

Jean Ross: Good morning, friends. Welcome to "Sabbath School Study Hour," coming to you from the Granite Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sacramento, California. We'd like to welcome all of those joining us across the country and around the world, our extended Sabbath school class. You know, a number of our regular Sabbath school members here at Granite Bay are joining us online as well, and we'd like to greet all of you, and thank you for taking the time to study with us. We have a very important lesson. We've been studying through the book of Isaiah, and we've just started our study. Today we're on lesson number three. It's entitled "When Your World is Falling Apart," very appropriate lesson for what's happening in our world today.

So, again, if you don't have a copy of the lesson quarterly, just go to the Amazing Facts website, and you click on "Sabbath School," and you'll be able to download a copy of the lesson and study with us.

We do have a free offer we'd like to tell you about, a book entitled, "The Final Verdict," and this is free. We'll send it to anyone in North America. To receive the book, call the number 866-788-3966, and just ask for Offer Number 162, and we'll send that to you, or if you're outside of North America and would like a digital copy of the book, you'll want to text the code "SH078," to the number 40544, and you'll be able to get a digital copy of the book, and you'll enjoy reading it. It's called "The Final Verdict," and I think you'll find that very informative. Let's bow our heads for prayer.

Dear Father in heaven, what a privilege to be able to come before You on this special day, a day that You have set aside where we can look back at Your work in Creation but not only Creation of our world but re-creation of our hearts and our lives, and, Father, we can rest in those everlasting arms, fearing not the future, for we know who has guided us thus far. So, Lord, we want to invite Your presence to be with us in a special way in our study today. Be with Pastor Shawn as he opens the Word, for we ask this in Jesus's name, amen. Our lesson this morning is going to be brought to us by our family life pastor here at Granite Bay: Pastor Shawn Brummund.

Shawn Brummund: Well, good morning to you all. It's nice to be able to come together to be able to continue to study as the Lord has blessed us with one of the most powerful chapters that we can find in the book of Isaiah, and because time is short and we have lots to be able to cover here this morning, I want to invite you to open your Bibles, if you have it with you, to Isaiah, the 7th chapter. We're going to start with the first two verses there. We're going to the book of Isaiah, 7th chapter.

For those of you who were disciplined and diligent enough to be able to go through this last Sabbath lesson study throughout the week, you know that we are studying and have been studying throughout the week Isaiah chapter 7, verses 1 through 14, and so we're starting with verses 1 and 2. Isaiah chapter 7, in verse 1 and 2, it says, "Now it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to make war against it, but could not prevail against it. And it was told to the house of David," that is, to the family of Ahaz, the great, great, great-grandchild of King David, "it was told to the house of David, saying, 'Syria's forces are deployed in Ephraim.' And so his heart and the heart of his people were moved as the trees of the woods were moved with the wind."

And so in order for us to be able to understand both these verses and the verses that are ahead of us here in our study today, I want to share with you just some very helpful context in history to be able to put it into its bigger picture. We need to back up about 200 years, and as we back up 200 years, we come to one of the most famous kings of Israel. His name was King Solomon. And when King Solomon came to the end of his life and he left the throne to his son Rehoboam, Rehoboam made some very

horrible, foolish decisions right from the get-go, and because of those very foolish decisions, he turns the bulk of Israel against him and against David's dynasty.

And so we find that 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel turn against him, and they make another gentleman, by the name of Jeroboam, the king of what now has-- had, at that point, I should say-- had become the northern king of Israel. And so Jeroboam, a former servant of King Solomon, becomes this new king of, sadly, the 12 tribes of Israel that made up the bulk of the geography of Israel as well as obviously the bulk of the tribes of Israel. And so there's Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, sitting there on his throne with only his own tribe, the tribe of Judah, and then we also find that Benjamin kind of ended up siding on his kingdom's side as well, and that makes up what we call the southern kingdom of Judah.

So we have the southern kingdom of Judah, and now we also have the northern kingdom of Israel. And sadly, Jeroboam, who made up the-- who was the first king over the northern kingdom of Israel, immediately turns his tribes to idolatry, just outright, open idolatry, and whenever we turn to idolatry-- the ancients turned to idolatry-- it always came with some very perverted principles and practices that came with it, and so, because of that, the moral and spiritual decline of the northern kingdom was very rapid because of that.

Now, we fast-forward 200 years to the time of Isaiah, the time of the chapter in which we're looking at, which is Isaiah chapter 7, and we find that there is a very bad apple that takes the throne in the kingdom of Judah, and his name is Ahaz, and Ahaz is part of the Davidic lineage. He is certainly a great-, great-, great-, great-grandchild of King David, but sadly, he had made some horrible choices, some choices that were very much in line with the previous king of Israel that I just talked about, which was Jeroboam of 200 years previous.

