

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah Chapter 8 — The Sign of Maher-shalal-hash-baz and the Coming Assyrian Flood

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Isaiah Chapter 8 continues the crisis begun in Chapter 7.

Judah is still living under the shadow of:

Aram.

Israel.

Assyria.

Fear.

Political instability.

God gives Isaiah another prophetic sign.

This time the sign is connected with Isaiah's own son:

Maher-shalal-hash-baz

The name means:

“Quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil.”

Before the child is old enough to speak clearly, Damascus and Samaria will be stripped by Assyria.

But the chapter quickly reveals a deeper problem.

The people have rejected:

“the gentle waters of Shiloah.”

These gentle waters represent the quiet, dependable provision and rule of God.

Instead, the people place their confidence elsewhere.

Therefore God warns that a much larger river is coming:

The mighty Euphrates.

Assyria.

The gentle stream rejected becomes a devastating flood.

That flood will sweep through the land and rise:

“up to the neck.”

Yet even in this terrifying picture, Isaiah says:

“O Immanuel.”

The land still belongs to the One whose name means:

God with us.

Therefore the nations may:

Plot.

Prepare.

Organize.

Threaten.

But Isaiah declares:

“Their plans will fail.”

Why?

“For God is with us.”

Then God gives Isaiah another command.

Do not think like everyone else.

Do not fear what everyone else fears.

Do not be controlled by conspiracy, rumor, panic, or public anxiety.

Instead:

“Honor the Lord Almighty as holy.”

Fear God.

Trust God.

Wait for God.

Listen to God.

The chapter closes by contrasting two sources of guidance.

One path seeks:

Mediums.

Spiritists.

The dead.

Occult voices.

The other path seeks:

God's law.

God's testimony.

God's Word.

Isaiah's verdict is unmistakable:

“If they do not speak according to this word, there is no light in them.”

The central truth of Isaiah 8 is:

Those who reject God's quiet provision and refuse His Word will be overwhelmed by judgment and darkness, but those who sanctify the Lord in their hearts, trust Immanuel, reject false guidance, and remain anchored in God's revealed truth will find Him to be their sanctuary.

I. GOD COMMANDS ISAIAH TO WRITE THE PROPHECY CLEARLY

Isaiah 8:1 — “Quick to the Plunder, Swift to the Spoil”

“The Lord said to me, ‘Take a large scroll and write on it clearly: Maher-shalal-hash-baz (‘Quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil’).”

God wants the message made:

Public.

Clear.

Visible.

Unmistakable.

The name itself is prophecy.

Judgment is coming quickly.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:2

The Lord told Habakkuk to write the vision clearly and make it plain so that anyone who read it could understand and carry its message forward.

Isaiah 8:3

Isaiah's son was later given the prophetic name Maher-shalal-hash-baz as a living sign of the judgment soon to come.

Deuteronomy 19:15

A serious matter was not to be established by only one witness; two or three witnesses were required to confirm testimony.

Spiritual Principle

God's warnings are not intended to be hidden or deliberately confusing.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

When God gives a serious warning, He gives people enough light to understand what He is saying.

II. THE PROPHECY IS CONFIRMED BY WITNESSES

Isaiah 8:2 — A Public Record

“So I called in trustworthy witnesses—Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah—to confirm the record.”

Isaiah's prophecy is not given secretly.

Witnesses confirm the written record.

This means that when the prophecy is fulfilled, no one can honestly claim:

“It was written afterward.”

The timing is documented.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 17:6

Serious legal matters required the testimony of more than one witness before judgment could be established.

Isaiah 8:16

Isaiah is later told to preserve the testimony and seal the teaching among his disciples.

Nehemiah 9:38

When the people renewed covenant commitments, they put the agreement into writing and had leaders and priests formally confirm it.

Spiritual Principle

God's prophetic Word is not vague speculation.

He establishes testimony before fulfillment.

III. ISAIAH'S SON BECOMES A LIVING PROPHECY

Isaiah 8:3 — Maher-shalal-hash-baz Is Born

“Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. The Lord said to me, ‘Name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz.’”

Isaiah's family becomes part of his prophetic ministry.

The child's name continually announces:

Plunder is coming.

Spoil is coming.

And it is coming quickly.

Every time the boy's name is spoken, the prophecy is repeated.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

God had already promised the sign of a son associated with the name Immanuel, meaning “God with us.”

Isaiah 8:4

Before Isaiah's child can clearly say “father” or “mother,” Damascus and Samaria will be plundered by Assyria.

