

Title: The Story of Ahaz  
 Pastor: Theuns Jacobs  
 Date: 22 June 2008  
 Time: 09h00



## The Key: Isaiah 7

### Isaiah 7:1-3 ESV

<sup>1</sup> In the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah the king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to wage war against it, but could not yet mount an attack against it. <sup>2</sup> When the house of David was told, "Syria is in league with Ephraim," the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind. <sup>3</sup> And the Lord said to Isaiah, "Go out to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-jashub your son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Washer's Field."

## Israel & Syria

### II Chronicles 28:5-8 ESV

<sup>5</sup> Therefore the Lord his God gave him (Ahaz) into the hand of the king of Syria, who defeated him and took captive a great number of his people and brought them to Damascus. He was also given into the hand of the king of Israel, who struck him with great force. <sup>6</sup> For Pekah the son of Remaliah killed 120,000 from Judah in one day, all of them men of valor, because they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. <sup>8</sup> The men of Israel took captive 200,000 of their relatives, women, sons, and daughters. They also took much spoil from them and brought the spoil to Samaria.

## Assyria



The Assyrian Empire, C. 700 B.C.E.

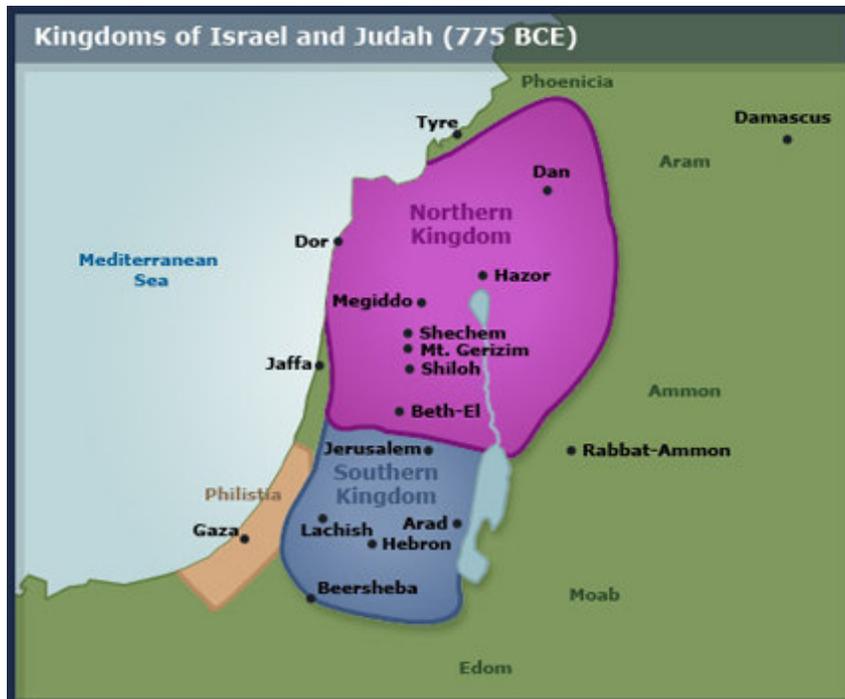
Top arrow: Assyria

Bottom arrow: Egypt

Israel & Judah: Small green section in middle



In the next generation of Hezekiah, Assyria invaded Judah and captured Lachish. They were denied Jerusalem when God made a plague break out and 185 000 died (Isaiah 37). Lachish is 42km southwest of Jerusalem (picture above is of tell Lachish). Because it was on a major route to Hebron and Jerusalem, it served as buffer zone against the Philistines with many bloody wars waged there and no certainty about who owned it. Thus many occupation layers.





To commemorate his victory, Sennacherib built the Lachish room in the palace in Nineveh which tells the story of the conquest. To access the hall, you walked down entrance which had 3 sets of 5 legged Assyrian bulls. The front set was 3m tall and the rest smaller to create impression of depth.

The Assyrian bull illustrates the military philosophy of Assyria:

- The first standing that was professional.
- Travelled light for speed (rampaging).
- First full scale siege machines.
- Used terror to keep conquered lands: Cruelty!



In the room base reliefs were carved to tell the story of how Lachish was taken. This was to leave visitors in awe of Assyria. The reliefs are chronological – as you walk around the room the story unfolds.



The camp. Highly organised and religious – priests offering sacrifices.



- Siege machines storming gates: Note torches thrown down. At Lachish big rocks with holes were found that the Jews used with swing motion to try and knock down the machines.
- People already leaving the gates to try and flee.
- Dead men being impaled (dead because their heads are already dropping).



Captives leaving after city taken: "pierced the lips (and) took them to Assyria as a spectacle for the people of my land."

[Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, 2 vols. (Chicago Univ. of Chicago Press, 1926–1927)]



Enlargement: probably torturing men by cutting limbs off.

"In strife and conflict I besieged [and] conquered the city. I felled 3,000 of their fighting men with the sword I captured many troops alive: I cut off of some their arms [and] hands; I cut off of others their noses, ears, [and] extremities. I gouged out the eyes of many troops. I made one pile of the living [and] one of heads. I hung their heads on trees around the city." [Albert Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Part 2: From Tiglath-pileser I to Ashur-nasir-apli II* (Wiesbaden, Germ.: Otto Harrassowitz, 1976)]

"The splendor of Assur, my lord, overwhelmed him [the king of Urartu] and with his own iron dagger he stabbed himself through the heart, like a pig, and ended his life." [Luckenbill, vol. 2, sec. 22]

### Isaiah 7:7-9 ESV

<sup>7</sup> Yet this is what the Sovereign Lord says: "It will not take place, it will not happen, <sup>8</sup> for the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is only Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people. <sup>9</sup> The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah's son. **If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.**"

Reality

Fear

Choices

Why should I believe?

### Isaiah 7:10-16 ESV

<sup>10</sup> Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, <sup>11</sup> “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” <sup>13</sup> And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.

Ahaz's end

### II Chronicles 28:16-21 ESV

<sup>16</sup> At that time King Ahaz sent to the king of Assyria for help. <sup>20</sup> So Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him. <sup>21</sup> For Ahaz took a portion from the house of the Lord and the house of the king and of the princes, and gave tribute to the king of Assyria, but it did not help him.

### II Chronicles 28:1-3 ESV

<sup>1</sup> Ahaz ...did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father David had done, <sup>2</sup> but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel. He even made metal images for the Baals, <sup>3</sup> and he made offerings in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom and burned his sons as an offering...

What will be your end?