



Isaiah 7:14 in Context

Pieces of the Promise

V7: It will not be established/exalted (QUM)
And it will not happen (HAYAH)

V8: For the head of Aram is Damascus
And the head of Damascus is Retziyn
And in the duration of sixty-five years
it will be shattered, Ephraim, from
being a people.

V9: And the head of Ephraim is Samaria
And the head of Samaria is the son of Remalyahu
If you do not believe,
then you will not be stabilized.

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Why This Context is Hard

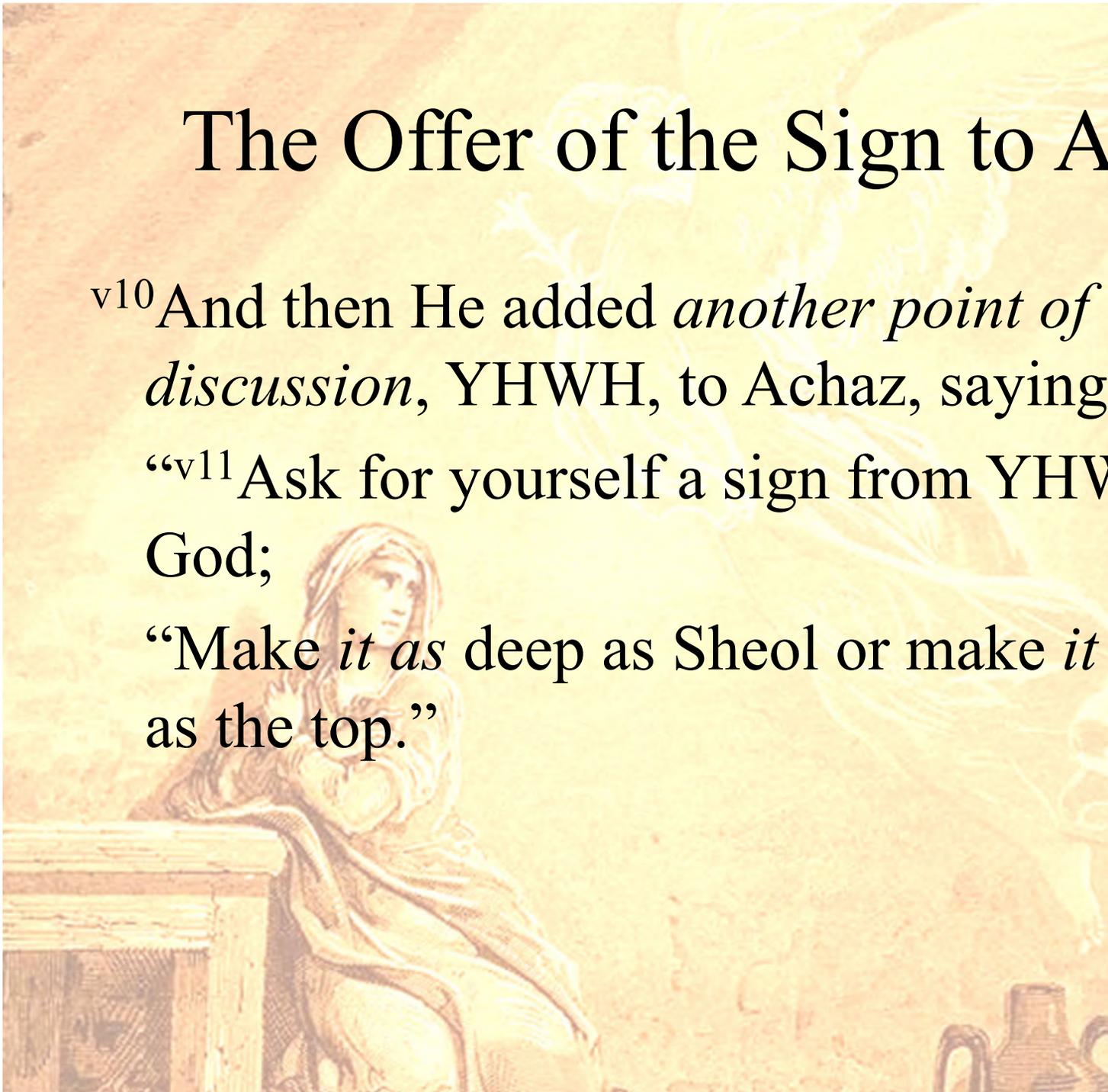
1. The offer of a sign in v11 is often interpreted as referring to the promise being portrayed in v7.
2. Actually, the promise God makes Ahaz goes from v7 through v9.
3. The near-term events of v7 are coupled with the long-term issue of Achaz' destiny in v9.
4. In sum, God's promise is **VERY COMPLEX**.