Now, by the way, 2 Kings chapter 16 is a key chapter. If you haven't read it and you want to get further insight, the most comprehensive biblical record of the life and the character of King Ahaz is found in that chapter, 2 Kings chapters 16, and that's referenced in your lesson study for this particular week. Assyria is rising up as a new superpower of the known world back then, and as superpowers like to do, they began to expand their territory and began to conquer the nations that were surrounding them, and, of course, this was a very real and practical threat to the security and to the well-being of those nations that surrounded them.

As it turns out, and as we just read in chapter 7, verses 1 and 2, the kings of Syria and Israel to the north, they surmise that, if they are to find themselves in a necessary partnership and they were to use both of their military power to be able to conquer this southern kingdom of Judah, remove King Ahaz from his throne and establish a puppet ruler, why, then, they would be able to have a three-kingdom coalition and have a substantial increase in their military power to be able to resist this rising superpower by the name of Assyria.

Well, they go ahead, and they try with some success to be able to conquer the southern kingdom of Judah. They conquer at least one city and take it, and so on, but when they came to the capital city of Jerusalem, as we have just read, we find that their attempt had failed. They had failed in conquering both Jerusalem and removing King Ahaz from his throne. Ahaz must now make a key political decision, a political and military decision.

Now, if Ahaz was a wise and righteous king as his great-, great-grandfather David was, he would've immediately consulted God. He would've consulted God, and he would've taken advantage of a man of God by the name of Isaiah that had already established himself very clearly as a prophet of God. And so Ahaz had all the spiritual and military and political advantage that he needed to be able to resist this power, not only in Assyria, but now also from many of their fellow brethren, which is the northern

kingdom of Israel, who had partnered with Syria. But the problem was this: Ahaz had already rejected God as his counselor and embraced some very foreign gods and idols, along with their wicked principles and their wicked practices.

Now, we have to understand that, when I say that he had embraced some very wicked, idolatrous practices, this is far more wicked than we here in America could ever imagine. Now, many of us are Christians, as well as the Lord, we know as well, is very distressed over how readily we are to be able to take the lives of our children while they're still in the womb. Abortion is practiced according to our free will across this country to the demise of many innocent children within the womb of their mothers, but back then, it was even worse than it is now.

You know, there's an organization, a Christian organization, a charity that we have here in America, and I forget what it's called, but you can give, and they actually pay for ultrasounds so that different young women that are finding themselves with a baby in their womb and are considering abortion can go in and get a free ultrasound, and what we found and what this Christian organization has found is that, when the young woman sees that child and they hear the heartbeat of that child, almost all of the time that they go through that experience, they end up deciding to keep the child 'cause they realize, "Wait a minute, this is not just an unfeeling, unliving blob inside of me. No, this is already a precious child with a heartbeat."

Well, back in Ahaz's day, he had embraced the worship of an idol, and I believe his name was Moloch, and he was the idol of the Moabites, if I remember correctly, and so King Ahaz, just outside of the ancient city walls of Jerusalem, in the Valley of the son of Hinnom, as it came to be called, is where he would set up this metal idol, this large, larger-than-life, metal idol, this idol named Moloch, and then he would take some of his sons and his daughters, and he would encourage other citizens that wanted to worship Moloch as well and to receive Moloch's blessing to take a child that has already been born-- so they didn't have to have an ultrasound to be able see this precious life that God has given to them. They are carrying this child. They are nursing this child. They are feeding--they are changing its diapers already, and they take that same child, and as they heat up-- as they called it "passing their children through the fire," they would take that child, and they would bring it out to the outstretched metallic, red-hot hands of this idol, and they would lay the baby on there and let it sear to death upon that idol.

Now, friends, I just want us to stop for a moment and just recognize how wicked and hard your heart has to be to be able to practice that. So, friends, the only reason I'm sharing this, as gruesome as it is, is to be able to help us to understand the reality of how steeped into immorality and into wickedness the kingdom of Judah, in particular, its king and his influence upon the kingdom was bringing upon his country. This was not a man of God. Ahaz did not have the heart of David. He had the genes of David. He possessed the genealogy of David, but he did not have the heart of David. He had the heart of wickedness.

By the way, this is where-- the Valley of the son of Hinnom is where we get the term in Greek in the New Testament "Gehenna," and many of you know that "Gehenna" is translated into "hell," and so Jesus was taking this valley of-- with the heritage of wickedness, both in passing the children of the different worshipers of Moloch through the fire and searing and burning their different children in sacrifice to the God, and then later on it was a dump of refuse in which the different dead carcasses and garbage, and so on, would be burned just outside of the walls of Jerusalem in Jesus's day. Indeed, it was a place that was literally hell on Earth in different ways throughout its history and rightly a fitting symbol of the future judgment of hell that God has in store for the devil and his angels and, sadly, for any of us that reject the mercy and the graciousness and the love that God has for us.

