

The Prophet's Telescope: Isaiah and Immanuel


Dr. John H. Niemelä

Water of Life Bible Class

November 30, 2023

Introduction

Historic Background

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Israel (Ruled by Pekah)</td><td>Assyria (Tiglath Pileser)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Judah (Ruled by King Ahaz)</td><td>Syria (Ruled by Rezin)</td></tr> </table>	Israel (Ruled by Pekah)	Assyria (Tiglath Pileser)	Judah (Ruled by King Ahaz)	Syria (Ruled by Rezin)
Israel (Ruled by Pekah)	Assyria (Tiglath Pileser)				
Judah (Ruled by King Ahaz)	Syria (Ruled by Rezin)				

Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel had formed an alliance against Assyria (north and east of the map), the dominant power in the eighth century BC. They wanted King Ahaz of Judah to join them in their alliance. Ahaz refused, because he knew that Tiglath Pileser of Assyria was strong enough to conquer the alliance (whether or not he joined it). Ahaz hopes that Assyria will defeat Syria and Israel, but leave Judah alone.

In Isaiah 7, the allied armies (Syria and Israel) are poised, ready to attack Judah (Isaiah 7:1-2). In preparation Ahaz checked on Jerusalem's water supply (Isaiah 7:3). If Rezin and Pekah had defeated Ahaz, they planned to install a puppet king over Judah (Isaiah 7:6). At this point, Isaiah brought his son Shear Yashub to meet a very fearful King Ahaz at the water supply (Isaiah 7:3).

A Clue that Will Be Explained Later

Exodus 13:21

Exodus 33:14, 16

Numbers 14:9

Deuteronomy 31:17b

2 Samuel 7:3, 9, 13-15

How Old Were They? _____ age _____ ; _____

King Pekah ruled Israel from 752-732 BC (21 years)

King Rezin ruled Syria from 750-732 BC (23 years)

Tiglath Pileser ruled Assyria from 745-727 BC (19 years)

King Ahaz was a co-regent in Judah from 750-735 BC and as sole king from 735-715 BC

Isaiah was prophet from 740 to ≈680 BC (60 years)

Isaiah's first son, Shear Yashub (A Remnant will return), would have turned 20 after 722 BC

His 2nd son, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (Quick to the Plunder, Swift to the Spoil), was born ≈732 BC

Short- and Long-Term Prophecies of Isaiah 7–8

Short-Term Prophecy of Isaiah 8

Short-Term Prophecies of Isaiah 7

Very-Short-Term Prophecy: Rezin and Pekah _____

Fairly-Short-Term Prophecy: Assyria _____

Longer-Short-Term Prophecy: Israel _____

Long-Term Prophecy: Immanuel

Matthew 1:22-23 and Isaiah 7:14

Conundrum: How could a virgin birth 730 years later be a sign to Ahaz? (Red Herring)

View 1: An Eighth Century fulfillment for Ahaz

Advantages (minimal)

Disadvantages (great)

View 2: A First Century fulfillment for _____

Advantages

A virgin birth would be _____

^ʿ*Almâ* (עַלְמָה) means virgin

Septuagint translates Isaiah 7:14 as Parthenos (virgin)

If Isaiah meant virgin, then Matthew 1:22-23

It rightly understands a key Hebrew grammar issue _____

Disadvantages

Ahaz would not have seen the sign.

The English seems to imply that Ahaz saw the sign.

View 3: An Eighth and a First Century fulfillment

Advantages (minimal)

Disadvantages (great)

Conclusion