Luke 1:31

The angel told Mary that she would conceive and give birth to a son and was instructed concerning His name.

Spiritual Principle

God can use ordinary family life as part of His extraordinary purposes.

IV. DAMASCUS AND SAMARIA WILL FALL QUICKLY

Isaiah 8:4 — Before the Child Can Speak Clearly

“For before the boy knows how to say, ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria will be carried off by the king of Assyria.”

The prophecy has a specific timetable.

The child will still be very young when:

Damascus falls.

Samaria is plundered.

The enemies Judah fears will not remain powerful for long.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:9

The Assyrian king attacked Damascus, captured the city, deported its inhabitants, and killed Rezin.

2 Kings 17:6

Assyria later captured Samaria and carried the people of Israel away into exile.

Isaiah 7:16

Isaiah had already declared that before the child associated with the sign reached moral maturity, the lands of the two kings Ahaz feared would be devastated.

Spiritual Principle

God’s timetable can move faster than human fear expects.

V. GOD SPEAKS AGAIN

Isaiah 8:5 — Another Warning

“The Lord spoke to me again, saying,”

God continues to speak because the people continue to need warning.

The problem is not lack of revelation.

It is rejection of revelation.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:6

God explains that the people rejected the gentle waters of Shiloah.

Jeremiah 2:13

God says His people committed two evils: they abandoned Him, the fountain of living water, and made broken containers that could hold no water.

Isaiah 30:1

God pronounces woe upon rebellious people who make plans without Him and form alliances contrary to His Spirit.

Spiritual Principle

Repeated warnings reveal both human stubbornness and divine patience.

VI. THE PEOPLE REJECT THE GENTLE WATERS OF SHILOAH

Isaiah 8:6 — Rejecting God’s Quiet Provision

“Because this people has rejected the gentle waters of Shiloah and rejoices in Rezin and Remaliah’s son,”

The waters of Shiloah flowed gently.

They picture:

Quiet provision.

God’s presence.

God’s rule.

God’s dependable care.

The people reject the quiet stream.

They prefer political excitement and human alliances.

Cross References

John 9:7

Jesus sent the blind man to wash in the pool of Siloam, and after obeying, the man returned able to see.

Jeremiah 2:18

God asks why His people seek help from foreign nations and their rivers when they should depend upon Him.

Nehemiah 3:15

The pool of Siloam was part of Jerusalem's water system and was associated with an important section of the city wall.

Spiritual Principle

People often reject God's quiet faithfulness because worldly power appears more impressive.

Key Truth

Never despise the gentle stream because the roaring river looks stronger.

VII. ASSYRIA WILL COME LIKE A FLOOD

Isaiah 8:7 — The Euphrates Overflows

"The Lord will bring against them the mighty floodwaters of the Euphrates—the king of Assyria with all his power. It will overflow its channels and run over all its banks."

They rejected:

A gentle stream.

God sends:

A raging river.

Assyria is pictured as floodwater.

Once it begins overflowing, it cannot easily be contained.

Cross References

2 Kings 16:7

Ahaz appealed to the king of Assyria for rescue and placed Judah under foreign dependence.

Isaiah 17:12

The nations are compared to roaring seas and mighty waters, creating an image of overwhelming military force.

Jeremiah 46:8

Egypt is compared to the Nile rising and flooding over the land, symbolizing a military force advancing in pride.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting God's way does not leave us without a master.

It often leaves us under a harsher one.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The gentle rule of God is better than the violent flood of the substitute we choose instead.

VIII. THE FLOOD REACHES JUDAH'S NECK

Isaiah 8:8 — “O Immanuel”

“It will sweep into Judah, overflowing and passing through. It will reach up to the neck; its outspread wings will cover the breadth of your land, O Immanuel.”

Assyria will not stop with Israel.

Judah will also feel the flood.

It rises:

To the neck.

Judah nearly drowns.

But not completely.

Then comes the remarkable phrase:

“O Immanuel.”

The land ultimately belongs to:

God with us.

Judgment comes.

But God's promise remains.

Cross References

Isaiah 7:14

The promised child is called Immanuel, meaning “God with us.”

Matthew 1:23

Matthew identifies the Immanuel prophecy with Jesus Christ and explains the name as “God with us.”

Isaiah 30:28

God's judgment is described like an overflowing torrent reaching up to the neck and shaking the nations.

Spiritual Principle

Judgment may rise high without overturning God's covenant purpose.

Key Truth

The flood may reach the neck.

It cannot drown Immanuel's promise.

IX. THE NATIONS MAY PREPARE FOR WAR, BUT THEY WILL FALL

Isaiah 8:9 — Broken Despite Preparation

“Raise your battle cry, you nations, and be shattered! Listen, all you distant lands. Prepare for battle—but you will be broken. Prepare for battle—but you will be broken.”

The repetition emphasizes certainty.

Prepare.

Arm yourselves.

Gather forces.

The result remains:

Broken.

Why?

Because military preparation cannot overcome God's purpose.

Cross References

Psalm 2:1

The nations rage and peoples form empty plans against the Lord and His purposes.

Psalm 33:10

The Lord frustrates the plans of nations and brings human strategies to nothing when they oppose His will.

Proverbs 21:30

No wisdom, understanding, or counsel can successfully stand against the Lord.

Spiritual Principle

Preparation without God is not ultimate security.

X. HUMAN PLANS FAIL BECAUSE GOD IS WITH HIS PEOPLE

Isaiah 8:10 — Immanuel Again

“Devise your plans, but they will fail; make your agreements, but they will not stand, for God is with us.”

This verse explains the previous one.

Why do enemy plans fail?

“God is with us.”

That is:

Immanuel.

The promise of Chapter 7 remains alive.

Cross References

Matthew 1:23

Jesus fulfills the promise of Immanuel, the One whose name declares “God with us.”

Romans 8:31

If God is for us, no opposing power can finally overcome His saving purpose for His people.

Proverbs 19:21

A person may make many plans, but the purpose of the Lord is what ultimately stands.

Spiritual Principle

The presence of God outweighs the plans of enemies.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The decisive question is not:

“How many are against us?”

It is:

“Is God with us?”

XI. GOD WARNS ISAIAH NOT TO FOLLOW THE CROWD

Isaiah 8:11 — A Strong Hand of Warning

“The Lord spoke to me with a strong hand and warned me not to follow the way of this people. He said,”

Isaiah lives among fearful people.

God tells him:

Do not think like them.

Do not react like them.

Do not follow their path.

The pressure of public fear must not control the prophet.

Cross References

Jeremiah 15:19

God tells Jeremiah to remain faithful, separate the precious from the worthless, and refuse to allow rebellious people to turn him from the truth.

Ezekiel 3:8

God promises to make Ezekiel firm enough to stand against stubborn and resistant people.

Numbers 14:9

Joshua and Caleb urged Israel not to rebel against the Lord or fear the people of the land because God was with them.

Spiritual Principle

God's people must not automatically adopt the emotional climate of the surrounding culture.

XII. DO NOT FEAR WHAT EVERYONE ELSE FEARS

Isaiah 8:12 — Conspiracies and Fear

“Do not call conspiracy everything that these people call conspiracy. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be terrified.”

This is one of the most relevant warnings in Isaiah.

People around Isaiah are consumed with:

Rumors.

Plots.

Political danger.

Fear.

God does not say no conspiracy can ever exist.

He says:

Do not allow the fears and interpretations of the crowd to dominate you.

Cross References

1 Peter 3:14

Even if believers suffer for doing what is right, they are blessed and should not fear human threats or become intimidated.

Numbers 14:9

Israel was told not to fear the inhabitants of the land because the Lord was with His people.

Jeremiah 1:8

God told Jeremiah not to fear those who opposed him because the Lord would be with him and deliver him.

Spiritual Principle

God's people should not be governed by mass panic.

Key Truth

Fear is contagious.

Faith must be intentional.

XIII. FEAR THE LORD INSTEAD

Isaiah 8:13 — Honor Him as Holy

“But honor the Lord Almighty as holy. He is the One you are to fear; He is the One you are to dread.”

Isaiah does not simply say:

Stop fearing.

He redirects fear.

Fear:

God.

Honor:

God.

Sanctify:

God in your thinking.

When God becomes large in our understanding, human threats become smaller.

Cross References

1 Peter 3:15

Believers are told to honor Christ as Lord in their hearts and remain prepared to explain the hope they possess.

Matthew 10:28

Jesus teaches His followers not to fear those who can only harm the body, but to recognize God's far greater authority.

Psalms 34:9

God's people are called to fear the Lord because those who reverence Him lack no truly necessary good thing.

Spiritual Principle

The fear of God breaks the controlling power of the fear of man.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person who rightly fears God does not have to live terrified of everyone else.

