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He Will Eat Curds and Honey

7: 15-17

He will eat curds and honey DIG: What was the sign and to whom was it given? What do you make of the curds and honey imagery? What is the age of accountability? What does that mean? How does this sign fit the crisis? Instead of peace, what will happen once Israel and Syria are out of the picture? What was the root cause of Ahaz's error? What possible reasons can you think of that would explain why he would be so completely disinterested in God's offer of a miraculous sign?

He will eat curds and honey REFLECT: Since Ahaz was a bad king all along, what does it mean to you in your life that the LORD would still desire to give him a sign of His mercy? Where do you get your wisdom, knowledge and understanding from? Who do you trust, worship, and obey? The world or the LORD? What evidence do you have of that in your life? Why was Ahaz a fool? What can you learn from his mistakes?

Most people in this life avoid any accountability for their actions. Some make excuses, many blame others, while most just avoid, or, as a last resort, postpone. **Ahaz** was no different. **He** had made a horrific decision to trust in the world and not to trust in **ADONAI**; tragically, the only **One** who could really save him. **He** had demonstrated his lack of faith by rejecting a confirming sign of **Isaiah's** prophecy (**7:12**). Therefore, **the LORD** gave him two signs (whether he wanted them or not). First, the House of David would be preserved (**7:13-14**), and secondly, **he** would not be dethroned (**7:15-16**), but would continue to live under **Assyrian** domination (**7:17**).

In **7:10-14**, **Isaiah** used both the Hebrew singular or plural form of **you**, to tell us who **he** is talking to, or about. In **7:10-12** **he** uses the singular form and was talking to **Ahaz**, then in **7:13-14** **he** uses the Hebrew plural form of **you** to let us know that **he** was referring to the House of David. Here in **7:15-17**, however, **Isaiah** reverts back to the Hebrew singular **you**, because **he** wants to indicate that **he** was talking once again to **Ahaz**.

The king needed something that would serve as a definite sign that the prophecies of **Isaiah** would be fulfilled in his lifetime (**7:7-9**). The virgin birth was an assurance to the House of David and **Ahaz** would understand that **he** would not be dethroned. As far as **God** was concerned, **He** was honoring the position of the one who sat on the throne of David, and not honoring **Ahaz** personally. But the sign needed to have some historical significance to **him** personally. A miracle that was going to happen seven centuries later would have no meaning to **him**. Here the definite article is important again; it is not a **boy**, but **the boy**. Before **the boy**, a specific person, is old enough to make moral choices, **the two kings** of the confederacy **will be laid waste**. So the prophecy given by **Isaiah** will be fulfilled in a very short period of time, which is part of the test of a prophet.



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 (7:16). The word used here cannot refer to a newly born child, it was a young **boy**. When we look at the immediate context we find that there is a **boy** mentioned back in **7:3**; when **Isaiah** was told **to meet Ahaz**, **God** also told **him** to bring **his son Shear-Jashub**. There was a specific reason why **God** told **Isaiah** to bring **his son** along. **While the Son born to the virgin would be a sign to the House of David, Shear-Jashub was a sign to Ahaz. And before Shear-Jashub is old enough to make moral choices, the two kings will not be a threat to Ahaz.**

For Jews, **7:16** serves as an age of accountability, or the mental capability **to know right from wrong**, to make a decision to trust in **Yeshua Messiah** and be immersed into the mikveh as the bible teaches (**Matthew 28:19**).

Isaiah prophesied that **his** son, **Shear-Jashub** was a sign to king **Ahaz (7:3)**. **He will eat curds and honey until he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right (7:15)**. Within about three years, or nine months for the pregnancy and a couple of years, the boy would know the difference between right and wrong have the ability to make moral choices. At that time, **Isaiah** said, **the land of the two kings Ahaz** dreaded would **be laid waste** and the northern alliance between Isra'el and Syria would be broken **(7:16)**. Not surprisingly, history proved this to be true. Pekah was attacked and assassinated by his countryman Hoshea **(Second Kings 15:29-30)**, and Rezin **(Second Kings 16:9)** was put to death by Tiglath-Pileser king of **Assyria**.

