

Essay by Bright Obiallor

What is one new thing you learned or idea to which you were exposed?

If there is one thing that is really special about this week's reading, it was the strange and unusual prophecy that was given by Isaiah to the king Ahaz in view of the two countries that were threatening to invade, dethrone Ahaz and setup a new king. Yet God in this prophecy promises to not only bring deliverance but affirmed it by giving Ahaz a strange sign-the birth of a son through a virgin. Even Oswalt noted the profound nature of the sign by pointing out that it has provoked endless controversy mostly due to the fact that Mathew used as a prophecy fulfilled by the birth of Jesus Christ (Oswalt, 2003). The reality is however that the prophecy had multiple layers of fulfilment that climaxed with the first coming of Jesus. This is a testament to the wisdom and knowledge of God whose works are known to him from before the foundation of the world.

Another interesting idea was that God was promising deliverance to his people despite Ahaz's unbelief and hardness of heart. Yet God was also speaking of judging this unbelief. So here is both the mercy and severity of God. Mercy in delivering them from the present dangers of the two threatening kings, but his severity in given his people over to the Assyrians they trusted. It was almost like God was confounding them for their unbelief by showing his power to deliver them from what they wouldn't trust him to deliver them from/

The lesson in this reading is very much needed for the church today. We are tempted to take our eyes off of Jesus and put trust in our own selves, other humans, money and so forth. The call of every minister is to point people to the reliability of God's words and the greatness of his faithfulness. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world through the virgin Mary is still a sign that he would come back a second time to take his people into the kingdom of God,