XIV. THE LORD IS EITHER SANCTUARY OR STUMBLING STONE

Isaiah 8:14 — Refuge to Some, Offense to Others

“He will be a sanctuary; but for both houses of Israel He will be a stone that makes men stumble and a rock that makes them fall. For the people of Jerusalem He will be a trap and a snare.”

The same Lord produces two different outcomes.

To those who trust Him:

Sanctuary.

To those who reject Him:

Stumbling stone.

The difference is not in God's character.

It is in the response to Him.

Cross References

Romans 9:33

Paul combines prophetic passages and applies the stumbling stone imagery to Christ, explaining that those who trust Him will not ultimately be put to shame.

1 Peter 2:8

Peter describes Christ as a stone of stumbling and rock of offense to those who refuse the Word.

Luke 2:34

Simeon tells Mary that Jesus is appointed for the falling and rising of many and will become a sign that exposes hearts.

Spiritual Principle

You cannot remain neutral toward God forever.

Key Truth

The One who is refuge to faith becomes stumbling to unbelief.

XV. MANY WILL STUMBLE AND FALL

Isaiah 8:15 — Snared by Unbelief

“Many of them will stumble; they will fall and be broken; they will be snared and captured.”

The warning becomes personal.

Many will:

Stumble.

Fall.

Break.

Be trapped.

The problem is refusal to trust the Lord.

Cross References

Luke 2:34

Jesus is appointed for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and people's responses to Him reveal their hearts.

Matthew 21:44

Jesus warns that the one who falls upon the rejected stone will be broken, and the one upon whom it falls will be crushed.

1 Peter 2:8

Those who reject God's Word stumble over Christ because they refuse the message centered upon Him.

Spiritual Principle

Unbelief turns the foundation God provides into the obstacle people trip over.

XVI. GOD'S TESTIMONY MUST BE PRESERVED

Isaiah 8:16 — Bind and Seal the Teaching

"Bind up the testimony and seal the teaching among my disciples."

The public may reject Isaiah.

The truth must still be preserved.

God's revelation is entrusted to:

Disciples.

Faithful hearers.

Future generations.

Cross References

Isaiah 8:20

All teaching and spiritual claims must ultimately be tested by God's revealed law and testimony.

Daniel 12:4

Daniel is instructed to preserve the prophetic message until the appointed time.

Deuteronomy 6:9

God's words were to be written visibly upon the homes and gates of His people so His truth remained continually before them.

Spiritual Principle

When society rejects truth, faithful people must preserve it.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Truth does not stop being truth because most people refuse it.

XVII. ISAIAH CHOOSES TO WAIT FOR THE LORD

Isaiah 8:17 — Trust While God Seems Hidden

“I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob. I will put my trust in Him.”

This is mature faith.

God's favor appears hidden.

Judgment is unfolding.

The people reject the truth.

Still Isaiah says:

I will wait.

I will trust.

Faith is not always:

Immediate answers.

Visible deliverance.

Quick change.

Sometimes faith waits.

Cross References

Habakkuk 2:3

The prophetic vision has an appointed time; even if fulfillment seems delayed, God's people are told to wait because it will certainly come.

Micah 7:7

Micah declares that he will look to the Lord, wait for the God of his salvation, and trust that God will hear him.

Psalms 27:14

Wait for the Lord, remain courageous, let your heart be strengthened, and continue waiting for Him.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting is not inactivity when it is filled with trust.

Key Truth

Faith continues trusting even when God's face appears hidden.

XVIII. ISAIAH AND HIS CHILDREN ARE SIGNS

Isaiah 8:18 — A Prophetic Family

“Here am I, and the children the Lord has given me. We are signs and symbols in Israel from the Lord Almighty, who dwells on Mount Zion.”

Isaiah's family participates in the message.

Shear-jashub:

A remnant will return.

Maher-shalal-hash-baz:

Quick to plunder.

Their names preach.

Isaiah's household becomes living prophecy.

Cross References

Hebrews 2:13

The New Testament quotes this passage and applies its language in connection with Christ identifying with the children God has given Him.

Isaiah 7:3

Isaiah had already taken his son Shear-jashub with him when delivering God's message to Ahaz.

Isaiah 20:3

God later describes Isaiah himself as a sign and symbol concerning coming events among the nations.

Spiritual Principle

Sometimes God's servants do not merely speak the message.

Their lives become part of it.

XIX. GOD'S PEOPLE MUST NOT CONSULT THE OCCULT

Isaiah 8:19 — Why Ask the Dead for the Living?