Honey was and is frequently mixed with various forms of milk products and used upon bread. When traveling, Arabs often take leather bottles full of **honey** for this purpose. It is considered very palatable, especially by the children (not to newborn infants). Butter is also mentioned in connection with **honey** in **Second Samuel 17:29, Job 32:13, and Song of Solomon 4:11**. We find in **Proverbs 25:16 and 27** allusions to the disagreeable consequences of eating too much **honey**, and it is possible that experience had proved the oily nature of the butter a corrective to the sweetness of the **honey**. **Honey** and oil are named together in **Deuteronomy 32:13**.²⁸

Ahaz was at the crossroads of **his** life. **Isaiah** had said to **him**, **"If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all."** Now **Ahaz** deliberately rejected that prophecy. Just because **God** had assured **him** that the two kings would fail in their attempt to divide **Judah**, it did not mean that **Ahaz himself** would escape the consequences of **his** actions. **Isaiah** went on to tell **Ahaz** that because **he** lacked **faith**, **he himself** would suffer. **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 (7:17)**. **Ahaz** was the one who aligned **Judah** with **Assyria** to begin with. As a result, **God** basically said, "You want **Assyria**. I am going to give you **Assyria**." Once **the Assyrians** subjugated Syria and Isra'el, **they** would continue southward and subjugate **Judah** as well. Had **Ahaz** believed **God**, the confederacy would have been broken and **Judah** would have been freed from the **Assyrian** domination. But **he** did not. As a result, **Ahaz and Judah** continued to pay tribute to **Assyria (Second Kings 16:7; Second Chronicles 28:21)**, worship **Assyrian** gods **(Second Chronicles 28:22-25)**, and live under their control. As a final indictment against this evil king, **Ahaz** was buried **in Jerusalem, but not in the tombs of**

the kings (Second Chronicles 28:27).

Isaiah said that **God** would bring an invasion **unlike any since** the ten northern tribes (here called **Ephraim**), **broke away from** the two Southern tribes of Benjamin and **Judah** in 931 B.C. **He will bring the king of Assyria**. There were four other invasions against **Judah** since the start of the Kingdom. The first invasion was by Shishak (**First Kings 14:25-26; Second Chronicles 12:2-9**). A second invasion was by the Ethiopians (**Second Chronicles 14:9-15**). A third invasion was by the combined forces of Moab and Ammon (**Second Chronicles 20:1-30**), and a fourth invasion was by the combined forces of Philistines and Arabs (**Second Chronicles 21:16-17**). Yet this invasion by the **Assyrians**, led by Tiglath-Pileser, would be worse than all of them.

By risking everything, **Ahaz** had gambled that **the Assyrian** military prowess would save both **him** and **Judah**. But in doing so, **he** bet against **God**, the only **One** who could truly protect **him** and the nation. In the last analysis, **Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came to him, but he gave him trouble instead of help. Ahaz took some of the things from the Temple of the LORD, from the royal palace, and from the princes and presented them to the king of Assyria, but that did not help him (Second Chronicles 28:20-21).**

King Solomon had warned that **the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge (Proverbs 1:7a)**. The problem with **King Ahaz** was that **he** feared **the king of Assyria** more than **he** feared **the King of Kings (Revelation 19:16)**. **The fear of the LORD** appears 11 times in **Proverbs**, and **fear the LORD** occurs 4 times. **Beginning** is the Hebrew or *resit*, which means *the start*. Thus, one cannot gain **knowledge** of spiritual things by starting at the wrong point by refusing to **fear the LORD**. In other words, to recognize **God's** character and respond by revering, trusting, worshiping obeying and serving **Him**. *Resit* also means *the capstone or the essence*. The *essence* of true **knowledge** is **the fear of the LORD**. Apart from **Him**, we are ignorant of spiritual things (**Romans 1:22; Ephesians 4:18; First Peter 1:14**).

In contrast to those who **fear God** and have **knowledge, fools despise wisdom and discipline (Proverbs 1:7b)**. In the Hebrew, **despise** or *buz*, means *to hold in contempt, to belittle or to ridicule*. It is used 7 other times in **Proverbs 6:30, 11:12, 13:13, 14:21, 23:9 and 22, 30:17**. Of the three Hebrew words translated fool in **Proverbs**: *ksil* is characterized by a closed mind, *nabal* refers to one who lacks spiritual perception, and *ewil* is an illustration of someone who is arrogant.



This was a clear picture of **Ahaz**. **He** was arrogant, lacked spiritual perception, and had a closed mind to what **Isaiah** was saying. In short, **Ahaz** was a fool.

You and I were born into that darkness. Many people don't believe that. In fact, in a Barna poll 74 percent of Americans said that people were born neither good nor bad. That illustrates how thick the darkness is. We don't realize how lost and helpless we naturally are, even though **God's** Word plainly says: **Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me (Psalm 51:5).**