Now, because Ahaz had already rejected God as his counselor, had embraced very deep and steeped wickedness in his life and in his heart, he was already on the same page as King Tiglath-Pileser. Now, Tiglath-Pileser was the king of the Assyrian superpower that was rising up and expanding his empire around him. If you go to that key chapter that I talked about earlier, 2 Kings chapter 16, it reveals that King Ahaz obviously admired Assyria, had admired this king of Assyria, Tiglath-Pileser, for its great power, for its great success in expanding its empire.

In fact, if you read that chapter, it tells us that King Ahaz had imitated the Assyrian king's altar of sacrifices, and he immediately had commissioned the head priest in Jerusalem to make a replica of the exact same altar that this pagan king had developed. And now King Ahaz was bringing his sacrifices before the altar and before the altar-- on the altar, his newfound altar, before the temple, the Jewish temple of Jerusalem. And so we can only imagine that King Ahaz was more than happy to approach this Assyrian king and ask him for help. This was a great excuse, almost for certain, in his mind, that he might be able to partner up with this most powerful man in the world.

Well, even though Ahaz wanted nothing to do with the man of God, he did not approach the man of God, Isaiah, he did not want anything to do with God or the man of God, the Bible tells us in the later verses of chapter 7, in the book of Isaiah, that God had sent Isaiah to search out for Ahaz with an offer to encourage him and to help him.

Now, God knew that this was critical for God's plan of salvation and preserving the tribe of Judah and preserving David's dynasty. If Judah were conquered, even as the northern kingdom of Israel eventually was by this foreign power called Assyria, Assyria would've taken the tribe of Judah and did the same thing that he did with the northern tribes of Israel. He would resettle and assimilate them with foreigners even as they did in the north.

This is why, even today, the ten tribes that made up the northern kingdom of Israel are referred to as the "ten lost tribes." Why? Because they became so intermarried and so blended with the other foreign powers that Assyria had purposely done as they did with all conquered nations that, indeed, they became the Samaritans. Did they have Jewish blood? Yes, but they also had the blood and the genes of all kinds of other different foreign races and peoples. And so there was no more purebreds, if we could call it that. There was no more pure Jews that remained by the time Jesus lived on the earth.

Now, if this had taken place and Assyria had conquered Judah, they would've done the same thing to Judah, and, therefore, the lineage of Jesus Christ would be lost, and the Son of David, the ultimate Son of David, Jesus Christ Himself, would not be able to arrive as God had planned. And by the way, this is interesting. This is the only reason that Jesus and His stepdad, if we can call him that, Joseph, are the only ones in the New Testament that can claim that they are a pure Jew coming from the pure tribe of the tribe of Judah, why? Because God had protected them from being conquered and assimilated by the Assyrians. They had protected them from that threat. This is why Paul could claim that he was a purebred Jew, a Hebrew of Hebrews, a descendant of the tribe of Benjamin, as many of you know, okay? The tribe of Benjamin. And Benjamin was the only tribe that partnered up with Judah and remained with the southern kingdom of Judah. And so those were the only two tribes that were preserved in regards to its lineage by the time Jesus came along in this earth.

Now, it's true that Judah needed to be punished eventually, sometime about 100 years after that of the northern kingdom of Assyria--I mean, the northern kingdom of Israel-- but they were taken captive by a different superpower that rose up a hundred years later, and that was the superpower of Babylon. Now, Babylon handled its captive nations much different than Assyria did. Rather than forcing this assimilation between themselves, these conquered peoples and the Assyrians as well as many other foreign peoples, the Babylonians allowed you to become-- to remain separate and preserve your

particular lineage. And so that's exactly what happened. So they were punished, but God was still able to preserve the lineage of David, the tribe of Judah, as well as the tribe of Benjamin.

Well, Satan inevitably saw this, and he inevitably had worked through the Assyrian power, hoping to be able to break this pure lineage of the dynasty of David, and not only is the Bible record very clear that Satan attempted this during Ahaz's day, but he also did through the Assyrian power in Hezekiah's day, the one that took the throne after King Ahaz had died. But Isaiah chapter 14, in verse 24, it tells us that the Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, "Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass and, as I have purposed, so it shall stand."

And so when God makes a purpose, when He has a goal, when He knew that Judah needed to be preserved, He meant it, and that's where we come to verses 3 through 9, of the passage that we're looking at here today. Isaiah chapter 7, verse 3, it goes on and says, "Then the Lord said to Isaiah, 'Go out now to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-Jashub, your son--'" what does "Shear-Jashub" mean? It means "a remnant shall return." And the lesson study pointed out some good insights on why God had prophetically named this son, this first prophetic son of Isaiah to be a sign to the generation and to the tribe of Judah and that of Ahaz. "So don't go alone, Isaiah, but bring your prophetic son," this sign that declares through his name that a remnant shall return, "at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller's Field--"

Apparently, the king was checking out and inspecting the water source because he knew that there was an imminent siege of the city of Jerusalem again, and, of course, water sources are key to being able to survive the siege. Verse 4, God goes on and says, "and say to him, 'Take heed, and be quiet,'" be calm, "do not fear or be fainthearted for these two stubs of smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and also the son of Remaliah," which is the king of Israel.

