

## PROMISE MADE - PROMISE KEPT

Isaiah

mikematijevich

mmatevich@aol.com

Intro:

- \* A professor did some calculations about Jesus' birth happening - with only one prophecy...
- \* Many prophecies but today focus on one... in songs we sing, & most think just a 1st century thing...
- \* It answers a question that I have & you have-
  - Does God really keep His promises?
  - Is God active & interested in history...?
  - Is God active & interested in your life?
- \* We ask questions because we see such RANDOMNESS...
  - Like maybe there is a God and He started this whole thing then backed away...
  - Because your world seems as if God hasn't been there for you...
  - Maybe we invented religion to help us cope with the randomness of life...
- \* Today we look at a story that PUMPS-UP my confidence that God is alive & well.  
And God is ACTIVE on the micro & macro level in history.

Let me read a couple verses in NT- get the picture:

Mt. 1:20-25 (1:21 "...all this was done...")

- \* This prophecy made 730+B.C.- it made NO sense then to people when it was written.

\* Review from last week:

- Israel divided into two portions: N tribes= Israel (10); S tribes Judah (2)  
Into the middle of all this God sent the Prophet with a message for Ahaz

Isaiah 7:2-4

\*(v 4) God perspective they are the residue of a fire...

Isaiah 7:5-9b The strength of those nations is their leaders, but it will not be after 65 years

Isaiah 7:9c "If ye will not believe, then..."

- \* This is powerful- God is saying to this terrible king... "I'm giving you 2nd chance to return to your faith- of Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob; I have a covenant with them, I have protected them in the past... so return to the faith of your fathers."

\* Ahaz isn't interested...

Isaiah 7:10-11 Isaiah is saying ask God for a sign if you don't believe me. Ahaz says NO.

Isaiah 7:12 This is not Ahaz being sanctimonious because (2 Kings 16 he allies with the Assyrians)

Ahaz had ANOTHER plan & paid for it with the treasures of the Temple.

(2Ki 16:7 "So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son)

"I am counting on you to help me OVERCOME my enemies- fight for me..."

Isaiah 7:13 So you don't want to play God's way?

Isaiah 7:14 God will come up with a SIGN, a PLAN, a WAY.

- \* This is important- God was so insistent because God had made a COVENANT- so I (God) will come to you & I will give you a sign... & you & the world will know that I am a God that keeps His promises.

Isaiah 7:14a That's it? The sign- a virgin will have a son?"

See the scene: Isaiah tells Ahaz - this verse, Ahaz, says, "Is that all you got?" (It didn't make sense to Ahaz.

Isaiah goes on...Aram & Israel will be judged by the Assyrians, but I will use them to judge you...

- \* And because I (God) don't like anyone judging my people I will send another group to judge them (Assyrians) then another, and another, and another.

\*\*\* You can bet on it Ahaz because God is going to give a sign... a SON

Isaiah 9:6 Routine info until "...MIGHTY GOD..." whoa... this son is God?

- \* Ahaz shrugs his shoulders and turns and goes out... sure enough

Assyria made war with Israel & they had to withdraw from Judah...

- \* Next 12 years Assyria exported so many people & imported so many people that when Jesus showed up this area was called Samaria (half-breed Jews)

- \* Next 20 Assyrians came down on Judah Hezekiah King then ransomed the city by giving the Temple treasures to the King of Assyria
- \* 90 Years later the Babylonians conquered all - destroyed the walls & the temple exported the brightest & the best back to Babylon- SURELY they would last forever... but 70 years later the Persians (300 years), then the Greeks, then the Romans.
- \* Ahaz was long forgotten, the promise of a "SON" the sign was all but forgotten, & the Jews that were devout felt forgotten by God...
- \* Israel & Judah had been the marching grounds of the nations that conquered them... Where was God... where was the Messiah?
- \*\*\* Then 700 years later God sent a message to a girl named Mary & said, "Mary you are the one..." - Then he came to Joseph in a dream and said...
- Mt 1:20-23 "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."
  - \* Joseph... Mary is the girl from Isaiah 700 years ago- that made NO sense, but NOW...
- Mt. 1:24-25 "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
- PROMISE MADE... PROMISE KEPT!
- \* It looked like God had forgotten His promise, but there it is! WOW!
- \* It looked like God had abandoned them- but God was at work the WHOLE time!
- \* Ahaz couldn't even come up with a sign- so God came up with one... So Israel & the world would know that He is the God nations, Leaders, & History...
- \* And I will accomplish my WILL whether I am invited to OR not!
- \* If you asked my kids to build a case for my presence in their life... Based on my willingness to DO what they WANT me to do, & when they WANT it, & how they want me to do it.
  - \*\*\* My kids might conclude that their father doesn't exist, & he is certainly not present... If THAT is the foundation they use to build their case.
- \*\*\* So it is with us..
  - My willingness to trust Him when He does WHAT, WHERE, HOW, WHY I want it done.
- \* That is why we wonder some times if God even cares, or is around.

Then we come to this thing called Christmas - how I kept my promise through Isaiah, even to a wicked king Ahaz... I will keep my promises to you as the baby WAS born just as I said...

- \* So you can trust me with all my promises EVEN when it doesn't look like I am alive anymore.

- \* So here we are IN BETWEEN the time of the promise & the fulfillment of the promise.

- \* What to do?

May I close with reading Isa. 7:4 again and paraphrasing it for you?

Isa 7:4 "And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah."

- \* The things that you fear, marriage, kids, security, you ask , "Are you at work God?" These things that you fear... TRUST that God is at work. Don't be afraid, I am active in your life.

- \* God did keep His promise- Emmanuel has Come!

PROMISE MADE---PROMISE KEPT...

That is why we celebrate Christmas.