

Sermon Title: When Fear Replaces Faith

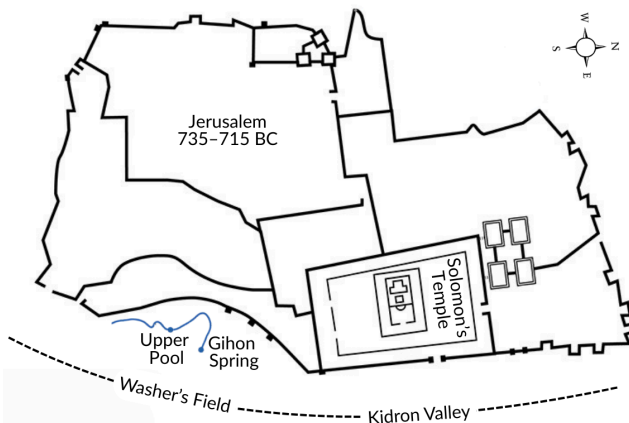
Sermon Text: Isaiah 7:1-14

Date: September 21, 2025

Ice Breaker: What's one thing you were afraid of when you were younger? What's one thing you didn't expect to be afraid of now that you're older?

1. Read Isaiah 7 and 2 Kings 16. What do you notice about Ahaz's spiritual life and his choices as king? Where did he put his trust?

2. When Ahaz was king, Jerusalem's water came from the Gihon Spring, which was outside the city walls and vulnerable during war. In the valley below was the Washer's Field where people used the flowing water to do laundry. What might Ahaz have been doing at the upper pool? Is there significance to Isaiah meeting him there?



3. People are often depicted as trees in the Bible (see Psalm 1:3, Isaiah 61:1–3, Daniel 4:10–14 & 4:20–23, and Luke 3:8–9). What is the significance of God describing Rezin (*Retz-een*) and Pekah (*Pe-kakh*) not as tall healthy trees but as ‘smoldering stumps of firewood’?
4. Fear is an emotion built on beliefs. For King Ahaz, his fear rested partly on the strength of his enemies, and partly on the belief that God would not help him. How does God reassure Ahaz in Isaiah 7:4–9? How is faith different than suppressing fear?
5. Ahaz refuses to ask for a sign by twisting Deuteronomy 6:16. What are signs meant for in the Bible (see Genesis 9:12–17 and Exodus 4:1–9)? What does it mean to “put God to the test” (see Exodus 17:1–7, Malachi 3:10, and Matthew 4:7)?
6. Prophecies like Isaiah 7:14 often have two layers of meaning — one for the people living at that time, and a second pointing ahead to Jesus. What did Immanuel (God with us) mean for Ahaz in his day? What similarities and differences are there in Matthew 1:23 when it's talking about Jesus?