



Isaiah was written about seven centuries before Christ, warning the people of Israel that they were on a path leading to God’s judgment. But judgment isn’t the end of the story. There is also comfort in the promise that God will have compassion, and ultimately rescue His people through His Servant. Isaiah also offers us the opportunity to ask the questions: What path are WE on? What is the way forward?

Week Three: TAKING GOD AT HIS WORD

Text: Isaiah 7-9

All of us have something in our past we are not proud of. We all see future possibilities that we are afraid of. Shame and fear can keep us living in darkness. We need God to give us a sign that will lead us out of that darkness. In this week’s passage from Isaiah, we see God approaching His people (and their king, Ahaz) to confront their shame and console them in their fear. He offers promises for the future and a sign that He will keep those promises. Jesus is both the sign and the fulfillment of all God’s good promises for us.

Discussion Questions: *The following are based on the “My Application” Questions found in the bulletin this week. Leader urge your group members to attend worship—or watch the sermon online—and to spend time considering and answering those questions before coming to the group. This will produce a richer discussion time.*

- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: “Everyone has something from their past that are not proud of”? Explain why.
- Compare Isaiah 7:10-13 with chapter 1:2-7. What is wrong with Ahaz’ response to God? (in what way is he turning his back on God like a rebellious child?) Why do you think he responds as he does? Can you relate...have you ever done the same?
- When in your life have you experienced darkness and gloom? During that time, did you turn away from God or did you look for a sign of hope from Him?
- Read 9:1-7. Based on what Isaiah says, what hope do we have in the middle of darkness and gloom? What keeps you from experiencing this hope in your life?
- What does it mean, in a practical sense, to take God at His Word and act accordingly?

Prayer Time:

Read again Isaiah 9:2, 6-7. This passage describes the predicted Messiah, Jesus. What about this description is particularly hopeful and comforting to you? How does that hope relate to an area of person "darkness" for you? (Contemplate this silently for a minute or so.)

Thank God for the hope He gives us through Jesus. Be specific. (If you are facing conflict and turmoil, might be thankful that Jesus is the Prince of Peace...)

Memory Verse:

*"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign:
The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son,
and will call him Immanuel."*

Isaiah 7:14

Application:

Small Group Leader, there are two great opportunities coming up for you and your group members to practice volunteering for missional assignments:

1. **Great Adventure** this summer. This is our annual church-wide effort to saturate our communities with the Love of Jesus. People can serve in the following ways:
 - a. Host a Back Yard Bible Club. (July 8-12)
 - b. Drive a team of teens to the clubs they will lead.
 - c. Man a booth at Summerfest. (July 13) This is a great project for groups to do together.
2. **Defying Gravity** this fall. As a church, we will be examining Biblical principles of stewardship that can free us up to follow Christ more fully, allowing us to find our security in God alone. All small groups are encouraged to participate by engaging with FPU (Financial Peace University) and by identifying one new leader for an additional group.