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The LORD Himself Will Give You A Sign

7: 13-14

The LORD Himself will give you a sign DIG: What is the sign that the LORD will give to Ahaz despite his refusal to ask for one? How is Matthew 1:23 the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy (see the commentary on the Life of Christ, to see link [click Ap - Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son](#))? What does Immanuel mean? Why is that important?

REFLECT: How has the LORD gone the extra mile with you in your life? When has He shown extraordinary grace and patience with you? How did you respond? Why? When have you not responded and suffered the consequences? What did you learn from that experience? Is there anything you can do now to help others?

At the heart of our earthly existence, our heavenly **Father** wants the best for us. Even a sinful human father normally wants the best for his children, let alone, our perfect heavenly **Father!** He will go the extra mile to give us a chance to repent and be saved. The apostle **Peter** would say it like this: **He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance (Second Peter 3:9b).** But **ADONAI** will not take away our free will to reject **Him**. We can say no to **God** and make it stick. This dynamic is clearly seen here in **Ha'Shem's** dealing with **king Ahaz**.

The LORD graciously sent **His prophet Isaiah** to **Ahaz, king** of the southern kingdom of **Judah**, to offer an authenticating **sign** so that **he** might believe and **the nation** would be saved. But after **Ahaz's** stubborn refusal to ask for a **sign** to confirm **the LORD's** prophecy, **Isaiah** said to **him**, "**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?**" (7:13).

Here **Isaiah** was no longer addressing **Ahaz** alone; **the prophet** was addressing the **house of David**. Every **you** in 7:10 through 12 is singular and addresses **Ahaz**, but every, **you** in these two verses is in the plural, addressing the **sign** to **the house of David**. Therefore, because of **the king's** skepticism, the **sign Isaiah** was giving was not to **Ahaz** individually, but to **the house of David** collectively. **The** human **house of David** was finally without hope; it has tried **God's patience** too far. In fact, **YHVH** was worn out from trying to get

this nation to act in faith during this crisis. The change from **your God** in 7:11 to **my God** here is ominous. **Isaiah** seems to be saying that **Ahaz** had rejected the very **One** who would have supported and established **him**. As a result, no longer can **the prophet** speak of **your God**, now it is only **my God**, who is evidently foreign to **Ahaz**. Sha'ul had a similar experience in his life (**First Samuel 15:26-30**). From this point on, however long it should take for this human Jewish dynasty to come to a complete collapse, the only hope is in **ADONAI's** provision.



As a result of **Ahaz's** refusal of an immediate sign during **his** lifetime, **Isaiah** looked about 700 years into the future and prophesied: **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 Immanuel, meaning God with us (7:14)**. If **the king of Judah** would not ask for a sign, **God**, in **His** sovereignty, **will give** him one anyway. It is impossible to determine if this was the sign **YHVH** intended to give had **Ahaz** asked, or whether it was especially given in light of **his** refusal to ask. At any rate, it is the one **he** received. It confirmed **Isaiah's** earlier promise in 7:4-9, but it also verified the foolishness of not trusting in that promise. That the positive side would have applied had **the king of Judah** received the **sign** in faith lends some weight to the idea that this was the intended **sign**. Had **Ahaz** received it in faith, **Immanuel** would have appeared to vindicate the **House of David**. As it was, **He** was to appear as a shame. They had not believed, so they received the just result of that unbelief. Nevertheless, **ADONAI**, in **His** faithfulness to **His** own promise, would raise up from the wreckage a true **Son of David**.

The demonstrative article **therefore** is an active participle. **Isaiah** uses this phrase 43 times in **his** book. With the exception of **48:7** every time it is used, it is referring to the future. It could be referring to something past, present, or future. By itself, it does not necessarily require a future interpretation. In the Hebrew however, if the word is used with the Hebrew active participle, it is always interpreted as a future event. And the phrase **will give birth to** is an active participle. So this is a future event.

Now let us look at the Hebrew word **virgin**. *Na-tor-ah* is generally translated by the word *girl*. It is used of virgins and non-virgins. In the case of a **virgin**, one example is used in **First Kings 1:2**, and in the case of a non-virgin, an example is used in **Ruth 2:6**. For most women the word for a **virgin** is *bet-to-la*, which in classical Hebrew refers to a single girl without reference to age. However, in most cases in classical Hebrew it is used of a **virgin**. But because the word is not always clearly a **virgin**, sometimes after using the term they have to use a descriptive phrase to point out that they mean **virgin (Genesis 24:16; Judges 21:12)**. So *bet-to-la* means a single girl of any age. Now with that knowledge, we come to the word that is used in **Isaiah**, the word *almah*. The basic meaning of *almah* is a young **virgin**. It never refers to someone who is old. It is never used of a married woman. In the other Semitic languages, the root word always means **virgin**. There is no debate on this. In addition, in the Septuagint the word used is *tarthenos*, which is the word used for a strict **virgin**.

