



**Gutenberg College Summer Institute 2015  
REUNION: Tanakh and the Gospel of Matthew**

**Talk 2: Background to Isaiah 7:10-16  
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**I. About the Book of Isaiah**

- A. Who was Isaiah?
  - 1. He was a prophet to Judah from 739 BC–690 BC.
  - 2. He was well connected in the palace.
  - 3. According to tradition, he was killed by sawing him in half.
- B. What is the book about?
  - 1. Judah has been wayward: worshiping idols and treating one another unjustly.
  - 2. So God is sending judgment to Judah;
    - a) But it is corrective judgment.
  - 3. Judah has a glorious future in store.
    - a) Accept the discipline for what it is.
    - b) Live in light of the glorious future that awaits.
- C. Where does this section fit in?
  - 1. General structure
    - a) Chapters 1-5: Introduction
      - (1) All the major themes are introduced.
    - b) Chapters 6-12: Prophetic warnings against allying with Israel and Aram
    - c) Chapters 13-27: Destruction of the nations and the world
    - d) Chapters 28-35: Prophetic warnings against allying with Egypt
    - e) Chapters 36-39: Historical realization of short-term prophecies
    - f) Chapters 40-48: God alone is in charge of history.
    - g) Chapters 49-55: The Servant is God's agent to bring salvation to the world.
    - h) Chapters 56-66: Worldwide reign of righteousness
  - 2. Isaiah is approaching Ahaz, King of Judah, early in Isaiah's prophetic career.

**II. Historical situation**

- A. Middle East was in turmoil.
  - 1. Three new kings of kingdoms

2. Assyria appears to be getting itself organized.
    - a) Historically a big threat
  3. Everyone expects Assyria to begin expeditions into the Levant.
  4. What do we do?
    - a) Resist?
    - b) Cooperate?
- B. Aram and Israel had formed an anti-Assyrian alliance.
1. They needed other kingdoms to join.
  2. They wanted Judah to join.
    - a) Judah refused.
  3. Now they are threatening to attack and install a more cooperative king.
  4. Joint armies are camped just north of Judah.
- C. Isaiah was sent to tell Ahaz this plot would not come to pass (7:7).

### III. Comments about the text

- A. "He will eat curds and honey" (7:15) .
1. Compare verse 22.
  2. There will be an abundance of food because of an attack.
    - a) Described in symbolic language in verses 17-20.
- B. Another child is born and given a name with prophetic significance (8:1-4).
- C. Isaiah 8:18 says, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion."