

Understanding Isaiah Chapter 7; Verse 20-21
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Introduction:

Here in verse 20 we are able to witness many ministers and church members; who use this verse to show scripture requirements for an individual to shave or not to shave his beard or facial growth. While this scripture has for many hundred years been use for scripture to justify the shaving of one's facial hairs or beard; the truth is that it has nothing at all to do with and individual who wishes or is compelled to shave his beard. Nothing is more far from the truth of God than when this passage is misinterpreted. This passage is metaphor for the future judgment, which God will bring against His people Israel because of their sins and the sins of Ahaz and his evil reign as King over Judah and the southern Kingdom of Israel.

We still should understand man's relationship to his own beard and facial hair and I think that you will not find one scripture where God ever shaved a man To the contrary: The Zohar, a primary sources of Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism), attributes holiness to the beard, indicating that hairs of the beard symbolize sacred channels of subconscious holy energy that flows from above to the human soul. (It made the hairs stand up on his head) Therefore, most but not all Hasidic Jews, for whom Kabbalah plays an important role in their religious practice, traditionally do not remove or even trim their beards. Scripture reveals in Leviticus 19:27 that "Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.." Talmudic tradition explains this to mean that a man may not shave his beard with a razor with a single blade, since the cutting action of the blade against the skin "mars" the beard. For this reason: Many Jews refrain from shaving during the 30-day mourning period after the death of a close relative, known in Hebrew as the Shloshim (thirty) as well as during periods of the Counting of the Omer and the Three Weeks. In the end whether we be Jew or Gentile; nothing matters except the keeping of His (Yeshua) word. Now let's get back to Isaiah Chapter 7.

We are able to see that Verse 20 depicts the threatening of the great desolation which the Mighty God of Israel would bring upon Ahaz and his kingdom by the Assyrians, and eventually the destruction of the ten lost tribes of Israel; notwithstanding their escape from this present storm, because they went forward, still in all their own wickedness (verses 17–25). And all of this is written in the Prophet's book; both for our comfort and for our admonition; that we might have hope in the promise of God; through the keeping of his word by faith and living above sin. Be ye holy; for I AM holy.

To arrive at a proper understanding of this passage by the Prophet Isaiah we must first understand the reign of Ahaz and how Israel, doing his reign; once again became a

nation where lawlessness and anarchy was the norm and the yielding to strange Gods produced both male and female Predators with an appetite for strange and illicit sex pervasions.

Now Ahaz was the son of Jotham and the eleventh king of Judah (2 Kings 15:38; 16:1-20) He was an ungodly king who promoted the worship of Molech, with its pagan rites of human sacrifice (2Chr 28:1-4) This reign of Ahaz probably overlapped the reign of his father Jotham and possibly the reign of his own son Hezekiah. He became King at the age of twenty and reigned for 16 years, from about 735 B.C. Ahaz in his early reign adapted policies that favored Assyria by refusing to join the anti-assyrian alliance of Pekah of Israel and Razin of Syria; who invaded Judah and besieged Jerusalem, threatening to dethrone Ahaz and replace him with a puppet king (Is. 7:1-6). Between Pekah and Razine more than 120,000 people were murdered and 200,000 taken captive. But Oded, the Prophet intervened and the captives were released shortly thereafter. (2Chr. 28:5-15)

Ahaz completely lost his spiritual identity and stopped following in the ways of four relatively good kings who had preceded him. (Kings: Joash, Amaziah, Azariah and Jotham, his father) Ahaz as King made images of Baal; he offered sacrifices of infants in the Valley of Heinnm; and sacrificed on the high places. (2 Chr 28:1-4) While at Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser III. Ahaz came under further pagan influence, when he saw the pagan altar there in Damascus. The priest at Jerusalem; Uriah was commanded by him to build a copy of the altar he had witness in Damascus and he had it installed adjacent to the Bronze Altar in the temple at Jerusalem; how sinful this man had become when under the influence of strange and pagan gods.

Now hear this: it was to King Ahaz, that the Prophet Isaiah's announcement of the promised Immanuel was made (Is. 7:10-17) Upon receiving this announcement of the coming Messiah; Achaz became terrified and the Prophet Isaiah sent a message to him; that he should return to God. However the terrified king refused to turn to God and Trust Him for deliverance. On the contrary, he plunged further and deeper into self-destruction and idolatry. And it was this conduct of King Ahaz; which brought divine judgment to Judah in the form of military defeats. The Philistines invaded Juda, capturing sever cities. Edom revolted and took captives from Judah; and Razin from Damascus seized control of Elath; Judah's port city on the Gulf of Aqaba. (2 Kings 16:5-6.)

Even after the comfortable promises made to Ahaz as a branch of the house of David, here we see follows terrible threatenings against him, as a degenerate branch of that house; for though the loving-kindness of God shall not be utterly taken away, for the sake of David and the covenant made with him, yet in spite of the promises of God: his iniquity shall be chastened with the rod, and his sin with stripes. For our learning those who will not mix faith with the promises of God; should expect to hear the alarms of his threatenings; when sin and transgression replaces the commandments of God..