The Pieces of the Promise

- From v7: The **Crisis** is focal: The plans of Ephraim and Aram will not be established. Tabal will not be made king in Jerusalem, and the conquest by the Syro-Ephraimite alliance will not be completed.
- From v8: **Duration** is focal—within the duration of 65 years the Northern Kingdom will be completely removed as a nation
- From v9: Achaz' **dynasty** depends on his faith—no faith, no succession of his dynasty

The Offer of the Sign to Achaz

^{v10}And then He added *another point of discussion*, YHWH, to Achaz, saying,
“^{v11}Ask for yourself a sign from YHWH your God;
“Make *it as* deep as Sheol or make *it as* high as the top.”



The Offer of the Sign

1. The sign is a crutch for faith. Cf. Hezekiah's requests for signs in 2 Ki 19:29, 20:8-9; Is 38:22.
2. The pattern is that God makes the promise and man receives the certification that God is
 - 1) able
 - 2) the One speaking
3. By definition, then, the sign is directed towards v9 or part 3 of the promise: FAITH
4. The offer of a crutch for faith must be seen as God's test of faith.
5. Of course God did not require a test to know Achaz' heart; however he did choose to demonstrate His faithfulness and justice through Achaz' disobedience and unbelief.

Irony in Isaiah 7

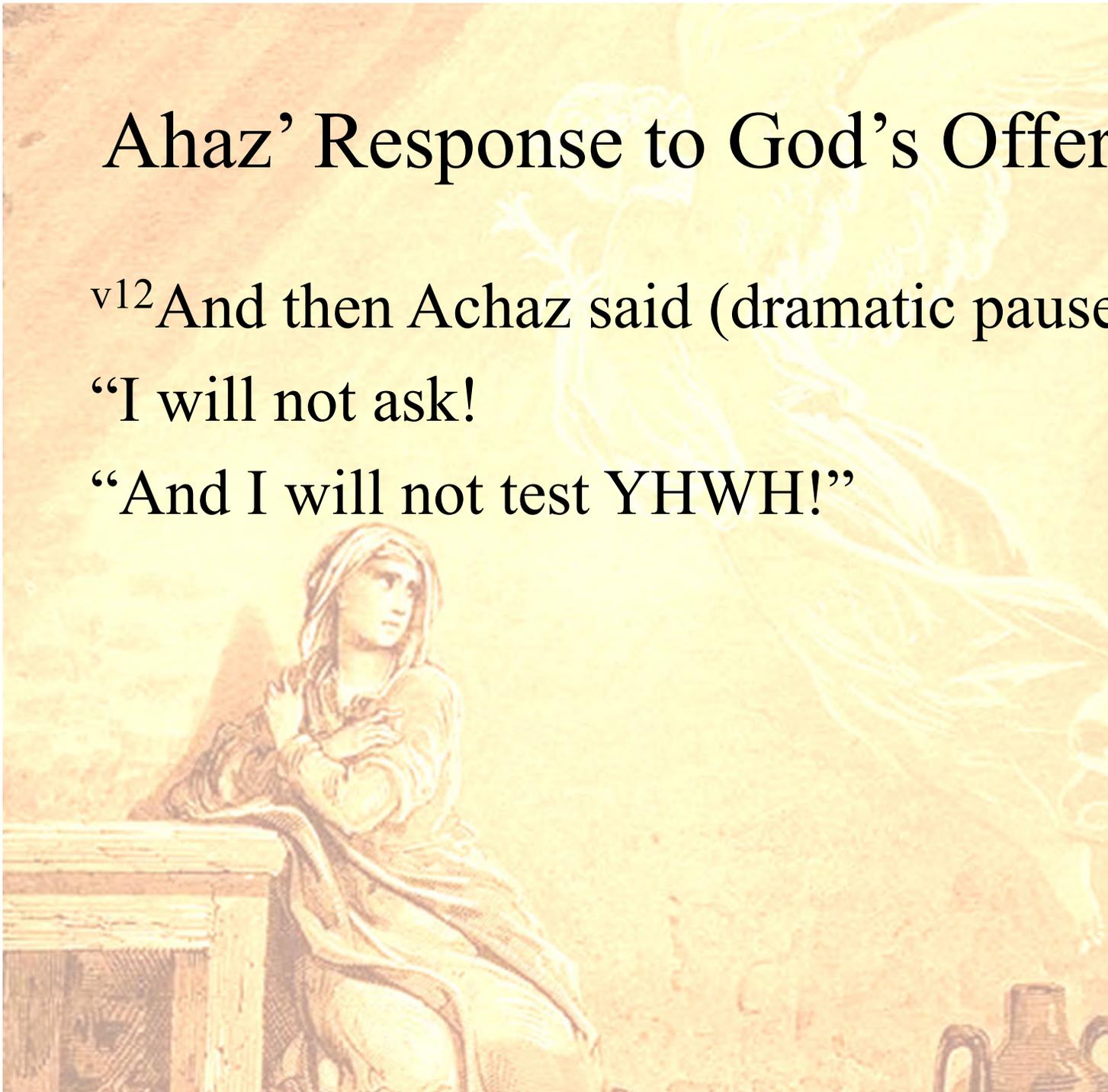
- **With a sign passage we expect 3 components:**
 - 1: **Promise**
 - 2: **Sign** verifying the promise
 - 3: The **faith** response of the recipient after the sign.
- **With Ahaz' sign passage we see the 3 components, right?**
 - 1&3: **Promise** *regarding faith*
 - 2: **Sign**

