

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

The Greatest Sign

Speaker:

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Date:

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Scriptures:

Isaiah 7-8

Theme: God has given us the greatest sign so that we look and trust him.

Introduction: Road signs serve many functions; but one of the main functions is to demonstrate that there is an authority over the road sign. Similarly, God gives signs in this world as a demonstration of his authority and as a call to his people to trust him and to live for his glory.

This passage offers us 3 purposes to God's signs through Isaiah:

1. A call to trust (7:1-9)

As Judah was being threatened by Israel (Ephraim) and Syria, they were terrified to the point of shaking.

The Lord sent Isaiah to King Ahaz to call him to faith, as the Lord would deliver them. He was told, "If you will not stand firm in faith, you will not be firm at all." Ephraim and Syria were seeking to consolidate strength against Assyria; but the Lord's purposes were greater than any of the powers involved.

2. A sign for comfort (7:10-25)

As a sign of his protection, the Lord offers Ahaz a sign. But Ahaz refuses—not because of humility, but because of unbelief.

Yet the Lord gives a sign: a virgin will be with child, and he will be named Immanuel. Before the child is 2, the Lord will deliver his people.

Though Isaiah's prophecy was originally directed to his immediate context, it also referred ahead to the ultimate Immanuel, Jesus himself (Matt 1:18-23).

3. A warning to remind (8:1-22)

Since Ahaz did not believe God, the Lord gave him a warning of impending judgment. Terrible consequences lay ahead of them.

However, the Lord uses several children as imagery of what he is going to do.

Isaiah's son, Shear-jashub, foretells God's mercy: a remnant will return. His son, Maher-shalal-hash-baz, foretells God's judgment: the spoil speeds, the prey hastens ('easy pickings'). And Immanuel, of course, foretells God's protection of his people.

The Lord also warns his people against believing in conspiracies. Instead of turning to other sources for knowledge of the future and confidence in the present, we should put our trust fully in him alone. He is our peace and comfort.

Questions:

1. What do you fear? What are you seeking to protect?
2. What would it mean for you to trust God in that fear?
3. How does God's goodness and faithfulness meet you in your fear?