



# TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, “Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test.”

Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”

*Isaiah 7:10-14*

## The *best* spoiled ending ever

I *still* haven't seen *The Avengers: End Game*. I know I can get it on DVD or Blu-ray. I know I can buy it digitally online. And yes, I *know* I can now watch it on Disney+ (only *after* I watch *Star Wars: The Mandalorian*, of course). Point being, it's not that I don't know all the different ways I *could* watch *Avengers: End Game*. The problem is, I *already know the ending*. I didn't get around to seeing it soon enough after it hit theaters. As time went on, *spoilers* started to creep into my newsfeed on social media. Now I know how it ends. I know all the 'awesome' moments, who dies, and who wins. All those details were *spoiled* for me. If you know how the story *ends*, you know where the story is going. It's lost its suspense. No more twists and turns. The surprise is gone.

*We don't like spoilers*. Be it books, TV shows, or movies, we *like* a story with surprises, with twists and turns, and nail-biting suspense—well, *except* when that story is *my life*. When we're waiting to see how we did on a math final or worrying about those test results from the doctor, we *don't* like suspense. When we're struggling to navigate in a new school with new classes, we don't like twists and turns. When we're wrestling with questions of identity, wondering if we made the team, or thinking about what to do after we graduate, we don't like surprises. We want to know how it's all going to turn out. When we feel small and weak, or when we *screw up big time* and we're left feeling broken and guilty, we want to know everything will be alright in the end. When it comes to the stories of our *own* lives, we'd warmly welcome any and all spoilers, wouldn't we?

King Ahaz knew the feeling. His kingdom, Judah, was *constantly* under attack. Ahaz was afraid that, at any moment, these enemy nations would invade. So, God gave him comforting words of promise. “Keep calm and don't be afraid,” God says through the prophet Isaiah. Why? Well, God *spoils the ending*. “It will not take place, it will not happen,” God says. But God wasn't done spoiling the story. “You want a sign of my faithfulness, Ahaz? You want *proof* it's all going to be alright in the end? That I *still* am advancing my plan to save my people?” Ahaz wouldn't ask for a sign; God gave him one anyway. And that sign has been given to *you*, too.

A virgin woman miraculously gave birth to a boy called 'Immanuel', which means “God is with us”. That child was Jesus, the Son of God! Jesus entered our broken world to save it from sin—by living a *perfect life* and dying on the cross in our place. Jesus has faced sin, death, and the devil—the greatest adversaries you will ever face—he fought them, and Jesus won.

There is a whole lot of 'unknown' that will take place in your life. But the story of your life has already been *spoiled*. Why? Because the God who *is with you always to the very end of the age* has already won. You are his dearly loved child. Your identity is safe in Christ and so is your *future*. *Spoiler alert*: it's safe with *him* in heaven.

**Prayer: Gracious Savior, thank you for coming to our rescue and saving us from sin, death, and the devil. Comfort us with the assurance that, because of you and your love for us, we have heaven as our home. Amen.**