

March 4th, 2018

“Hope in Him”

Focal Passage: Isaiah 8 (ESV)

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

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| Feb 25 Numbers 33-34 | Mar 1 Duet 5-7 |
| Feb 26 Numbers 35-36 | Mar 2 Duet 8-10 |
| Feb 27 Duet 1-2 | Mar 3 Duet 11-13 |
| Feb 28 Duet 3-4 | Mar 4 Duet 14-16 |

Cross References: *Deuteronomy 18:21-22, Jeremiah 28:9, John 14:23, Proverbs 21:1, Acts 4:27-28, Romans 13:1, Ephesians 1:11, Romans 8:28, James 1:2-4, Galatians 1:10, 1 Corinthians 2:14, 1 Corinthians 12:3, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9*

Important Background Passage: **2 Chronicles 28.**

Because Judah’s King Ahaz refused to listen to Isaiah’s counsel from the Lord, his kingdom was wrought with heartache and defeat (see also **2 Kings 16**).

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS OF THE PASSAGE:

- **God is sovereign over all things, even suffering (V. 7-10).**
- **Christ as the only means of salvation is a stumbling block for many (V. 13-15).**
- **God’s Word is the only place to turn for wise council (V. 19-20).**
- **Those who do not trust in the Lord are utterly hopeless (V. 21-22).**

Lesson Idea: *Our hope in the midst of chaos is to wait for the Lord, and trust His Word.*

Isaiah 8:1-10

1 Then the Lord said to me, “Take a large tablet and write on it in common characters, ‘Belonging to Maher-shalal-hash-baz.’ 2 And I will get reliable witnesses, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, to attest for me.”

3 And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the Lord said to me, “Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz; 4 for before the boy knows how to cry ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away before the king of Assyria.”

5 The Lord spoke to me again: 6 “Because this people has refused the waters of Shiloah that flow gently, and rejoice over Rezin and the son of Remaliah, 7 therefore, behold, the Lord is bringing up against them the waters of the River, mighty and many, the king of Assyria and all his glory. And it will rise over all its channels and go over all its banks, 8 and it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass on, reaching even to the neck, and its outspread wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel.”

9 Be broken, you peoples, and be shattered; give ear, all you far countries; strap on your armor and be shattered; strap on your armor and be shattered.

10 Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us.

DISCUSSION:

- **V. 1-4**
 - Why was the tablet to be large, and why was the message to be written in common characters?
 - What was the purpose of these two reliable witnesses? (*Deuteronomy 18:21-22, Jeremiah 28:9*)
 - Why was Isaiah’s wife referred to as “the prophetess”?
 - What is the significance of the name *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*?

Note: *The name of Isaiah’s son, Maher-shalal-hash-baz, is meant to point to the nature of the coming invasion of Assyria. This name speaks of “speeding to the plunder,” and “hurrying to the spoil.” Isaiah’s son was meant to be a living time-marker, showing that the enemies of Judah would be defeated quickly.*

Note: *often times the prophets were instructed to use things from their personal lives as living*

examples of the Lord's message (e.g. Hosea and Gomer). It is important to take note of their example of obedience to all that the Lord commanded. Whether it was to have a child and name him a certain name, or marry a prostitute, or preach to a people who they knew would not listen, they obeyed the Lord. This faithful obedience is a mark of one who has encountered the Lord, and loves Him (**John 14:23**).

- **V. 5-8**

-Why is it that it was prophesied that Judah, along with their enemies, would suffer at the hands of the Assyrians?

-What do these verses tell us about God's role in this invasion of Judah?

Note: Often times, when we think of chaos and suffering, we tend to leave God out of the equation. We either think He's forgotten us, or He is helpless. What we see in this passage is neither that God has forgotten the people of Judah, nor is He helpless to put a stop to their coming suffering, but rather, He is the one bringing it about (**V. 7**). God's sovereignty over all circumstances is seen clearly in this passage, as well as many others (**Proverbs 21:1, Acts 4:27-28, Romans 13:1, Ephesians 1:11**). It is important to note that God's sovereignty over suffering does not always mean He is using it to punish those experiencing the suffering. On the contrary, in the lives of believers, we can trust that our suffering is always being worked for our good (**Romans 8:28**). As Christians, we can rejoice in God's sovereignty over suffering, because we can trust that He is using it to bring about our sanctification (**James 1:2-4**).

- **V. 9-10**

-What do these verses tell us about the future of God's people, and the ultimate end of their enemies?

Isaiah 8:11-22

11 For the Lord spoke thus to me with his strong hand upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: 12 "Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. 13 But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your

dread. 14 And he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 And many shall stumble on it. They shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken."

16 Bind up the testimony; seal the teaching among my disciples. 17 I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. 18 Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. 19 And when they say to you, "Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter," should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living? 20 To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn. 21 They will pass through the land, greatly distressed and hungry. And when they are hungry, they will be enraged and will speak contemptuously against their king and their God, and turn their faces upward. 22 And they will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. And they will be thrust into thick darkness.

DISCUSSION:

- **V. 11-13**

-How was Isaiah able to proclaim such a difficult message to the people of God? What was he primarily concerned with? (**Galatians 1:10**)

- **V.14-15**

-Why does trusting and fearing the Lord (or trusting Christ as the only means for salvation) cause so many to stumble? Why is it so offensive to so many? (**1 Corinthians 2:14, 1 Corinthians 12:3, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4**)

Note: Without the power of the Holy Spirit, every one of us would stumble over the gospel. The Scriptures are clear that "**no one seeks God**" (**Romans 3:10-12**). Left to ourselves, we would be hopeless. May our passage today cause us to rejoice in the fact that, by God's grace, we have not stumbled, but have called on Jesus by the power of the Spirit! May it also encourage us to pray for those who do not know Him, that God's Spirit might work in them as He has in us.

- **V. 16-18**

-In the midst of chaos, what was Isaiah's response?

-What are some the promises of God that you cling to in times of trouble?

- **V. 19-22**

-Where were some of the people of Isaiah's day turning to for answers?

-What are some of the wrong ways we seek answers today?

-Where did Isaiah instruct the people to turn to for answers?

Note: *Isaiah proclaims clearly, the answers we are searching for in the midst of chaos and suffering, or any other time, are to be found in the "teaching and the testimony!" The Word of God is able to shed light on every situation. Too often we find ourselves turning to worldly council, while the very words of God sit on our shelves. The Word of God is sufficient for every circumstance (2 Timothy 3:16-17).*

-What does Isaiah say about those who do not get their answers from the Word of God? (2 **Thessalonians 1:8-9**)

-How should knowing the fate of those who reject God's Word influence our day-to-day interactions with those around us?

APPLICATION:

- ✓ What does this passage teach us about God?
- ✓ How might those truths encourage and strengthen you this week?