Ahaz' Response to God's Offered Sign

v¹² And then Achaz said (dramatic pause),

“I will not ask!

“And I will not test YHWH!”



Who is Testing Whom?

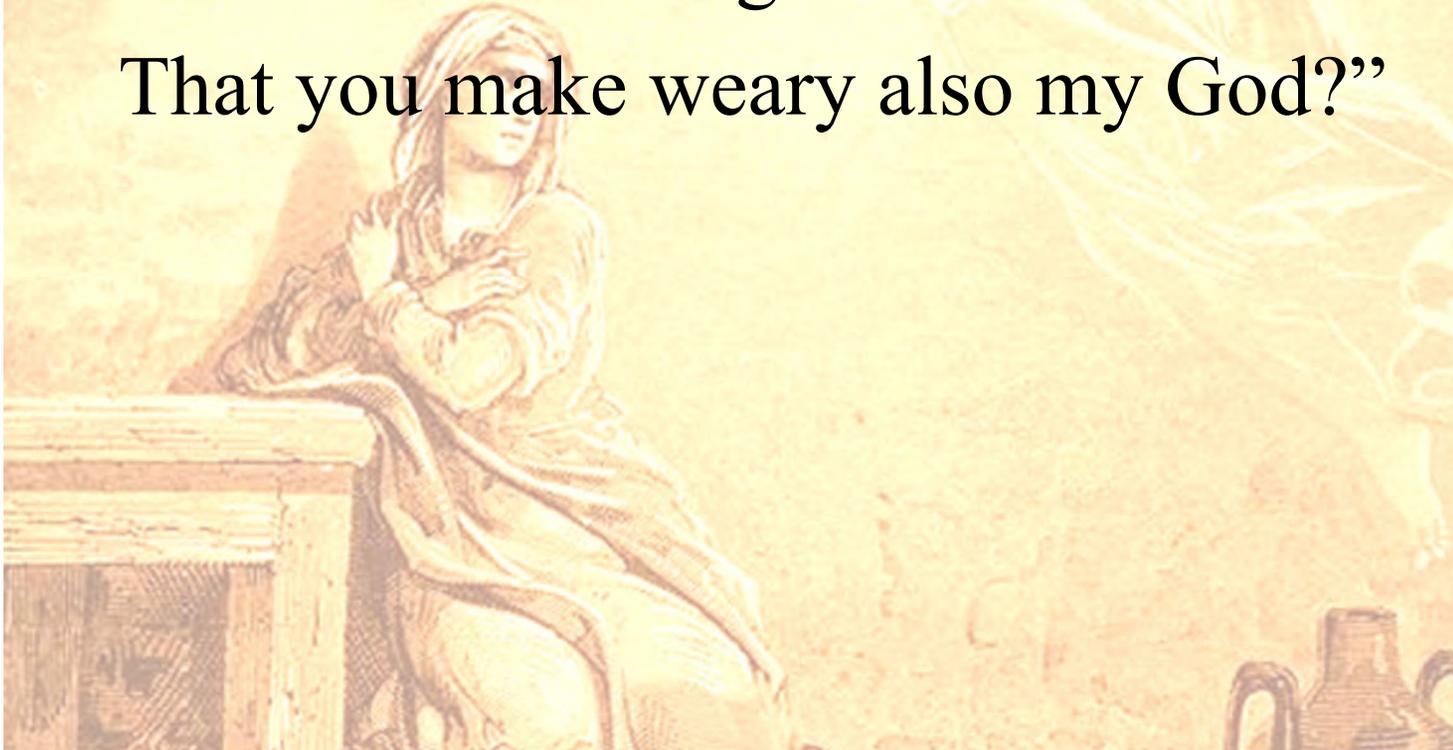
1. The promise God has issued culminates in an if-then statement: fail to believe and there will be no establishing a dynasty.
2. The offer of the sign is a very public demonstration of whether Achaz will submit to YHWH as the HEAD of Judah.
3. God knows, however, that Achaz has already made arrangements for dealing with the invading armies.
4. So the test is of Achaz' faith, and his wry statement about testing the LORD is proof of his lack of faith.
5. Be very clear of Achaz' error here: He is trusting in human solutions to problems he observes.
6. The human solution he is proposing is an alliance with Assyria.

