

FEAR SO YOU WON'T BE AFRAID

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God's Presence Makes You Fear without Being Afraid

ONE: Only Faith in God Brings Firmness

7.1-9

Don't live in fear (of pressure from neighbors) 7.1-2

Don't act foolishly (by making wrong alliances) 7.3-7

In the Lion of Judah is firmness 7.8-9

TWO: Seek the Faith God Intends to Give You

7.10-25

Don't hide in spirituality (false piety) 7.10-13

God's presence will remove your fears 7.14-25

THREE: God's Presence Supersedes All Scheming

8.1-10

God loves his people so much he will allow our scheming to drown us up to the neck. 8.1-8

Immanuel will one day come in judgment and glory 8.9-10

Interact with Isaiah 7.1-8.10 with these thoughts/questions:

1. What fears (Judah's are in 7.1-7) lead you/us to make questionable alliances in business, dating, marriage, choice of church, ministry...?
2. The 10 northern tribes left firmness by splitting off from Judah & Jerusalem. This led them away from God's presence and to all kinds of wrong alliances and fears. In seeking independence from parents, family, church, friends, are you/have you been in danger of abandoning the firm foundation God provides in his covenant promises and people?
3. Ahaz' refusal to do what God said: "*ask a sign of the LORD your God*" (7.10) was really a way of refusing to believe and still appear religious (*I will not put the LORD to the test*). God wanted to and did give him a great sign, *Immanuel* (7.14). We often hang onto old alliances and refuse to step out in faith following Jesus into new friendships, new giving, and new serving. If we don't believe God will save and bless us as we step out, how are we behaving like Ahaz?
4. This passage literally says that God at times graciously allows his people to get up to their necks (8.8) in the flood of trouble that flows from their schemes. He does this to point us to God's ultimate *Immanuel*, Christ Jesus. Take some minutes to give thanks to the one who delivers us from floods of our own choosing, from the small deaths of our many trials, and from the ultimate death we each face. Cry out to him, ask him to make you useful and fruitful, not in spite of your pain and weakness, but because in your weakness alone can you fully praise him.