

## Handout: Isaiah Lesson 5

The Syro-Ephraimite War:

Date: 735-734 BC

Key players: Tiglath-Pileser III, king of Assyria  
Razon, Aramaean king of Damascus (Syria)  
Pekah, king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel  
Ahaz, king of the Southern Kingdom of Judah

The issue: The rise of Assyria forced smaller kingdoms to choose between joining forces to resist Assyria or submitting to Assyria and becoming vassal states.

The conflict: Israel and Damascus formed an alliance against the Assyrians. Judah did not accept the invitation to join the alliance and therefore, the Israelites and Aramaeans went to war against Judah.

Isaiah 7:14 ~ *The Lord will give you a sign, in any case: It is this: the virgin [ha 'almah] is with child and will give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel (LXX).* Matthew quotes this same verse and wrote that Isaiah 7:14 is fulfilled in Jesus' virgin birth (Mt 1:23). Isaiah 7:14 is the first of ten Old Testament fulfillment statements found in St. Matthew's Gospel—5 from Isaiah (Mt 1:23 = Is 7:14; Mt 4:14-5 = Is 8:23-9:1/9:1-2; Mt 8:17 = Is 53:4; Mt 12:17 = Is 42:1-4; Mt 21:4-5 = Is 62:11). Pope Pius VI condemned any interpretation denying the messianic sense of Isaiah 7:14 in 1779. When the Hebrew word *almah* is used in the Old Testament it is never used for a woman who is sexually experienced and is only used to describe a young, unmarried woman of marriageable age (Edward Sri, *Queen Mother: A Biblical Theology of Mary's Queenship*, page 54-55; 140-41; see endnote #1 in the lesson). The first Hebrew translators of the Book of Isaiah into Greek clearly believed the intent of the inspired writer of the Book of Isaiah was to convey that the "sign" the house of David would receive was that a virgin, descended from the great King David, would conceive and bring forth a son. For a married woman to bring forth a son is hardly a divine "sign" but for the virgin (*ha almah*) to be "with child" is clearly a divine "sign" which points to a particular virgin. I found 7 references to '*almah*: 1. Gen 24:43; 2. Ex 2:8; 3. Is 7:14; 4. SS 1:3; 5. SS 6:8; 6. Ps 68:25; and 7. Prov 30:19. In each case the Hebrew word '*almah* explicitly means "virgin" or implies it; and in each case '*almah* always refers to an unmarried woman of good reputation.

The prophetic names of Isaiah's sons:

1. Shear-Jashub means "a remnant will return" and foretells a return from exile.
2. Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz means "speedy-spoil-quick-booty" and foretells the sack of the Northern Kingdom by the Assyrians.

Christian interpreters have always identified Isaiah 8:23-9:6/9:1-6 with Jesus:

1. He is the "Wonder-Counsellor" who is the source of heavenly wisdom (1 Cor 1:30).
2. He is the "Mighty-God" who possesses divine power and through whom all things are created (Col 1:16-17).
3. He is One with the "Eternal/Everlasting Father" and the Second Person of the Godhead who rules forever as the Lord of time (Jn 14:7-11; Heb 1:10-11).
4. He is the "Prince of Peace" who rules as God's divine Son and brings lasting peace to those who believe in Him and serve His Kingdom in this life and in the next (Rom 5:1).

Michal E. Hunt Copyright © 2015 [www.agapebiblestudy.com](http://www.agapebiblestudy.com)