“When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people ask their God for guidance? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?”

This question exposes the irrationality of occult guidance.

Why seek:

The dead.

Spiritists.

Mediums.

Whispering voices.

When the living God has spoken?

God's people should seek:

God.

Cross References

Leviticus 19:31

God commands His people not to turn to mediums or spiritists because seeking them brings spiritual defilement.

Deuteronomy 18:11

Israel was forbidden to use spells, consult mediums or spiritists, or seek information from the dead.

1 Samuel 28:7

Saul, after rejecting God's Word, sought a medium at Endor in desperation, showing how far he had fallen from faithful dependence upon God.

Spiritual Principle

Seeking supernatural guidance is not automatically spiritual or godly.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The supernatural must always be tested by whether it comes from the God who has revealed Himself in Scripture.

XX. GOD’S WORD IS THE STANDARD

Isaiah 8:20 — “To the Law and to the Testimony”

“Look to God’s law and testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, there is no light in them.”

This is one of the most important principles in the chapter.

The test is not:

How impressive does it sound?

How supernatural does it appear?

How popular is the speaker?

How emotional does it feel?

The test is:

Does it agree with God’s revealed Word?

Cross References

Deuteronomy 13:3

Even if a supposed prophet produces an impressive sign, God’s people must not follow teaching that leads them away from the true God.

Acts 17:11

The Bereans listened carefully to Paul but examined the Scriptures daily to determine whether what they were hearing was true.

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, correcting error, exposing wrong, and training people in righteous living.

Spiritual Principle

Scripture judges spiritual claims.

Spiritual claims do not judge Scripture.

Key Truth

If a message contradicts God's Word, no amount of spiritual appearance can turn darkness into light.

XXI. REBELLION PRODUCES ANGER AND HUNGER

Isaiah 8:21 — They Curse Rather Than Repent

“Distressed and hungry, they will roam through the land. When they are famished, they will become enraged and look upward, cursing their king and their God.”

The people suffer.

But instead of repenting:

They rage.

They curse.

They blame.

Suffering does not automatically soften the heart.

Sometimes rebellion becomes even more bitter.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 28:53

Israel was warned that severe covenant judgment could produce desperate hunger during enemy siege.

Revelation 16:10

Under judgment, people experience anguish but continue in rebellion rather than humbling themselves before God.

Isaiah 5:30

Isaiah had already pictured the land under judgment as filled with darkness, distress, and gloom.

Spiritual Principle

Pain alone does not create repentance.

The heart must turn toward God.

XXII. WITHOUT GOD THERE IS ONLY DARKNESS

Isaiah 8:22 — Driven into Deep Darkness

“Then they will look toward the earth and see only distress and darkness, fearful gloom, and they will be driven into deep darkness.”

They look:

Upward.

And curse.

Then:

Toward earth.

And find darkness.

Why?

They rejected:

God’s Word.

God’s guidance.

God’s quiet waters.

God’s sanctuary.

The chapter ends where rejection of light must end:

Darkness.

Cross References

Revelation 16:11

Under severe judgment, rebellious people curse God because of their suffering yet refuse to repent of their evil deeds.

Deuteronomy 28:29

Israel was warned that rebellion could lead to groping in confusion like a blind person in darkness, without success or deliverance.

Zephaniah 1:15

The day of divine judgment is described as a day of wrath, distress, darkness, gloom, clouds, and deep obscurity.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting God's light eventually leaves no other true light.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If you turn away from the Source of light, do not be surprised when every other direction becomes dark.

XXIII. EIGHT GREAT LESSONS FROM ISAIAH 8

1. God Gives Clear Warnings

Maher-shalal-hash-baz was a visible prophetic sign.

Principle:

God warns before judgment.

2. Rejecting God's Gentle Rule Leads to Harsher Consequences

The gentle waters of Shiloah are rejected.

The Euphrates comes flooding.

Principle:

The way of God is always better than the substitutes we choose against Him.

3. God Is With His People

Immanuel remains the great assurance.

Principle:

Human plans cannot defeat the presence and purpose of God.

4. Do Not Fear What the Crowd Fears

Isaiah is warned not to follow public panic.

Principle:

God's people should think biblically rather than merely emotionally.

5. Fear the Lord Above All

The answer to the fear of man is reverence for God.

Principle:

A large view of God makes human threats smaller.

6. The Lord Is Sanctuary or Stumbling Stone

Our response to God matters.