Here in Isaiah Chapter 7, we see that the judgment threatened is intense and very great, verse. 17. It is very great, in that it is general, but also precise; it shall be brought upon the prince himself; and as high as he is, he shall not be out of the reach of it; and upon the people, the whole body of the nation, and upon the royal family, upon all thy father's house; it shall be a judgment entailed on posterity and the fact the spoken word of God states that he should have no other God before him; as the Jehovah God alone is the true and one God of all creation and humanity, and shall go along with the royal blood; beginning with the King and extending down to the least. It (judgment) is very great, for it shall be unprecedented and even for days that have not come; so dark, so gloomy, so melancholy, so shall it be and as never were the like since the revolt of the ten tribes, when Ephraim departed from Judah, which was indeed a very sad time for the entire house of David, who as King over all Israel and Judah kept the desire in his heart to bring all the tribes and nations together under one banner; A people committed to serving the one true God.. Take note: This all men should remember: the longer men continue in sin the sorer punishments they should have reason to expect and the final impact upon them will be destruction and death. It is the Lord, the Mighty God, who sits in heaven alone, that will bring these days upon them, for all our times are in his hand, and who can resist or escape the judgments he brings; and who can question His word, once he has spoken it; as to why it should not, be made good?

Now, here we see: the enemy that should be employed, by the will of God; as the instrument of this judgment is none other than the king of Assyria. Ahaz reposed great confidence in that person for help against the confederate powers of both, Israel and Syria, and minded the less and without consideration; what the True God said to him by his prophet for his encouragement; because he had built much upon his personal interest in the king of Assyria, rather than the God of all creation; and had meanly promised to be his servant as the price willing to pay, if he would send him some succours. He had also, took silver and gold and made him (King of Assyria) a present, for which he drained the treasures of both church and state, (2 Ki. 16:7-8). Now at this time the Almighty God threatens that, that same king of Assyria whom Ahaz made his stay instead of the Mighty God, should become a scourge to him and be responsible for his downfall and the downfall of his kingdom. He was so speedily; and, when he came to him, he distressed him, but strengthened him not (2 Chr. 28:20), and in time of his distress he trespassed even more against the Lord God Almighty. it could be said that the reed not only broke under him, but ran into his hand, and pierced it, with a yoke of bondage put in place by the Lord God of Promise and of whom the message came from by the mouth of the Prophet. And thenceforward the kings of Assyria, for a long time were, more than grieving thorns to Judah, and gave them a great deal of distress, mis-fortune and serious trouble. Our less here is one from the beginning: The Lord Jesus does not want us to put our trust in man or in any other king; for man will ultimately lead us to destruction and death. But, Christ at all times should be recognized as our King; our one and only true King of Glory and Father of the Royal Priesthood.

Note: So it always goes without saying that the creature (man) and/or false god, that we make our hope commonly proves our hurt, our pain and our loss. The king of Assyria, afterwards, made himself master of the ten tribes of Israel, carried most but not all of

them away captive, and laid their country waste, the land flowing with milk and honey; given them by God; so as to fully answer without doubt the prediction here concerning the judgments from God; and perhaps it may refer to that, as an explication of verse 8, where it plainly foretold that Ephraim shall be broken, that it shall not be a people; and it is easy to suppose that the prophet at verse 17 turns his speech to the king of Israel, denouncing God's judgments against him for invading Judah.

Now scripturally observe: Summons given to the invaders (verse 18): The Lord shall whistle or call upon for the fly and the bee. (See ch. 5:26). Enemies that always seem as contemptible as a fly or a bee, and under conditions are as easily crushed, shall yet, when God pleases, do his work effectually, even as mighty armies and great men of valor. Though they can be as far distant from one another as the rivers of Egypt and the land of Assyria, yet they shall punctually meet to join in this work when God commands their attendance; for, when God has work to do, he will not be at a loss for instruments to do it with. As it is written: God leaves himself not without witness and a reserve remnant that he at any time can whistle his command and they are set in motion to do his will. (Verse 19)

As the scriptures informs, those who sin and transgress God law will loose their strength and become subjects of their enemies and here we see at the actions of Ahaz and his worshiping of the pagan god Molech, has not only bought the wrath of the True God upon himself but also those who are a part of his kingdom. True believers of God must at any time be ready to separate themselves from evil and corrupt leaders and ministers of the church for their own good lest the wrath of God be upon them as well. Or else the church today will be as it was then: It seems as if the country was in no condition to make resistance. They found no difficulties in forcing their way, but came and rest all of them in the desolate valleys, which were deserted by the inhabitants upon the first alarm, and left them a cheap and easy prey to the invaders. They came and rested in the low grounds like swarms of flies and bees, and rendered themselves impregnable by taking shelter in the holes of the rocks, as bees often do; showing themselves formidable by appearing openly upon all thorns and all bushes; so generally was the land overspread with them. (These bees shall knit upon the thorns and bushes, and there rest undisturbed. Great desolations made, and the country generally depopulated) (v. 20): The Lord shall shave the hair of the head, and beard, and feet; he shall sweep all away, as the leper, when he was cleansed, shaved off all his hair, Lev. 14:8, 9. This is done with a razor which is hired, either which God has hired (as if he had none of his own; but what he hires, and whom he employs in any service for him, he will pay for. See Eze. 29:18, 19), or which Ahaz has hired for his assistance. God, whose thoughts are not our thoughts, will make that to be an instrument of his destruction which he hired into his service.

