the Prophet that his words were sealed up on a certain date and when they were opened lo and behold they'd been fulfilled in an interim now when he says here am I and the children whom the Lord's give me apparently he's saying this to God he says I'm gonna go wait on the Lord I'm gonna go look for God I'm gonna present myself to God here I am God and my children too where the signs and wonders that you've given to Israel we're waiting on you now this statement here am I and the children whom the Lord's give me is actually quoted in Hebrews 2 13 as if it is Jesus speaking the writer of Hebrews is pointing out that Jesus though he was of course God and and you know greater than all of us yet he was not ashamed to humble himself to be called our brethren and his children and he quotes some Old Testament verses to make the point it's in Hebrews actually chapter 2 verse 11 says both he who sanctifies meaning Jesus and those who are sanctified meaning us are all of one there's all one nature all human beings Jesus humbled himself to become one of us for which reason he's not ashamed to call them brethren which is an amazing thing that he who is our Creator would actually reduce himself to speak about us as equals almost as brethren and he quotes from Psalm 22 22 I will declare your name among my brethren so there Jesus although it's David speaking in Psalm 22 it's attributed to Jesus calling us his brethren but then down in verse 13 he goes off and quotes a few more verses Isaiah 8 17 and 8 18 I will put my trust in him is Isaiah 8 17 and then again here am I and the children whom God has given me which is the next verse he quotes two verses where Isaiah speaks about himself and his children and applies it as if Jesus is the one speaking the idea being that Jesus calls us his brethren and he calls us his children notice he deigns to include us as close relatives even though he is God and we're not but the point here is that apparently Isaiah himself is now being seen as a type of Christ as David is the writer of Hebrews quotes David in Psalm 22 and says that's Jesus speaking he quotes Isaiah and says that's Jesus speaking too which means that there are many persons in the Old Testament that are treated as types of Christ so that what they say about themselves is seem as applicable to what Jesus would also say and applicable to him well we're about done this hour but let's look at the last few verses of Isaiah chapter 8 verse 19 says and when they say to you seek those who are mediums and wizards who whisper and mutter which is apparently what people were doing instead of turning to

God in Jerusalem they want to know what things were happening so they go talk to a fortune-teller or a medium to contact the dead and get information from them he says should they seek the dead on behalf of the living to the law and to the testimony if they do not speak according to this word it is because there's no light in them now the mediums don't talk according to the same way that Isaiah talked Isaiah gave the word of the Lord and if they don't speak in agreement with what he said well then they're just wrong they're just in the dark there's no light in them he says and they will pass through it and this they will pass through it apparently is going back all the way back to verse 10 which was talking about a serious aggression and it seems to be talking about a Syria here they will pass through it that is Judah hard-pressed and hungry and it shall happen when they are hungry that they will be enraged and curse their king and their God and look upward then they will look to the earth and see trouble and darkness gloom and anguish and they shall be driven into darkness now they here I believe is a reference back to a Syria obviously it could be harking back to the to Israel or someone else it's hard to say it does it's not at all clear who they are in verse 21 because there was no no antecedent in in the previous 10 verses and so unless it was the disciples of Isaiah which doesn't seem likely so I said a Syria it could be Israel it doesn't really much matter the point is that all the parties all the bad guys Israel will be destroyed by Syria and a Syria who themselves will come under judgment from God can be described almost in the same way eventually they're going to be driven into darkness themselves well we have to stop there and let's come back to that next time