And so God doesn't refer to them as "smoking, fiery, threatening volcanos." No, he refers to them as "smoking firebrands." In other words, they're on their last straw. They're taking some of their last breaths. There's just some smoke that's remaining, but the strength of the fire and the burning power that they may have had in the past is now very quickly burning out. "Because Syria, Ephraim--" and that's another term that was used for the northern kingdom of Israel-- "and the son of Remaliah have plotted evil against you, saying, 'Let us go up against Judah and trouble it, and let us make a gap in its wall for ourselves, and set a king over them, the son of Tabel,'" and thus says the Lord God, "It shall not stand, nor shall it come to pass, for the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin. Within 65 years Ephraim will be broken, so that it will not be a people.'"

Indeed, it was only 12 years later that Assyria came in and conquered Israel and began to assimilate them and, again, we find that, sadly, those ten tribes very quickly in the years ahead became the lost ten tribes of Israel. In verse 9, it says, "The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If you will not believe," God says, "surely you shall not be established." And so here's this prophetic message that the man of God, Isaiah, brings to this very wicked and rebellious king by the name of Ahaz, and God has made it very clear, "Listen, I have declared I am the sovereign one, and I've declared, indeed, that Assyria will not be able to conquer you, and both Syria and the coalition that they entered in with the northern tribe of Israel will not succeed in conquering Jerusalem and taking your throne."

Well, obviously, after the first message is given, well, God must've seen that Ahaz was not convinced, because we find that God continues on in trying to convince Ahaz, indeed, that the Lord has spoken, and, indeed, it will come to pass as He said. And that's when we come to verses 10 through 12. As we come to 10 through 12, it says, "Moreover the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, 'Ask a sign for yourself

from the Lord your God. Ask it either in the depth or in the height above.' But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord.'"

Now, friends, we could be tempted to be able to read that and think, "Well, Ahaz was being, you know, pious. He was being reverent and respectful of God and did not want to test him." But all we have to do is go on and read this very next verse, and we realize that there was no good motive, no good reason in which Ahaz was giving in his heart nor in his words for such declining God's offer. In verse 13, it says, "Then he said, 'Hear now, O house of David. Is it a small thing for you to weary men, that you will weary my God also?'"

Was Isaiah and God impressed with the answer in which Ahaz had given? No. You see, we have to remember the heritage and the character and the life of Ahaz, even as I gave you a small glimpse but very needful glimpse of the fact that this man named Ahaz had no respect or reverence for God. This man had given himself fully and completely over to complete idolatrous wickedness, and so we don't want to fall into any kind of misunderstanding in regards to the response of which Ahaz gives, and, again, verse 13 makes it very clear, both the prophet Isaiah as well as God is not impressed at all. In fact, I'd like to suggest that Ahaz could see the possibility of a sign, a supernatural sign that God could give as an absolute threat to his position of unbelief and his love for sin. He didn't want to threaten that.

The last thing King Ahaz wanted to do was confirm God's existence. He didn't want to confirm God's existence and ask for a supernatural, miraculous sign. No, not at all. Not only would it confirm God's existence, but a sign that is given supernaturally at the offer of God and at the request of King Ahaz would also confirm God's sovereignty.

And the last thing that somebody is in rebelling against God wants is to confirm God's sovereignty because if you go ahead and confirm God's sovereignty, which a miraculous sign and miracle would do, it would also then ultimately confirm that God is the ultimate Judge, and the last thing that somebody that's in love with sin and rebelling against God wants is to be able to be confirmed that, one day, he will be held accountable before the Almighty. And so you can see why Ahaz so readily and so quickly, without hesitation, had declined on this offer that God had given to him.

Well, then we come to the punch line of our lesson study here today which is chapter 7 and verse 14, chapter 7 and verse 14. And this is where I want to park for most of our time here together. And so we kind of moved pretty quickly through the first verses, but that's okay. The lesson study covers it very thoroughly and well. We certainly looked at some additional insights and such that, I think, help us to be able to understand the context of what is taking place when we make our way to this very famous prophecy. It's a prophecy in which we are very familiar.

Some of us have written and, you know, have bought Christmas cards in recent holiday season here, and, you know, one of my favorites that we used to give out, you know, said in big, nice gold letters, "Immanuel, God with us." Christ, the living Christ, the Son of God, clothed Himself in humanity when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a young virgin by the name of Mary.

Now, friends, this is the heart of the Christmas message and the hope of the gospel and the beginning of the hope of the gospel that Jesus, who had fulfilled His promise, He had become one with humanity. Verse 14, it says, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign." Ahaz declines because his heart and his motives are in a very bad place, and so the Lord says, "Listen, whether you want it or not, I'm going to give it to you. I'm going to give you a sign. I will decide what that sign is." What is that sign, Lord? The sign is this: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Now, again, the Hebrew name and term "Immanuel" literally means "God is with us."