Principle:

Faith finds refuge in the One unbelief trips over.

7. God's Word Must Test Every Spiritual Claim

Mediums and spiritists are rejected.

Principle:

True guidance agrees with Scripture.

8. Rejecting God Ends in Darkness

The chapter closes with distress and gloom.

Principle:

There is no lasting light apart from God.

XXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT GOD'S WORD

God's Word is:

Written.

Witnessed.

Sealed.

Preserved.

Tested.

It is the authoritative standard.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A generation may reject Scripture.

It cannot replace Scripture with an equal authority.

XXV. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT FEAR

The people fear:

War.

Conspiracy.

Foreign powers.

Political instability.

God tells Isaiah:

Do not fear what they fear.

Spiritual Principle

Fear becomes idolatrous when it receives the reverence and controlling power that belongs to God.

XXVI. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT IMMANUEL

The name appears again.

Assyria floods Immanuel's land.

Enemy nations plot.

But:

God is with us.

Key Truth

Immanuel does not mean God's people never face danger.

It means danger never removes God's presence or overturns His purpose.

XXVII. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT ASSYRIA

Assyria is pictured as:

A flood.

A mighty river.

An instrument under God's control.

The empire is dangerous.

But not sovereign.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God may use powers far greater than us without those powers ever becoming greater than Him.

XXVIII. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT CONSPIRACY

Isaiah is specifically warned:

Do not call everything conspiracy.

The people are consumed with fear and political intrigue.

God redirects Isaiah's attention toward:

Himself.

Spiritual Principle

Not every alarming report deserves control over your mind.

XXIX. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT THE FEAR OF GOD

God says:

Fear Me.

This is not the fear of a helpless victim before cruelty.

It is profound recognition of:

God's holiness.

Authority.

Majesty.

Judgment.

Sovereignty.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Fear of God puts every other fear into proper proportion.

XXX. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT CHRIST

The New Testament uses Isaiah 8:14 in reference to Christ.

Jesus becomes:

A sanctuary to believers.

A stumbling stone to unbelievers.

Key Truth

The question is not merely:

“What do you think about Jesus?”

The question is:

“Will you trust the Rock or stumble over Him?”

XXXI. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT WAITING

Isaiah says:

“I will wait for the Lord.”

Even while judgment unfolds.

Even while God seems hidden.

He waits.

Spiritual Principle

Waiting upon God is an expression of faith, not wasted time.

XXXII. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT THE OCCULT

God forbids His people from seeking supernatural guidance through forbidden spiritual sources.

The dead cannot become a substitute for the living God.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Spiritual curiosity is never a justification for spiritual disobedience.

XXXIII. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT DISCERNMENT

Verse 20 provides the test:

“Look to God’s law and testimony!”

Discernment asks:

Does this agree with God’s Word?

Spiritual Principle

Discernment is not suspicion of everything.

It is testing everything by truth.

XXXIV. WHAT ISAIAH 8 TEACHES ABOUT DARKNESS

The chapter ends in deep darkness because the people rejected:

God.

His Word.

His guidance.

His sanctuary.

Darkness is not accidental.

It is the outcome of rejecting light.

Key Truth

You cannot continually reject light and still expect to see clearly.

XXXV. THE GENTLE STREAM AND THE RAGING FLOOD

This contrast summarizes much of the chapter.

God offers:

Shiloah.

Gentle water.

The people reject it.

Judgment comes like:

The Euphrates.

Floodwater.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God's way may seem quiet, but quiet should never be confused with weak.

XXXVI. WHEN FEAR BECOMES THE VOICE OF THE CROWD

Everyone is talking about:

Danger.

Plots.

Conspiracy.

Isaiah receives a separate word from God.

Do not walk their way.

Spiritual Principle

The loudest voice in society is not automatically the truest voice.

XXXVII. SANCTUARY OR STUMBLING STONE

The Lord does not change.

To faith:

Sanctuary.

To rebellion:

Rock of offense.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

How you respond to God determines whether His truth becomes refuge or resistance.

XXXVIII. “I WILL WAIT FOR THE LORD”

This statement deserves emphasis.

Isaiah cannot control:

Kings.

Armies.

Public opinion.

National judgment.

But he can choose:

Trust.

Spiritual Principle

Faithfulness begins with doing the part God has actually placed in your hands.

XXXIX. ISAIAH’S FAMILY AS A SERMON

Isaiah’s children have prophetic names.

His household itself becomes testimony.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Some of the strongest messages we preach are communicated through the life we live before others.