The Prophetic Evaluation of Achaz' Performance

v¹³ And then he said,

“Listen here, House of David! (PAUSE)

“Is it *such* a trifling matter to make weary men
That you make weary also my God?”



Oh, that's what's wrong here

1. Achaz has not been reading Isaiah 7.
2. Therefore he cannot know that Isaiah is speaking directly for the LORD.
3. In v10 we have YHWH as the speaker, so we know that what Isaiah says is what God says.
4. Achaz' initial problem is that he does not believe that Isaiah is really speaking for the LORD.
5. This is part of why God offered Achaz the sign, to verify that Isaiah was inspired.
6. Notice that God is making a very thematic statement about the chain-of-command: the king of Judah is supposed to listen to and obey the prophets.

Mediation in OT Israel

Theocratic Kingdom GOD

AUTHORITY

Mediated Kingdom MAN



The background features a faint, golden-toned illustration of a king seated on a throne on the left and a prophet standing on the right, holding a staff. The overall color palette is warm, with shades of yellow and orange.

Theocratic Kingdom **GOD** **THE WORD**

AUTHORITY

Mediated Kingdom **MAN**



The king was to make his decisions as unto the LORD.
They were supposed to demonstrate His character as a model.
The prophet was to tell the king what his decision should be.

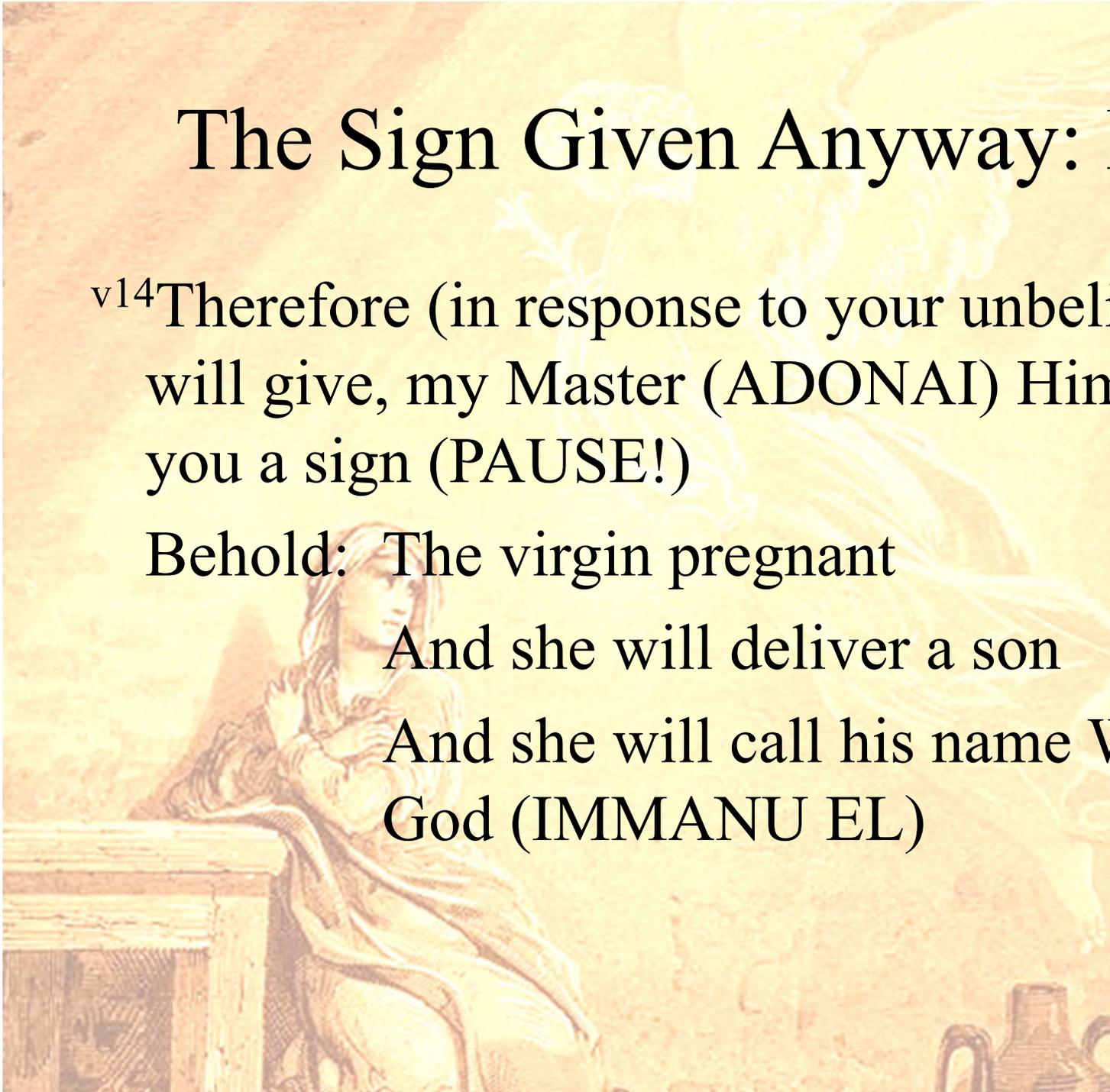
The Sign Given Anyway: Faith

^{v14}Therefore (in response to your unbelief) He will give, my Master (ADONAI) Himself to you a sign (PAUSE!)

Behold: The virgin pregnant

And she will deliver a son

And she will call his name With us *is*
God (IMMANU EL)



