

# +WEEKLY SERMON

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## The sign to believe

*Isaiah 7:10-16*

Our world is full of signs. Signs are everywhere. There are traffic signs, signs outside shops and stores, signs inside buildings, signs in nature and many more.

Signs give us important information. These could warn us from a danger or give us a significant news.

God has also been using different signs to give significant news as well as warnings to his people. God gave us a sign in Adam and Eve that a Saviour will be born of a woman who will crush Satan and sin (Genesis 3:15); he gave a sign to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3:2-3) as the God who cares and also to Hezekiah as the shadow on the sundial recedes (2 King 20:9-11) as God the healer. There are many more examples.

In our reading today we see God is giving another sign through Isaiah (V14), 'Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel'.

God is love and, in his everlasting love, he desires to be with his people. This is God's promise to King Ahaz and his people, but he refused to ask God for a sign because he would not believe in a sign and in the promise to be saved by God from the enemy.

The result is this sign becomes a judgement for Ahaz (v16-17). Interestingly, this sign is not only for Ahaz but for all those who believe. And this sign becomes a judgement for those who refuse and reject God's word.

Almost 700 years later the virgin Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit and there followed a miraculous birth to a son, Jesus. God's promise of the coming Saviour, a son born of the virgin, is fulfilled in Jesus and they call him Immanuel, which means God with us (Matthew 1:22-23).

The miracle of Christmas is Jesus, God with us. The sign is very clear for those who believe. The Virgin Mary gave birth to a son without the involvement of a man. A unique miracle of Jesus' incarnation.

Jesus is God who left his throne and came to live with us to save us from Satan and sin as he promised. Our God is not a distant God who does not care about his creation.

God reached down to us with his son, Jesus who came to suffer and die in our place. Jesus died our death for the forgiveness of our sins, was buried and raised back to life to give us life. Jesus' miraculous birth and resurrection are the signs which loudly say that Jesus is Immanuel - God with us. Believe and follow him to be saved and have life eternal.

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