

## The Sign of Immanuel ~ Part 1

### Yesha'yahu 7:1-6

In my last post, we looked at **Yesha'yahu's Commissioning in Yesha'yahu 6:8-13**. In this post, we will begin to look at **The Sign of Immanuel in Yesha'yahu 7:1-6**.

***<sup>1</sup> During the days of Achaz the son of Yotam, the son of 'Uziyahu, king of Y'hudah, Retzin the king of Aram (Syria) and Pekach the son of Remalyah, king of Isra'el, advanced on Yerushalayim to attack it but were unable to conquer it. <sup>2</sup> It was told to the house of David that Aram and Efrayim had become allies. Achaz's heart began to tremble, as did the hearts of his people, like forest trees shaken by the wind.***

**'Uziyahu** was a good king and a godly man. His son, **Yotam**, was also a good king and a godly man. **Achaz**, however, was one of the worst kings in the history of **Y'hudah** and a wicked man. Not only did he turn his own heart against the Lord, but he caused the entire nation to backslide.

When **Achaz** heard that the ten northern tribes of **Isra'el** had formed an alliance with **Aram** and were going to come down and march against the two southern tribes of **Y'hudah**, **Achaz** was blown away like trees in the wind. What was the reason for this alliance? Historically, these two countries allied to protect themselves from the threat of **Assyria**. **Assyria** was to the northeast of **Aram** - a vast and brutal empire. Both **Aram** and **Isra'el** wanted **Y'hudah** to join in the confederacy, but **Y'hudah** refused. Therefore, **Isra'el** and **Aram** were coming to attack **Y'hudah** to force her to join their stand against the **Assyrian** threat.

The chronology of the reigns of **Yotam** (Jotham), **Achaz** (**Achaz**) and **Achazyah** (Hezekiah) is very complicated. Nevertheless, the invasion referred to in verse one can be confidently dated to 735 BCE. By 734 BCE **Tiglath-Pileser III** had begun responding to the problems in the west, and the coalition would not have felt at liberty to take such aggressive action.

**Assyrian** king **Tiglath-Pileser III** was occupied with **Urartu** and **Media** between 737 and 735. During this time the western states were working to put together a coalition that might resist **Assyrian** incursions. **Retzin** had most likely played a significant role in bringing **Pekach** to the throne of **Samaria**. It is suspected that the attack against **Yerushalayim** was related to **Achaz's** pro-**Assyrian** position. The siege was intended to result in replacing **Achaz** with an anti-**Assyrian** representative on the throne, who would then join in the coalition.

***<sup>3</sup> Then Adonai said to Yesha'yahu, "Go out now to meet Achaz, you and your son Sh'ar Yashuv, at the end of the aqueduct from the Upper Pool, on the road to the Launderers' Field;***

The name of **Yesha'yahu's** son, **Sh'ar Yashuv**, means "a remnant will return," a theme that has already played a significant role in the first six chapters of the book.

Achaz deserved to be wiped out. He was, after all, a wicked ruler, a man who had no interest in the things of God. God sent **Yesha'yahu** to talk to him, thereby giving **Achaz** yet another chance to turn to Him.

We can learn a valuable lesson here. Oh, the mercy of our Lord. How longsuffering and patient He was with **Achaz**. How longsuffering and patient He is with me.

***<sup>4</sup> and say to him, 'Take care to stay calm and unafraid; don't be demoralized by these two smoldering stumps of firewood, by the blazing anger of Retzin and Aram or the son of Remalyah; <sup>5</sup> or because Aram, Efrayim and the son of Remalyah have been plotting against you, thinking,***

**"Go out now to meet with Achaz,"** the Lord said to **Yesha'yahu**, and tell him **to stay calm and unafraid**. The plans of these two firebrands are not going to work the way they think or hope. In fact, in sixty-five years, the ten northern tribes will not even be a people. Indeed, within sixty-five years, the **Assyrians** came down and carried away the ten northern tribes, and they haven't been heard from since.

**<sup>6</sup> "We will invade Y'hudah, tear it apart, divide it among ourselves and appoint the son of Tav'el as king there." ~ Yesha'yahu 7:1-6 (CJB)**

Though nothing is known historically of this individual, the name **Tav'el** is Aramaic and thus suggests someone in the royal household (likely of Davidic lineage) whose mother was perhaps a princess from the area of **Aram**. Such an individual would be more likely to be a sympathizer with **Aramean** causes.

The political intentions of **Retzin** and **Pekach** were clear. They wanted to remove **Achaz** from the throne because of his unwillingness to join their coalition and they intended to install a puppet king who would be more easily manipulated.

In my next blog, we will continue to explore **The Sign of Immanuel ~ Part 2** in **Yesha'yahu 7:7-12**.