Now, friends, again, this is likely the most famous, well-known Old Testament prophecy concerning Christ's death, and when we go to the gospel of record of Matthew chapter 1, we find that Matthew was the only one that was inspired by God to be able to record and confirm the ultimate, the ultimate fulfillment of this powerful prophecy, not only was it a prophecy but it was a promise. In chapter 1, in verses 18 through 25, I read it here together with you.

If you have your Bibles, I invite you to open as we look at that together. It's Matthew chapter 1, and verses 18 through 25. It says, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit, and then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly."

Very obviously, Joseph was not as convinced as Mary and the others were that that in which was conceived in her womb did not come from having sexual relationships with another man. "But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit,'" not another man but of the Holy Spirit. "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus--" "Jesus" literally means "Savior--" "'for He will save His people from their sins.' So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet--" what prophet, friends? The prophet Isaiah-- "which was spoken through the prophet saying, 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us.'"

Now, friends, many people who read these verses, coming back to Isaiah chapter 7, when we return back to Isaiah chapter 7, even as we've looked at the first 14 verses, particularly verses 1 through 13 that makes its way up to that of verse 14, but also including the first half of verse 14, many people are confused by why a prophecy that is clearly fulfilled in Isaiah's time is now being applied 700 years later to the arrival of Jesus. Now, this is not unusual confusion. These are not unusual questions that we ask when we first come to read Isaiah.

When I first read through the book of Isaiah and came to chapter 7, and read the verses that preceded that of verse 14, as well as the last, the two verses that followed up with verse 14, made it very clear to me that that prophecy was fulfilled in the generation of Isaiah, and, yet I'd already read the gospel of Matthew where God had very clearly declared that it also applied, or did apply, to the virgin Mary and the conception of Jesus.

Let's read verses 15 and 16. Okay, we're going to Isaiah chapter 7, and we're looking at the following verses. Again, what is the most important thing in understanding any particular verse in all of the Scripture? Well, one of the most important rules of safe, reliable interpretation of the Bible is context. You know, in real estate, they say, "The number one golden rule for real estate in choosing real estate is location, location, and location." I guess, no, what's the saying? "The top three rules of real estate is location, location, location." And when it comes to Bible study, "context, context, context."

Context means everything, friends. Of course, the Holy Spirit is number one, but the second number one rule that we have in reliable interpretation is context. Verse 15, goes on and says as Isaiah continues and the Lord continues, he says to King Ahaz, "Curds and honey He," that is, Immanuel, "shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings," the kings of Israel and the king of Syria.

And so both the verses that come up to the great prophecy, this Christmas prophecy, or prophecy of the birth of Christ, as well as the verses that follow make it very clear that God had brought a Son, a boy in the very near future of Ahaz, that would be named Immanuel.

Now, this is in perfect harmony with the trend that God had already began through the prophet Isaiah, for there is already a son that Isaiah had given birth to, and God had chosen his name as well, "I want you to name it 'a remnant shall return.'" And now God is saying to King Ahaz that there is another boy that will be born. His name will be Immanuel, "God is with us." And before He grows old enough, in other words, while He's still in His toddler years, you will find that these great and threatening kingdoms from the north will be squelched, and they will no longer be a threat. In other words, God is saying, "Listen, this is a sign to let you know that I'm in charge. I've got you covered."

Now, this is what we need to understand. We need to understand that the prophecy that is found in Isaiah chapter 7 and verse 14, is what we call a dual application prophecy. And what do I mean by that? Well, what I mean by that is that there are two applications to that prophecy. There is a one that is closer into the future. They are both future prophecies. For Immanuel, the Son, of Isaiah's time, had not yet come, but there's two future-- there's two applications.

The first one was in the more immediate future, and then the next one was 700 years into the future in this particular case, where it was fulfilled, ultimately, in the conception of Jesus in the womb of Mary. Now, this particular kind of dual application of prophecy is not alone. One of the most famous and well-known, especially within the Adventist church is we are very prolific studiers of the end-time prophecies that God has given to us as this end-time movement of the Seventh-day Adventist church is bringing the three angels' message to the world, and the classic dual prophecy that we have studied and that we preach and share with so many millions around the world every single year is that found in Matthew chapter 24, because in Matthew chapter 24, Jesus had referenced to a statement that Daniel had written some 500 years before Jesus, in which he talked about a coming abomination of desolation.

Now, the gospel of Luke tells us that the first application of that abomination of desolation that Jesus warned his people about took place in 70 A.D., when the pagan Roman army surrounded the holy city of Jerusalem. They sacked and completely leveled and burned the city, but then, when they came to the temple, they did the same thing. They leveled the temple. As Jesus said, "Not one stone will be left upon another."

