
Turn Back the Battle: Isaiah Speaks to Christians Today
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Chapter 2 Stand or stumble: the choice is yours Isaiah 7:1-13

Questions for discussion and reflection

1. Have you experienced testing times when trusting God and following his word seemed exceeding difficult, but in hindsight you are very glad you did trust and obey for God proved faithful and his word proved true?

Write down one such account as a testimony to how trusting God and walking by faith is worth it, even when circumstances make it difficult. (If in a group: share your testimony.)

2. God's advice to King Ahaz -- be quiet, fear not and stand firm; and his promise -- it [the Syro-Ephraimite plot] will not come to pass'; were both based on God's heavenly perspective -- that Kings Rezin and Pekah were fading lights; and on his promise (the Davidic covenant) which guaranteed the security of David's heir.

Consider some of the worst threats facing the Church today.

(a) What might God's perspective be -- of the enemy?

-- of their Christian victims?

(b) To what promises might we anchor our hopes and prayers?

Here are a few to start with.

Add to this list as many helpful promises as you can:

Isaiah 40:31; Psalm 146:7-9; Habakkuk 2:14; Matthew 28:20b; John 16:33; Romans 16:20.

3. The key verse in God's advice to King Ahaz is Isaiah 7:9b.
'If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all.' (ESV)
'If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.' (NIV)

What exactly is God saying?

How might this apply to your own situation?

Prayer: *I believe, help my unbelief.*

My Lord and God,

You alone are sovereign over all principalities and powers --
in heaven and on the earth.

You are not intimidated by any amount of human bluster,
or any threat that any man or woman or army or nation might issue.

Indeed the nations are like 'a drop from a bucket' to you,
like 'dust on the scales' (Isaiah 40:15).

I praise you Father for you are not a God who is far off and removed,
but one who is near and profoundly interested in every single aspect of my life:
material, political and economical;
physical, emotional and spiritual.

Forgive me Lord, for the times I failed to seek your perspective on these matters.

Forgive me Lord, for the times I forgot or resisted your promises,
and responded in fear of what I saw
rather than in faith in what I knew.

I thank you Lord for your long-suffering patience and grace.
I humbly thank you for the countless second chances and for your
willingness to forgive.

I praise you for your faithfulness;
indeed, you are absolutely worthy of my trust.

Great is your faithfulness!

May your Holy Spirit work powerfully in me to increase my faith,
so that I might be deeply rooted and firmly established in you my Rock
(Psalm 1; Matthew 7:24-27; Psalm 18:2).

For I do not want to wither, topple, collapse or be swept away when hard-times flood in.
I want to be a witness that stands firm in faith, not only for my own sake,
but for the Church's sake,
so your grace, power and glory might be revealed to the world.

Lord, you have assured me that

'All things are possible for one who believes.' (Mark 9:23)

And so it is in earnestness that I cry to you,

'I believe, help my unbelief!' (Mark 9:24)

For the sake of your Church and for glory of the Lord,

Amen.