As far as how it is used in the TaNaKh, it is only found in seven places: **Genesis 24:43** in reference to Rebekah where it states that she is a **virgin**; **Exodus 2:8** in reference to Miriam the sister of Moses; **Psalms 68:25** which deals with young virgins worthy to participate in a religious procession; **Song of Songs 1:3** referring to women who are worthy to be desired; **Song of Songs 6:8** where there is a contrast with two other groups, queens, concubines, and virgins beyond number. Queens were legal wives and their main function was to produce royal children to the throne. The concubines served the king sexually. Virgins were prospective concubines; **Proverbs 30:18-19** contrasts the **virgin** with the adulteress in **Proverbs 30:20**; and finally, the passage here, **Isaiah 7:14**. In each reference, while some passages are clearly virgins, even the unclear passages at least allow for virginity. But nowhere does it refer to a married woman.

Because of the fact that the word **virgin** cannot refer to a married woman, only an unmarried woman, there are only two options when interpreting this passage. Either you have a **virgin** birth or an illegitimate birth. Illegitimate births are very common, no miracle there. Likewise a **virgin** getting married and giving birth to a child is very commonplace. Not only that, but it is **YHVH** doing this so you have moral problems if you associate **God**

with something illegitimate. The entire context of the passage begs for a **virgin** birth. The emphasis is that in her virginity she will conceive, and that is the miracle.

The article does not mean *a* **virgin**; it means **the virgin**. In Hebrew grammar the usage of a definite article, when against something specific, has two rules. First, it would refer to a woman already mentioned in the immediate context. There has been no woman mentioned in the immediate context. Secondly, would be *the law of previous mention*. This is when some event or some person had become so familiar in the minds of the people that when the event or person is mentioned, everybody knows what or who is being discussed. For example when you say, "*the Exodus*", the Jews know what you are talking about. That is similar to this passage. However, there is no woman to go to in the previous context. There must be a specific woman in the minds of the people, so if it said *the woman* everyone would know *which* woman was being referred to. Has there been such a previous mention? Yes, in **Genesis 3:15**. What **Isaiah** is doing is explaining the mystery of this passage. The Bible teaches that the **Messiah's** seed, or **offspring**, will come *after* the woman, which goes contrary to all Biblical systems and principles of Jewish law. And now **Isaiah** explains why it is necessary. The reason **Christ** will have to be born after the **offspring** of the woman is because there is no man involved. **He** will be born of a **virgin**, and: **The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel**, which means *God with us* (**Matthew 1:23**).

There is something else in this verse. The **sign** was to be a **boy** named **Immanuel**. When parents name a child, it shows the thinking of the parents. The parents' hopes and aspirations for the child can be seen in the meaning of the name they choose. Maybe it will be true, and maybe it will not be true. In Scripture, when **Elohim** names a child, it becomes true. And the character of this **child** is literally, *God with us*. Concerning **Immanuel**, there is a certain flow in the context. In **Chapter 7 He** is to be born, in **Chapter 9 He** will be viewed as having already been born, and in **Chapter 11 He** is reigning. By the time you get to the end of **7:9**, **the king of Y'hudah** has been given a specific promise. The first part of the promise is that the two kings of the confederacy are doomed to failure. That does not guarantee the establishment of **Ahaz** personally; that would take faith on **his** part. But as far as the **House of David** there is no threat to it, the promise will remain.

What does it mean for us today that *God is with us*? The **God** of the universe is able to have a personal relationship with us. Before **Christ**, **the Holy Spirit** was not a permanent indwelling for each believer in the **God** of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **The Ruach** would come and go. That is why **David** said: **Have mercy on me, O God. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me** (**Psalms 51:1 and 11**). But with the

coming of **Messiah**, *God with us* has taken on a whole new dimension. Now **God** lives inside of us. This is what **Jesus** had in mind when **He** said that **the Ruach** would indwell the apostles (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Kr - The Holy Spirit Will Teach You All Things**). **His Tabernacle** was no longer in the center of the twelve tribes (see the commentary on **Exodus Ep - The Camp of the Twelve Tribes of Isra'el**), but in the human heart itself.

This means we can live without fear. If **YHVH** lives in us through the power of **the Ruach HaKodesh**, then neither the condemnation of our past sins nor the power of present temptation can defeat us. **If God is for us, who can be against us (Psalm 56:9; Romans 8:31)?** Nothing that anyone can do to us can ultimately hurt us because **Immanuel** has conquered death. *God with us* would be a great truth even if **Christ** had not come. But it would only be an incomplete hope. There would always be the grave, the single most inescapable reality of human experience. But **Messiah** has gone with us all the way, even into the tomb. And having gone in with us, **He** can bring us out with **Him. Immanuel!**²⁷

Many large cities have computerized warning signs to alert drivers to hazards ahead. I recall one occasion when I was on the freeway and a sign told me, "Accident ahead - major delay." There was no other reason to believe there had been an accident, but I heeded the warning anyway and got off at the next exit to take another route to my destination. Returning about an hour later in the other lane, I found the sign had told the truth. There was a terrible traffic jam by that time and cars were lined up for miles. The new sign had provided a timely warning and saved me a great deal of time by letting me know what was ahead. Seven-hundred years before the coming of **Messiah**, the prophet **Isaiah** told **God's** people what was ahead for them. **The prophet** didn't have a computer or giant billboards, but **he** had **the Holy Spirit** and was able to predict the coming, character, and style of **Christ**.