

Isaiah 8:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

Analysis

Isaiah's union with 'the prophetess' (likely his wife, possibly a prophet in her own right) produces a sign-child. The conception and birth follow natural processes, yet the child becomes a prophetic symbol. This illustrates how God uses ordinary life events for extraordinary purposes. The Reformed understanding of providence recognizes God's sovereign orchestration of natural events to accomplish His purposes. The child's very existence becomes a living prophecy, a walking reminder of God's promised judgment on Syria and Israel.

Historical Context

The term 'prophetess' could indicate Isaiah's wife shared prophetic gifting or simply denoted her status as a prophet's wife. Prophetic sign-children appear elsewhere in Scripture (Hosea's children, Isaiah's other son Shear-jashub). The conception and nine-month pregnancy provided a time marker—before this child could speak 'father' or 'mother' (roughly age 2), Damascus and Samaria would fall. This proved accurate: Tiglath-Pileser III conquered Damascus in 732 BC.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does God use ordinary family life and relationships to accomplish His prophetic purposes?
2. What does this teach about God's sovereignty over all aspects of life, including conception and birth?
3. How might our children and family relationships serve as witnesses to God's work in our generation?

Interlinear Text

בְּשֶׁלֶת מֵהֶם וְאֶלְעָלָה יְהֹוָה וְאָמַר

Then said the LORD to me Call his name Boaz H559 H3068 H7121 H8034 H0 H0 H0

الْفَاتِحَةُ

Mahershalahashbaz

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