

France victories and permanently banned from cycling and any World Anti-Doping Agency sanctioned events. Travis Tygart, the CEO of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, claimed that Armstrong's USPS team "ran the most sophisticated, professionalized and successful doping program that sport has ever seen." Tygart also said, "The USPS Team doping conspiracy was professionally designed to groom and pressure athletes to use dangerous drugs, to evade detection, to ensure its secrecy and ultimately gain an unfair competitive advantage ...." It was a doping program "organized by individuals who thought they were above the rules."

– Matt Woodley, *Leadership Journal* Winter 2013; sources: YouTube, "Lance Armstrong Nike Commercial (2001); Sports Illustrated, "USADA to ban Armstrong for life."

But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it (2 Timothy 3:13-14, NRSV).

### ***Family News***

The February potluck will be today after services in the annex.

The target date for finalization of the adoption of the **Shorts' foster daughter** is February 11.

**Douglas and Jonda Gardner** We look for a current news report this morning.

**Jonda Gardner:** We will need a news update on her this morning.

**Ben Atchley** was released from the hospital on Friday.

### ***Prayer List:***

**Healing:** *Tatyana's daughter Olga, Jerry Robinson's daughter Christie, Mike Cavasos, Sandy Cavasos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas Self, Annie Self, Douglas and Jonda Gardner, Brandon (Gerry Clark's grandson), Inez's son Lee, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*

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# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

**10 February 2013**

## **Sermon Topics**

**A.M.: The Cross!**

Col 2:9-15

**P.M.: The Sign of Immanuel**

Isaiah 7:1-23

Evangelist

*Ken Knowlton: 428-5974*

Elders

*Ben Atchley: 428-2246*

*Greg Briggs: 428-8756*

*John Cunningham: 428-0895*

## **Services**

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

## **Three prophetic signs**

Asbury Bible Commentary on Isaiah 7:1-25

In the first five chapters the people of Judah and Jerusalem were unwilling to trust God and obey him. This destructive posture of a people is now brought into sharp focus through an episode in the life of Ahaz, their king (736-725 B.C.). The historical setting is that of the Syro-Ephraimite War. The massive and devastating army of Assyria under Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727 B.C.) was a menacing presence, a dark cloud just east of Palestine. Some of the smaller states, such as Ephraim (the northern kingdom of Israel) and Syria (Aram) tried to spark an anti-Assyrian revolt. Wanting Judah to join forces with them, they threatened it with violence unless it agreed.

Ahaz is terror-stricken (his heart shook **as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind**). Into this situation, Isaiah comes, calling upon Ahaz to trust in Yahweh rather than in the power of men. To communicate his message, Isaiah gives a sequence of three signs based on the names of three children: Shear-Jashub, "a remnant will

return” (7:1-9), Immanuel, “God with us” (7:10-17), and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, “Quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil” (8:1-4).

Perhaps Isaiah saw Ahaz wavering, uncertain. He challenges him to ask God for a sign. With hauntingly hollow piety, Ahaz responds, “**I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.**” He failed to recognize that he alone was the one who was being tested. Isaiah could tolerate this religious posturing no longer: “**Will you try the patience of my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.**”

The debate over the interpretation of the Hebrew word, *'almâ* is extensive and inconclusive. Whether Isaiah meant a virgin, a young maiden, his own wife, or something else cannot be stated with certainty (cf. this debate in Oswalt, 207-9). Whatever one concludes about the nature of the mother, the primary importance has to do with the son and his name: Immanuel, God with us.

The question arises, Does the name Immanuel mean weal or woe, blessing or destruction? One of the literary techniques that Isaiah employs is that of double entendre or twofold meaning. This is but one example. The meaning to be realized depends entirely on the choice that is made. If you stand firm in faith, then “God is with us” in blessing. If you do not stand firm in faith, then “God is with us” in judgment.

Both elements are present in the subsequent prophecy (vv. 15-25). Before the boy is of the age of choosing right and wrong, that is, very shortly, **the land of the two kings [Ahaz dreads] will be laid waste.** Therefore, God would be with us in blessing (vv. 15-16). Indeed, within three years, Damascus had been destroyed and Samaria reduced to nearly nothing, and Samaria was completely destroyed twelve years later.

However, now it becomes clear that Isaiah has realized that Ahaz would not stand firm in his God but would disobey and turn to Assyria for help. Therefore, “God is with us” in judgment. He will bring upon Judah a time of unprecedented devastation brought about by the very one to whom Ahaz had turned for help, the king of Assyria (v. 17).

Vv. 18-25 speak in figurative language of the coming Assyrian invasion. To be sure, over the next twenty-five years Assyria brought tremendous devastation to Judah.

# FEBRUARY 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Groundhog Day
3	4	5	6	7	8 Sara Atchley Birthday	9
10 Potluck	11 Tatyana Knowlton Birthday Shorts adopt Josefina	12 Lincoln's B-Day	13	14 Valentines Day	15	16
17	18 Presidents Day	19	20	21	22	23 Billy Martin Birthday
24	25	26	27	28		

## Slide into Self-Deception

In 2001, Lance Armstrong made an anti-doping commercial for Nike in which he strongly disavowed using illegal drugs. In the commercial, Armstrong boldly states, “This is my body, and I can do whatever I want to it. I can push it. Study it. Tweak it. Listen to it. Everybody wants to know what I’m on. What am I on? I’m on my bike busting my [butt] six hours a day. What are you on?”

In 2006, during sworn testimony in a dispute over his \$5 million bonus, Armstrong said he wouldn’t take drugs because he had too much to lose. “(The) faith of all the cancer survivors around the world. Everything I do off the bike would go away, too .... it’s not about money for me .... It’s also about the faith that people have put in me over the years. So all of that would be erased.”

In October 2012, Armstrong was stripped of his seven Tours de