

## “Hope in Immanuel” Isaiah 8:1-22

**Context:** Isaiah’s prophetic themes of judgment of the unfaithful and deliverance of the remnant are set against the backdrop of God’s impending destruction of Ahaz and Judah (2 Kings 16:7ff). Ahaz rejected God’s call to trust Him, even refusing God’s offered sign. Ahaz chose to trust instead in the power of Assyria for deliverance from Syria and Ephraim. God promised Ahaz a sign anyway, a sign of His presence through Isaiah’s second son, whose two names meant “God’s presence” and “God’s destruction.” God promised preservation of a believing remnant, symbolized by curds and honey, in the midst of devastation, symbolized by briars and thorns. The prophecy also alludes to another presencing of God and another deliverance of the remnant from destruction through the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

### 1. Hope in His quiet presence - Isaiah 8:1-8, 6

God promised Isaiah a son whose presence and name were signs that Syria and Samaria would no longer be a threat to Judah. He gave this prophecy to two witnesses rather than Ahaz to insure the safety of Isaiah’s wife. YHWH added clarification, explaining that Israel’s rejection of the calm flowing waters of Siloah (Judah), representing the quiet and barely perceived nature of God’s kingdom, for an alliance with the kingdom of Syria would bring down the flood of destruction from Assyria. The same kind of faithlessness by Ahaz brought God’s presence through the same flood of destruction, leaving Judah gasping for life, flooded to the neck.

### 2. Hope in His providential mercy – Isaiah 8:9-15, 10

Isaiah and the faithful were warned for the purpose of perceiving that human strategy, war, victory, defeat, and devastation ultimately yield to the purpose of God. Their response to dire situations is to be antithetical to the rumors, dread, and fright of their surrounding community. For them, God is to be set apart from the politic, and God alone is to be revered and dreaded. Instead, His presence causes unbelieving Judah to stumble, even to the point of destruction.

### 3. Hope in His revealed truth – Isaiah 8:16-22, 20

Isaiah prayed that the Lord would seal the stories of His works and the revelation of His ways in the hearts of those Isaiah taught. He testified that he had affixed himself to the hidden God whose disclosure he anticipates. He then warned his disciples to seek their sole understanding and comfort, not in the dim-witted around them, but in God as revealed in His word.

## Study questions:

- *Hiphil* verbal forms are used in verse 13 to indicate a causal force that the subject contributes to the action of the verb. As **Bible study method**, look up the meanings of “holy” (TWOT #1990) and “dread” (TWOT #1702). What actions would you do in order to cause YHWH to be worshipped as holy and to cause your emotion to tremble in His presence?
  
- What are the subtle differences in the words “wait” and “look eagerly” in Isaiah 8:17 (see TWOT #645; #693c; #1994)?
  
- We profess an eager expectation of Jesus Christ’s second coming (see footnotes 1-4 ‘**On Last Things**’ in our **doctrinal statement** under **what we believe** at [www.gracepointfellowship.org](http://www.gracepointfellowship.org)). Isaiah gave signs of His coming presence (Isaiah 8:8, 10). What signs are described before He returns a second time (see Matthew 24:10ff)?

## Transformation exercise:

Reflect on Isaiah’s hope in Isaiah 8:16 and 17. What Christmas traditions do you have that deepen your hopeful expectation of His return? If you don’t have any, find one.