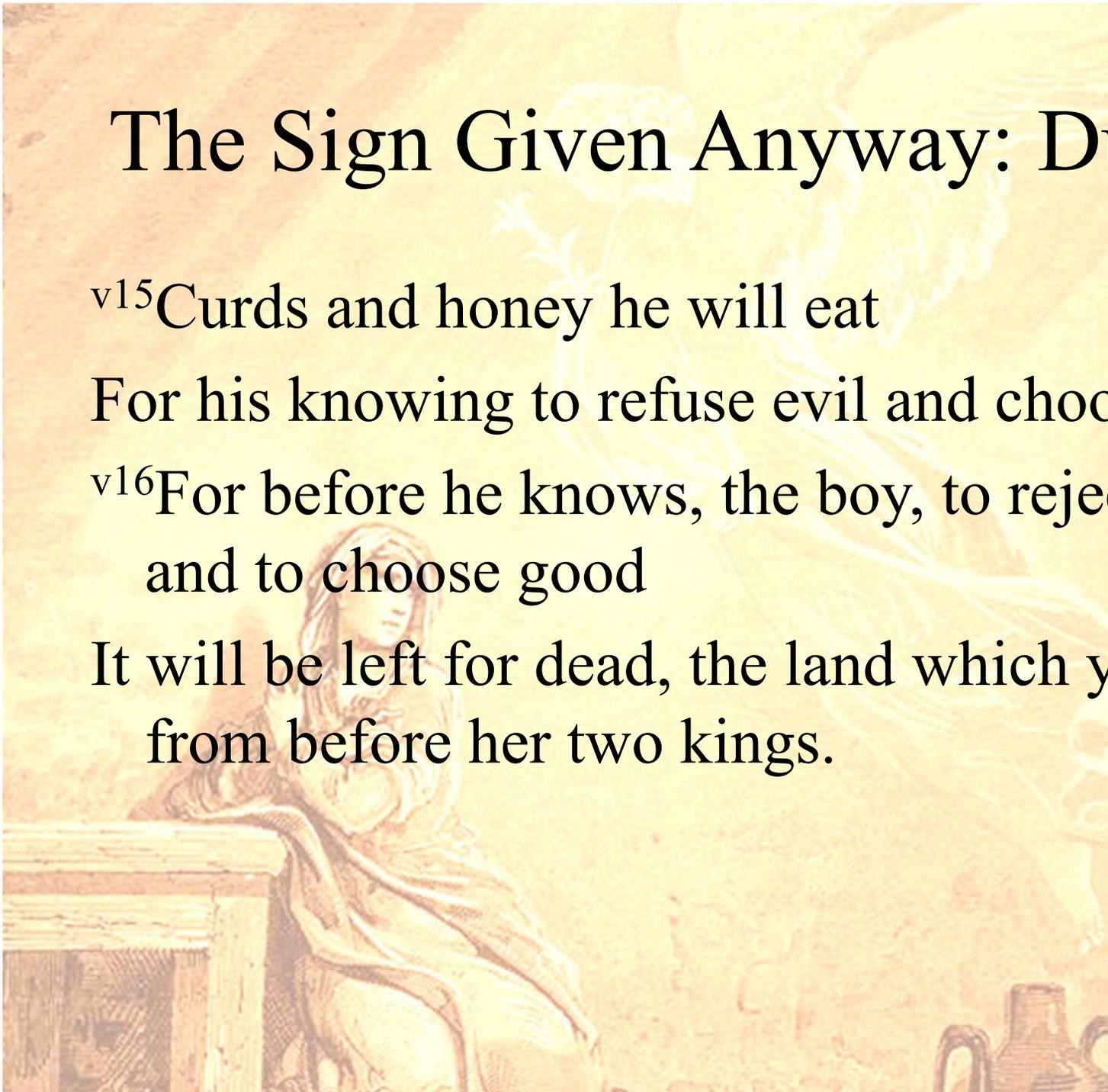
The Sign Given Anyway: Duration

v¹⁵Curds and honey he will eat

For his knowing to refuse evil and choose good

v¹⁶For before he knows, the boy, to reject evil
and to choose good

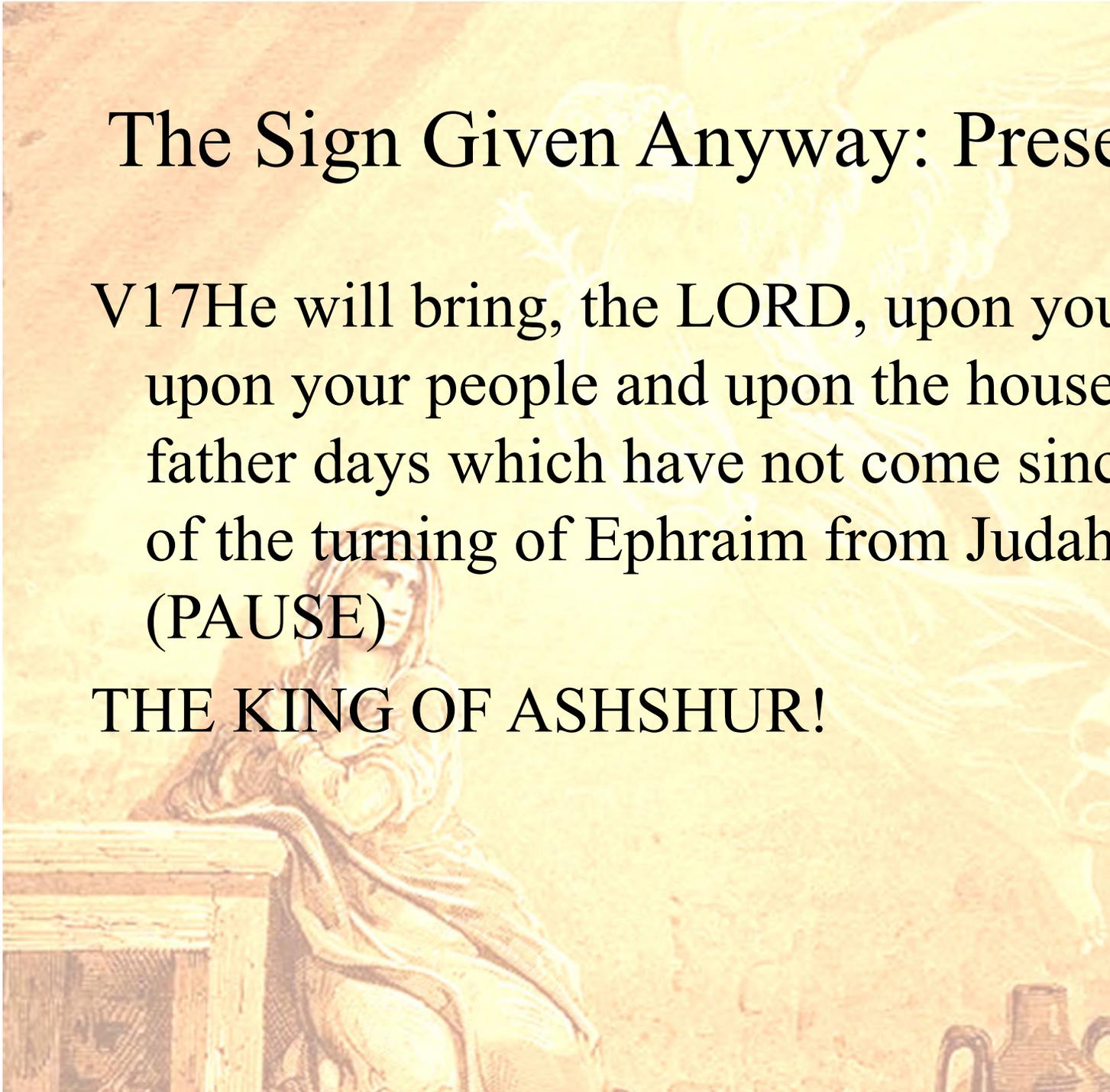
It will be left for dead, the land which you dread,
from before her two kings.



The Sign Given Anyway: Preservation

V17 He will bring, the LORD, upon you and upon your people and upon the house of your father days which have not come since the day of the turning of Ephraim from Judah:
(PAUSE)

THE KING OF ASHSHUR!



The Promise and the Sign

Promise

V7: 1) Ahaz will not be removed from the throne by the two small armies

2) The armies will not conquer Judah

V8: Duration of Samaria's existence emphasized

V9: No faith, no establishment of a dynasty

Sign

V14: No faith, no dynasty: Virgin Birth will bring God With Us.

V15-16: Duration in time—the period during which Ahaz can expect the end of the Syro-Ephramite threat—3 yrs?

V17: A worse fate than Aram-Ephraim

The Irony is Even Stronger than we Thought

1. Ahaz' fear of being removed from his throne by Syro-Ephraem is nothing compared to the loss of identification with the line of Messiah.
2. What Ahaz feared would not happen; however something worse would happen because of Ahaz' handling of the threat.
3. Phechach and Remalyahu would not remove Ahaz from David's throne, God would.
4. Ahaz' choice for a solution to the crisis, alliance with Assyria, would cause the military destruction he feared.
5. In all this, God would be working the pieces together.
6. Ahaz' problem is the arrogance of fear.