Note, Many are beaten and controlled with that arm of flesh which they trusted to rather than to the arm of the Lord, and which they and the church were at a great expense upon, when by faith and prayer they might have found cheap and easy succour in God. The message for God, sent through the mouth of the Prophet to King Ahaz detailed the consequences of this general depopulation among the tribes: The flocks of cattle shall be all destroyed, so that a man who had herds and flocks in abundance shall be stripped of

them all by the enemy, and shall with much ado save for his own use a young cow and two sheep—a poor stock (verse 21), yet he shall think himself happy in having any left. The few cattle that are left shall have such a large compass of ground to feed in that they shall give abundance of milk, and very good milk, such as shall produce butter enough, verse 22. There shall also be such want of men that the milk of one cow and two sheep shall serve a whole family, which used to keep abundance of servants and consume a great deal, but is now reduced. The breed of cattle shall be destroyed; so that those who used to eat flesh (as the Jews commonly did) shall be necessitated to confine themselves to butter and honey, for there shall be no flesh for them; and the country shall be so depopulated that there shall be butter and honey enough for the few that are left in it. Good land, that used to be let well, shall be all overrun with briers and thorns (verse 23); where there used to be a thousand vines planted, for which the tenants used to pay a thousand shekels, or pieces of silver, yearly rent, there shall be nothing now but briers and thorns, no profit either for landlord or tenant, all being laid waste by the army of the invaders.

Note, The God of man's salvation can turn a fruitful land into generated barrenness; and it is just and righteous with him to turn vines into briers if we; instead of bringing forth grapes to him, bring forth wild grapes not meant for the masters use, ch. 5:4. The implements of husbandry shall be turned into instruments of war; and the blessings of holiness shall be withdrawn, verse 24. Because of sin and transgression; the whole land having become briers and thorns, the grounds that men used to come to with sickles and pruning-hooks to gather in the fruits they shall now come to with arrows and bows, to hunt for wild beasts in the thickets, or to defend themselves from the robbers that lurk in the bushes, seeking for prey, or to kill the serpents and venomous beasts that are hid there. As they don't live there anymore; for it is God's will that they be driven from the Garden of plenty and prosperity. The Church can only suffer this abandonment when sin lies at it door. And when we are rebellious and walk away from the influence of His word we also, likewise walk away from the influence of his Mercy. When we give him no reason to extend his mercy toward us; how we so quickly learn that he is a God of Swift Justice.

This denotes a very sad change of the face of that pleasant land; good land the bears the signature of the one True God. But what melancholy change is there which sin will not make with a people, who are determined not to keep the ways of the one true God and instead go after the way of Molech? Where briers and thorns were wont to be of use and to do good service, even in the hedges, for the defense of the enclosed grounds, they shall be plucked up, and all laid in common. This is the price that we will all pay and how the land must suffer when we go the way of strange gods; even as Ahaz and his kingdom now must pay the ultimate price for transgression. There shall be briers and thorns in abundance where they should not be, but none where they should be, for God will not reward sin nor those nations who lust for it. verse 25. The hills that shall be digged with the mattock, for special use, from which the cattle used to be kept off with the fear of briers and thorns, shall now be thrown open, the hedges broken down for the boar out of the wood to waste it, Ps. 80:12, 13. It shall be left at large for oxen to run in and less cattle. This we will all witness: when the Lord shall shave the hair of the head, and beard, and feet; he shall sweep all away, as the leper, when he was cleansed, shall shaved

off all his hair. And even as it is written: It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of an angry God. All this is written for our learning; that we may understand what corrupt leadership will bring upon the church; the household of the Church of God. When sin comes into our lives and into the Church; lost are all our right to live and engage in a land, flowing with milk and honey, And, Oh, how we must now dwell among the briars and thorns and diggers of wells without water; never again able to come to the knowledge of truth and the recipient of the manifold mercies of God.

See the effect of sin and the curse it brings upon all those who walk in it; it has made the earth a forest of thorns and thistles, except as when it is forced into some order by the constant care and labor of man; a curse from man's first sin. And see what folly it is to set our hearts upon possessions of lands, be they every so fruitful, ever so pleasant; if they lie ever so little neglected and uncultivated, or if they be abused by a wasteful careless heir or occupant, or the country be laid waste by war, they will soon become frightful deserts; so depraved that no one can inhabit or make it productive. However if we are that part of the Church which shall be delivered; then we are promised another land which can never be desolate; for Heaven is a paradise not subject to any such changes.

God bless the saints of the Most High God,

Brother Charles

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