Now, friends, that was the first application of that prophecy, was it not? But that wasn't the last application of the prophecy. It was a dual application. Now, the second application was much more international, much more widespread, even as it is still being fulfilled today, and that second application of the abomination of desolation is not the pagan Roman armies that come in and trample around an earthly temple, but it is the Roman Church that comes in and tramples upon a heavenly sanctuary and temple where Jesus is interceding for all believers as our High Priest, applying his sacrifice that he made on the cross of Calvary for the cleansing of our sins, that we might have of hope of sinners of growing and accepting the salvation that comes through Jesus Christ alone.

And so what happened was the ultimate fulfillment of this particular prophecy, the abomination of desolation, is that the Roman Church then removed Christ's daily intercession for us as our High Priest and replaced it with an earthly priesthood. So rather than going to the heavenly sanctuary and to the heavenly eternal priest, Jesus Christ Himself, with my sins, for cleansing for my guilt, now I am sent to my local church and my local priest, and the Bible calls that the ultimate spiritual fulfillment, the second fulfillment of this particular dual prophecy. And so that's one of the classic, largest dual prophecies that we find in the Bible. Immanuel's first application is found in the generation of Isaiah.



Now, the evidence for this is overwhelming in both chapter 7 and chapter 8, and the evidence is overwhelming in favor of this particular first Immanuel, this first sign and prophetic child to be born to a prophetess by the name of Mrs. Isaiah. And you could find that in chapter 8, in verses 3 to 4. Now, in verses 3 and 4, of the 8th chapter, you'll find there that there is a third prophetic son now that is now born, and his name is kind of long, and if I spoke Aramaic or something like that, I think I could pronounce it a whole lot better, but when you go to those verses, you'll find that God then instructed Isaiah to have a third prophetic child with a prophetic name that was to be a sign to the nation and to the generation of Ahaz.

Now, many of us can get very uncomfortable when we are confronted with the idea that the original application of this particular prophecy included a young married woman of childbearing age but wasn't really a literal virgin. In fact, if you go to the original Hebrew, there are two words that are used to describe young women of childbearing age that are also marriageable, and one of them refers to one that is already married and has been with a man, and the other refers to a woman that is a virgin that has never been with a man.

As it turns out, the Hebrew that is used by Isaiah and by the Lord in Isaiah chapter 7, in verse 14, is the word that is not referred to a literal virgin but a woman that is of childbearing age that is marriageable that is already having sexual relations with a man.

Now, the Bible's commentary, as the Seventh-day Adventist commentary as I found, explains this in a very first-class way, and so I just don't have time to be able to run over all the details of which they shared, but if you want to study this more thoroughly, I highly recommend that you go to the Seventh-day Adventist commentaries. Look up this particular verse, and they spend several pages explaining this in a very first-class way.

Now, of course, if this is a dual prophecy, and the first prophecy is fulfilled through a boy named Immanuel in Isaiah's day, we don't want that woman to be a virgin because, if she is a virgin, we run into some very quickly-- we very quickly run into some very real theological problems because, if she's a literal virgin that is supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit, even as Jesus was through Mary, now we have two divine beings that arrived in history. We have one that arrives in Isaiah's day and the second one that arrives in Christ's day, in Mary's day, and, of course, we don't want that, do we? No, that raises a much larger problem for us to be able to handle.

And so I know that this brings us to the million-dollar question, and I know that I'm speaking if-- to a number of different conservative, very sincere Christians and some scholars in the different circles of very sincere Christians have done all kinds of gymnastics trying to demonstrate that the-- and prove that the original virgin that's spoken of in Isaiah's day was a literal virgin.

And friends, we get into a whole lot more problems. We dig ourselves into a very big hole that actually makes the Bible more illegitimate and more difficult for us to accept as the infallible record of the Word of God because, again, we don't want the first woman that bears Immanuel to be a virgin that is conceived supernaturally because then we get into some very real problems.

And so the million-dollar question is this: "Does the first application and fulfillment of this prophecy through a naturally born son in Isaiah's day negate its second application to a marriageable virgin woman who has a supernatural conception by the Holy Spirit? No, not at all, friends. It does not put itself at odds. I think some of us have mistakenly come to believe and understand somehow that it does. God's infallible, inspired, prophetic Word declares in the prophetic book of Matthew that, indeed, Mary and Jesus found themselves being conceived supernaturally by the Holy Spirit Himself within the very womb of the woman named Mary.

Friends, it's absolutely completely clear when we come to the Word of God in Matthew chapter 1, even as we have just read. And so God has made it crystal clear that the ultimate application in terms and in the context of Mary is that she was a literal woman that had never had sexual relations with any man, both before she conceived Jesus in her womb through the Holy Spirit, as well as throughout her entire pregnancy.

Now, friends, we know that it's not unusual for a couple that is married, even after the woman is married, to continue to have sexual relations, but as you read the gospel record of Matthew chapter 1, we find that God had inspired and confirmed to that of Joseph that he is to determine both with himself and with Mary that they would not have sexual relationships even after they went to the wedding altar until Jesus was born.