XL. WHY CONSULT THE DEAD?

Isaiah’s question exposes spiritual absurdity.

God is:

Living.

Speaking.

Present.

Yet people seek:

The dead.

This is not greater spirituality.

It is deeper darkness.

Spiritual Principle

When God has spoken, seeking forbidden alternatives is rebellion, not revelation.

XLI. TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY

This principle must govern:

Teaching.

Prophecy.

Tradition.

Experience.

Spiritual claims.

Religious leadership.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Experience must bow to Scripture.

Scripture must never bow to experience.

XLII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What does Maher-shalal-hash-baz mean?

It means:

“Quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil.”

Question 2

Why was the name written publicly before the child’s birth?

So trustworthy witnesses could confirm the prophecy before its fulfillment.

Question 3

What did the child’s birth signify?

It signified that Damascus and Samaria would soon be plundered by Assyria.

Question 4

What are the gentle waters of Shiloah?

They represent Jerusalem’s quiet provision and, in the prophetic picture, the dependable rule and care of God that the people rejected.

Question 5

What does the flooding Euphrates represent?

It represents the overwhelming power of Assyria coming in judgment.

Question 6

How far would Assyria’s flood reach?

It would sweep into Judah and rise figuratively to the neck.

Question 7

Why would enemy plans ultimately fail?

Because:

“God is with us.”

Question 8

What was Isaiah told not to fear?

He was not to adopt the conspiracy fears and terrors dominating the surrounding people.

Question 9

Who should Isaiah fear?

The Lord Almighty.

Question 10

How can the Lord be both sanctuary and stumbling stone?

Those who trust Him find safety, while those who reject Him stumble over the very truth meant to save them.

Question 11

What does Isaiah say he will do while God appears hidden?

He will wait for the Lord and trust Him.

Question 12

Why were Isaiah and his children called signs?

Their names and lives communicated prophetic messages to Israel.

Question 13

What does Isaiah say about mediums and spiritists?

God's people must not seek guidance from them but should seek the living God.

Question 14

What is the standard for testing spiritual teaching?

God's law and testimony—His revealed Word.

Question 15

How does the chapter end?

With those who reject God wandering in distress, anger, gloom, and deep darkness.

XLIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Isaiah 8 asks several searching questions.

Am I Rejecting God's Gentle Waters?

Do I overlook quiet faithfulness because dramatic alternatives look more powerful?

What Flood Have I Invited by Rejecting God's Way?

What substitute has become harder than the obedience I refused?

What Am I Afraid Of?

People?

Politics?

Conspiracies?

Loss?

The future?

Am I Fearing What Everyone Else Fears?

Does public anxiety determine my own emotional state?

Do I Honor God as Holy?

Is He bigger in my thinking than the threats around me?

Is God My Sanctuary?

When fear rises, do I run:

Toward Him?

Or away from Him?

Am I Willing to Wait?

Can I trust God when I cannot yet see what He is doing?

What Sources Do I Consult for Guidance?

Scripture?

Prayer?

Godly wisdom?

Or spiritually dangerous substitutes?

Do I Test Everything by God's Word?

Or do I accept teaching because it sounds impressive?

XLIV. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Fear What the World Fears—Fear the Lord and Let Him Become Your Sanctuary”

Isaiah lived in fearful times.

Military danger was real.

Political instability was real.

Conspiracies were real.

Yet God told him:

Do not become like everyone else.

Principle:

Faith does not require peaceful circumstances; it requires a heart anchored in a holy God.

XLV. THE POWER OF IMMANUEL

The phrase:

“God is with us”

does not make Assyria disappear immediately.

The flood still comes.

But the flood cannot destroy God’s purpose.

Spiritual Principle

God’s presence does not always mean absence of trouble.

It means trouble is never ultimate.

XLVI. THE DANGER OF FOLLOWING THE CROWD

God explicitly tells Isaiah:

“Do not follow the way of this people.”

There are moments when faithfulness requires standing apart.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

If the crowd is walking away from God, being outnumbered may be evidence that you are standing where you should.

XLVII. THE RIGHT FEAR

Human fear produces:

Panic.

Confusion.

Compromise.

The fear of God produces:

Reverence.

Stability.

Wisdom.

Faithfulness.

Spiritual Principle

The fear of God does not enslave the soul.

It frees the soul from slavery to lesser fears.

XLVIII. THE WORD BEFORE THE WORLD

Isaiah does not say:

Check public opinion.

Ask the spiritist.

