

# The Background and link between Isaiah 8 and 9

## Chapter 8

The start of chapter 8 continues on from the events in chapter 7.

At the time Judah was suffering from ongoing oppression from the nations of Syria and Israel (see Isa 7). Syria and Israel were mounting pressure on Judah to join forces against the dominant power that was Assyria (8:4).

The prophet Isaiah has another son, which Yahweh instructs him to name Maher-shalal-hash-baz (8:3). This name is significant because it's meaning; "swift is the booty, speedy is the prey" (8:1), represents the coming judgement of God towards Syria and Israel.

Isaiah was to write this coming judgement on a large tablet in front of two men, Uriah (probably the high priest) and Zachariah (it is unknown what position he held but it was one of public significance). These two men served as witnesses to Isaiah's public notice of the coming attack on Syria and Israel (8:4), confirming that Isaiah predicted the date and events of this prophecy before they occurred.



The preceding prophecies Isaiah proclaimed to Ahaz (7:10-25) are generally negative, but the following prophecies spoken to the Judites (8:1-10) are more positive. These instructions from the Lord evidently came to Isaiah in the midst of the Syro-Ephraimitic war.

### These are the prophecies Isaiah proclaimed:

Before the boy grew old enough to speak distinctly (8:4), Assyria (King Tiglath-pileser III) would carry off the wealth of Damascus and Samaria (in 732 B.C.; 7:15-16; 2 Kings 15:29; Isa 8:7).

Syria and Israel would not only fail in their attempt to bring Judah under their power (7:6), but the king of Assyria would bring them under his power.



As a result of the Assyrian invasion (8:5-10) Isaiah predicted that Judah would also be invaded (by King Sennacherib in 701 BC), and only Jerusalem would be spared (8:9). This is because of Judah's lack of obedience in trusting in Yahweh alone, and making alliances with other nations (Assyria) to ensure their protection.

The second prophesy Isaiah proclaims, despite Assyria's strength (only permitted by God as His instrument of Judgement) God would not permit her to take Jerusalem (8:9-10).

Assyria however, would leave the remaining country side of Judah desolate (8:21-22).



A warning is then given to Judah to trust in their God Yahweh for refuge (8:13-14), to not oppose Assyria because she was the instrument of God's judgement (8:11), to turn back to His Law (8:16), and the assurance that the two signs of judgement given to Israel and Judah (Isaiah's sons) would be fulfilled (8:17-18).

Despite these warnings the unfaithful in Judah chose not to trust God's Word (8:20), but that of mediums and spiritualists (8:19).

## Chapter 9

In contrast to the judgment proclaimed in chapter 8, Isaiah now prophesies the glory that will be given to the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali (9:1)

These tribes were the first to experience the darkness (9:2) of the Assyrian invaders (2 Kings 15:29). However, they would be the first to see the light (9:2) because this geological area became the primary ministry of the Messiah (Matt 4:15-16).

While the first two verses of chapter 9 deal with the first advent of Jesus, verses 3 to 7 proclaim the events of His second advent. The hiatus between verse 2 and 3 has already been 2000 years!

**We see God's promises to the entire land of Israel at the second advent of the Messiah are as follows:**

- National growth and an abundance of joy of all kinds (9:3),
- Deliverance from Israel's enemies (9:4) against overwhelming odds (as when God broke the yoke of Midian- Judg. 6-7),
- The promise to end all war (Isa 9:5, Ps 46:9-10).



**Verse 6 provides the climax of chapters 7, 8 and 9 as we see two beautiful contrasts between:**

**The two Kings of Judah:**

- The foolish, unrighteous king of Judah, Ahaz (7:12)
- The wise, righteous reign of King Jesus (9:7).

**The two children born:**

- Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isaiah's second son) that represents the judgment of God and captivity of the nation of Israel
- The Godchild born, ultimately, to restore Israel- both physically to the land and spiritually to God.

While the first half of verse 6 proclaims the first advent of Jesus, the second half of verse 6 and 7 proclaims His second advent. Declaring:



- His ruling attributes- Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father and Prince of Peace (9:6b),
- The throne in which He shall be ruling from (David's) therefore, fulfilling the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:8- 17, Isa 9:7),
- The eternity of His reign (2 Sam 7:16, Isa 9:7).