Now, of course, this confirmed without a doubt that when Jesus was born, it was a miraculous birth. It was a supernatural birth. It was the birth that saved all of sinful mankind. Now, this is most certainly why God had directed Isaiah not to record the details of Immanuel's birth in his day. It's fascinating, but I think it's also on purpose that we can find the details of the first prophetic boy and son of Isaiah being born, which means "a remnant shall return," and God records the details of the third prophetic boy that is named "speed the prey," and "speed the booty" or the loot, and so on, again, referring to the eventual conquering and judgment of Israel by Assyria and Judah if they're not careful, which eventually it did take place in the days of Babylon.

But God then purposely inspires Isaiah to leave out the details concerning and surrounding the birth of what is most likely his second prophetic Son, which is that of the boy named Immanuel, "God is with us." He will bring us through this hard time in Isaiah's day.

Now, this is not the first time that God had done this. He inspired Moses not to record the details in the birth and the life of an ancient king and priest in Abraham's time. His name was Melchizedek. Now, Melchizedek was a fascinating figure. He was the king of Salem, which eventually became Jerusalem, and he was also a priest of the Most High God. It is confirmed for us in Hebrews chapter 7, verses 1 through 3, where it says, "This same Melchizedek, the king of Salem, the priest of the Most High God," who is without father-- later on, in verse 3, it says, "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of the days or end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually."

Now, friends, I ask the question, "Did Melchizedek literally have no father or mother? Did he literally have no beginning or end? No, of course, he had a beginning. Of course, he had an end. Of course, he had a mother. Of course, he had a father. But what Paul is inspired to do when he is writing and penning the words of Hebrews chapter 7, is he's trying to use that, or God--he is purposely using something that God had inspired Moses to leave out of these different details of Melchizedek's life so that God can then use that as a fitting figure and prophecy, a symbol through Melchizedek of the coming King and Priest, Jesus Christ Himself.

Now, Paul understood that Jesus is the only being that has no beginning or end, that has no earthly mother or father, but God is using Melchizedek because those details are not in the sacred record to be able to use him in a very powerful way. The lack of the details adds to the mystery of the original Melchizedek, and it makes it more effective in using him to prophetically point to the ultimate Melchizedek, which is Jesus Christ. Even Moses was used prophetically to represent and prefigure Christ. In Deuteronomy chapter 18, in verse 15-- and this is our last verse for today-- it says, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet," with a capital "P," if you look in the New King James, "a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear."

And so, again, we find here that God is using Moses in a very fitting way as a historical figure to symbolize the ultimate Moses, which is Jesus Christ. Now, did Moses have a beginning and an end? Did he have a mother and a father? Sure, he did. Was Moses perfect? No. Okay, so there's a lot of things that Moses didn't have that was like Christ, but there was a lot of things that did, and there was enough that did that God was able to use Moses as a prefigure, as a prophetic figure to look forward to the ultimate Moses, Jesus Christ. And so he says, "There was going to be a Prophet that is much greater and bigger than myself, but He is very much like me."

Did Moses lead God's people out of captivity and sin into the liberty and Promised Land and righteousness of Jesus Christ in the land of Canaan? Sure, he did. Did Jesus deliver you and I from sin and captivity and slavery and to liberty and righteousness and holiness? Sure He did. See, you see the parallel there, friends? There's a powerful parallel between the two, and God is simply using the same in Isaiah chapter 7 and verse 14. So I hope that was enough time and enough words to be able to help explain and navigate through what is most commonly one of the most misunderstood prophecies in the Bible, and understand that God knew what He was doing from the very beginning, and He was using it in a very powerful way for you and me.

All right, my friends, we need to be able to close. Don't forget to take advantage of the free offer that we have here today as Pastor Jean earlier had offered. It's "The Final Verdict," and you can go ahead and ask for--you can go ahead and dial 1-866-788-3966. Again, that's 1-866-788-3966, and ask for Offer Number 162, and we'll be happy to be able to get that out to you, and until then, let's close with prayer.

Father in heaven, we want to pray that you will bless us and keep us, and help each and every one of us as we continue to worship you and learn your Word, in Jesus's name we pray, amen.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544, or visit the web address shown on your screen, and be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts, wherever and whenever you want, and most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: Amazing Facts, Changed Lives.

Charlie Green: My life was in turmoil. My wife and I were fighting all the time. I got away from everything and everybody. I don't know. It just--I always had this emptiness in my heart. I want it filled. I just felt like I went my whole life, you know, just searching for something. And my father died, and that ruined me a lot. My father didn't believe in suicide, and I didn't want to live, but rather than disrespect him, I decided I would just become so mean that someone else would do it to me, and I wouldn't have to. So I joined the Army, thinking, "What better place to get killed than in the Army?" And while I was in the Army, my daughter got injured. She was in an accident, and she was blind and paraplegic, and it's just like I felt the whole world was coming down on me.