Follow rumors.

He says:

“Look to God’s law and testimony!”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Before asking what everyone else is saying, ask what God has already said.

XLIX. LIGHT OR DARKNESS

The chapter ends with two paths.

God's Word:

Light.

Occult guidance:

Darkness.

Trust:

Sanctuary.

Unbelief:

Stumbling.

Waiting:

Hope.

Rebellion:

Despair.

Spiritual Principle

The direction of life is shaped by the source from which we receive our light.

L. FINAL APPLICATION

Isaiah Chapter 8 is about where we turn when we are afraid.

The people of Judah live in anxious times.

Military threats surround them.

Political alliances shift.

Rumors spread.

Conspiracies dominate conversation.

Foreign armies grow stronger.

God gives Isaiah a different path.

Do not think like everyone else.

Do not fear what everyone else fears.

Do not allow public panic to become your personal master.

Instead:

“Honor the Lord Almighty as holy.”

Fear God.

Trust God.

Wait for God.

Listen to God.

The chapter also gives a warning.

The people reject:

The gentle waters of Shiloah.

They do not trust God’s quiet provision.

So a flood comes.

This teaches us:

Do not reject God’s way simply because it seems too quiet.

God’s obedience may appear:

Slow.

Simple.

Ordinary.

Unimpressive.

But His stream gives life.

The substitute may look powerful.

Then become a flood.

Isaiah also reminds us:

Immanuel still stands.

The flood reaches:

The neck.

But God’s promise is not drowned.

Enemy nations may organize.

They may make plans.

They may sign agreements.

But:

“They will not stand, for God is with us.”

Then comes the question of guidance.

Where do you turn when confused?

Isaiah says:

Not to occult voices.

Not to forbidden spiritual sources.

Not to the dead.

Instead:

“Look to God’s law and testimony!”

That must remain the standard.

Test:

Teachers.

Messages.

Prophecies.

Experiences.

Spiritual claims.

By:

God’s Word.

If something contradicts Scripture:

Reject it.

Finally, Isaiah says:

“I will wait for the Lord.”

That may be one of the hardest acts of faith.

Wait when:

Nothing changes.

God seems hidden.

Others panic.

Answers seem delayed.

Still:

Wait.

Trust.

Stand.

Because:

God is with us.

And the person who takes refuge in Him discovers that the Stone others stumble over becomes:

A sanctuary.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You that You are with Your people.

Thank You that when nations rage, kings plan, and fear spreads, You remain sovereign.

Forgive us for rejecting Your gentle waters.

Forgive us when we choose dramatic human solutions over quiet obedience.

Teach us to value:

Your Word.

Your guidance.

Your presence.

Your timing.

Father, protect us from fear.

Do not let us fear everything the world fears.

Protect us from:

Rumors.

Conspiracies.

Panic.

Speculation.

Anxiety.

Teach us to honor You as holy.

May our fear of You become greater than our fear of man.

Be our sanctuary.

Be our refuge.

Be our safe place.

Father, thank You for Immanuel.

Thank You for Jesus Christ.

Thank You that God is with us.

When trouble rises like a flood:

Remind us.

When plans are made against us:

Remind us.

When we feel surrounded:

Remind us.

You are with us.

Give us patience to wait.

When Your face seems hidden, help us still say:

“I will trust Him.”

Father, protect us from false spiritual guidance.

Keep us from mediums, spiritists, occult practices, and every forbidden attempt to seek supernatural knowledge outside Your will.

Anchor us in Scripture.

Help us test every message by Your Word.

Give us discernment.

Give us wisdom.

Give us courage to reject anything that contradicts Your truth.

Do not let us be driven into darkness.

Keep us walking in Your light.

And when the world around us is filled with fear, may our lives quietly testify:

God is with us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Key Verse

“Devise your plans, but they will fail; make your agreements, but they will not stand, for God is with us.” — Isaiah 8:10

Central Truth

Those who reject God’s gentle provision and revealed Word will eventually encounter judgment and darkness, but those who fear the Lord, trust Immanuel, wait upon Him, reject false spiritual guidance, and test everything by Scripture will find God Himself to be their sanctuary.

Isaiah 8 in One Sentence

Isaiah uses the birth of Maher-shalal-hash-baz to announce Assyria’s swift advance, warns that rejecting God’s gentle rule brings an overwhelming flood, and calls God’s people to reject fear, conspiracy, and occult guidance, trust Immanuel, wait upon the Lord, and test everything by His Word.