One morning, I just really got mad, and I gave God a cussing like you wouldn't believe. I said, "I'm not Moses. I'm not Abraham." You know, I don't-- but I put my sandals on just like they do, and I'm a man. I don't want to know why this is happening to me. I just want to know that it's happening for a reason. If You tell me right now that this is all for a reason and You can stack it on me from here to the end of time-- and I will never complain again."

And that little TV came on. It'd been sitting there just static all night long, and there was this minister. Well, he pops up, and he says, "Today's lesson is from the book of Job. God only lets those suffer that He

loves the most." And I said, "Well, that's all you have to say, Lord. I appreciate it greatly. From that day forward, I knew that He was there and He was in my life and that He would help me.

I went to prison just almost immediately after that. I was in prison for aggravated assault. I was in one of the worst prisons in the state of Tennessee. It was full of gang activity. I got my throat cut-- 52 stitches. Man, like, I could take those fingers and stick them all the way through, out my mouth. I'd gone to the library that day because it was really about the only thing to do. But I ran across this little book called "The Richest Caveman." This book is hilarious, but it is great. I'm sitting there with this big beard. I'm thinking, "Hey, I know what it's like to look like a caveman, but--" I'm not an educated person, I guess you'd say, but I'm a simple guy. I'm just really a simple guy. That's what I loved about Doug Batchelor because this guy is just straight out as you can get.

And my wife and I, we've kept contact through all these years, and so much is going on, and I told her, I said, "Listen, this is the center of my world right now," and I said, "I really want you to be involved in it with me. I need it," and I said, "You will too if you ever just take hold of it." I told my wife, I said, "Listen, I've got this Amazing Facts Bible study going here, and this is the best way for you to get this information, I think," I said, "because it's broken down, and they give you questions and-- to make you look for these things, you know. So it's not anyone telling you. You find it on your own, and they teach you to actually use the Bible."

She was there faithfully every Wednesday until we decided, you know, she wanted to be baptized also. She saw it coming around. The choice was made, and October the 4th, 2014, my wife and I, we were baptized in the water at the same time, and we started our walk together, I guess you'd say. I went through everything that a man could possibly go through, I guess, from marital trouble, loss of family members, death in my family, my children were harmed, and my daughter is handicapped for life. I went to prison, but still, I kept my word to God that He could stack it on me as much as He wanted, and I'd never question Him again, and I didn't. But I can say this much: He never put nothing on me that I couldn't handle, and He walked with me through it all.

And I'd like to say that-- to anyone who is in prison, not to give up. Don't lose hope. Put your faith in the Lord and study, and seek Him, and He will seek you. And my name is Charlie Green, and I want you to know that you and Amazing Facts have changed my life.

Announcer: Amazing Facts, Changed Lives.

Female: Well, my conversion story is when I was in the Philippines. I just graduated as a nurse, and afterwards, I did not have any religion, and one time I found myself inside a small church, Catholic Church in Manila and before a big cross, and I was kneeling before, and I could hear Jesus telling me to enter the convent, save myself and also my family, and I said, "Lord, I would like to follow You all the way."

At that point, I seemed to be happy externally, but because inside the convent we don't read the Bible, we don't study about the Word of God, we pray the rosaries, we also, at the same time, study the lives of the saints and also our founders and the encyclicals of the Pope and the Virgin Mary, and so I do not know the truth, and I had this torture of conscience, the guilty feelings that cannot be resolved, so I will confess to the priests in the confessional box, saying, "Father, forgive me. Since my last confession was last week, since then, I have committed the following sin, including the root cause, why am I falling and falling in that same sin over and over again?"

And still, for 21 long years, I struggle and I struggle, and I struggle. I realized that I was totally empty. I was totally helpless and hopeless and so depressed and so desperate that I would like already to end my life. I was working for five years as dean of the University of San Agustin College of Nursing in Iloilo City,

one of the islands in the Philippines. After five years, I received a commission from my parents to help my sister who was being a battered woman. This is one of the reasons why I came over to United States. It is because my sister needs my help.

As I was working in the hospital in New York, my boss--a thing that was so gracious enough to give me an invitation to the "Millennium Prophecy." As I was listening to Pastor Doug Batchelor's presentation, my heart really was beating so fast, and my mind-- I'm able to grasp the truth that this is the truth that I've been longing to hear all my life that I have been seeking for so long. My personal relationship with Jesus, I can see Jesus as my personal Savior. He is not only the Savior of the whole world, but He is my personal Savior. He was the one who delivered me mightily from the depths of sin from the miry clay.

Pastor Doug Batchelor has been used by the Lord in my conversion. The Amazing Facts, I owe to them. The Lord really blessed this ministry, and I'm so proud that I was able to attend this "Millennium Prophecy." My life has never been the same. It has given me that peace, the joy that never-- I have never tasted in my life, and now I'm set free to be able to work for Him and to follow Him.