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The Prophetess Bore a Son

Named

Maher-shalal-hashbaz.

(Isaiah 8:1-22)

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

The Prophetess bore a Son Named Maher-shalal-hashbaz.

Topics.

- The Name Maher-shalal-hashbaz.
 - God brings Assyria and Babylonian against Israel and Judah.
 - The stumbling stone an Old Testament echo of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - The LORD is hiding His face from the house of Jacob.
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Introduction

In the previous chapter Isaiah told Ahaz King of Judah at Jerusalem that the LORD will give him a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. This sign child was to be a sign to Ahaz that Jerusalem would not be conquered by Syria and Ephraim (the ten tribes of Israel), because the armies of Assyria were about to invade the land of Israel and bring to utter ruing Rezin the king of Syria whose capitol was Damascus (Isaiah 7:8) and Pekah the king of Israel (also called Ephraim) whose capitol was Samaria (Isaiah 7:1-2, 8).

The name Maher-shalal-hashbaz

- **Isaiah 8:1-4:** Then the LORD said to me (Isaiah), "Take a large tablet and write on it in common characters, 'Belonging to Maher-shalal-hashbaz.' ²And I will get reliable witnesses, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, to attest for me." ³And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, "Call his name Maher-shalal-hashbaz; ⁴for before the boy knows how to cry 'My father' or 'My mother,' the wealth of Damascus (Syria) and the spoil of Samaria (Israel) will be carried away before the king of Assyria."

It is very likely that Maher-shalal-hashbaz is Isaiah's own child, since the Scripture says, "I went to the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son" and Isaiah did have other children (Isaiah 8:18) which means he had a wife who may well have been this prophetess woman, but since there is very little in the Bible concerning Isaiah and his family we will simply refer to Maher-shalal-hashbaz as the child of the prophetess.

The kings of Judah, Israel and Syria

- Ahaz was king of Judah and the head of Judah was Jerusalem (Isaiah 7:1-2).
- Rezin was king of Syria and the head of Syria was Damascus (Isaiah 7:8).
- Pekah was king of Israel (also called Ephraim) and the head of Israel was Samaria (Isaiah 7:1-2, 8).

Maher-shalal-hashbaz: from Strong's Concordance is a symbolic name given by Isaiah, by the LORD'S direction to the son of the prophetess as a prophetic indication that Damascus and Samaria were soon to be plundered by the king of Assyria. The name carries the meaning quickly, speedily, hastily, soon and suddenly and also of plunder and spoils (of

war). The sign child Maher-shalal-hashbaz is not mentioned in Scripture once Israel is taken captive into Assyria. The birth of Maher-shalal-hashbaz to the prophetess was to be a sign that God was with Israel even during their captivity to Assyria. The LORD told Isaiah to write on a tablet the words, 'Belonging to Maher-shalal-hashbaz. Isaiah does this and a prophetess conceives and gives birth to a son. Then the LORD tells Isaiah to name this son Maher-shalal-hashbaz, and that before the boy knows how to speak the words, "My father" or "My mother," the king of Assyria will have attacked Damascus and Samaria and taken their wealth and the people captive.

- **Isaiah 8:5-8:** The LORD spoke to me (Isaiah) again: ⁶"Because this people (Israel/Samaria) have refused the waters of Shiloah that flow gently, and rejoice over Rezin and the son of Remaliah, ⁷therefore, behold, the Lord is bringing up against them (Israel/Samaria) 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, ⁸and it (Assyria) will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass on, reaching even to the neck (Jerusalem), and its outspread wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel."

Isaiah in these verses is not only saying that Assyria will rise up against Israel/Samaria because they refused God, but will also descend upon the land of Judah. Isaiah finishes this verse with the expression, "O Immanuel" in this context this expression is an expression that shows Isaiah's great grief at seeing by vision the land of Israel and Judah being laid waste by their enemies. Today we would say, "O God what a pity" it is a sigh of Isaiah's deep sadness and despair that this destruction is coming to God's people (because of their rebellion and wickedness).

- **Isaiah 8:9-10:** Be broken, you peoples, and be shattered; give ear, all you far countries; strap on your armour and be shattered; strap on your armour and be shattered. ¹⁰Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us.

Band together you people is referring to all the enemies of Israel and Judah. Isaiah is saying that even though the enemies of Israel and Judah will bring them to ruin and their land to utter waste it will not last because God is with His people.

God brings Assyria and Babylon against Israel and Judah

God used Assyria and Babylon to bring judgement upon Israel and Judah because of their gross sin and rebellion against the LORD. Assyria conquered Israel and Babylon conquered Jerusalem and Assyria so that both Israel and Judah were brought into captivity for seventy-years to Babylon. Isaiah is saying that this child to be born to the prophetess is to be a sign that God is still with his people while they are in captivity. Israel and Judah went into captivity to Babylon as two rebellious nations who had not only turned from God to idols, but were even sacrificing their own children to pagan gods. While they were in captivity God molded them like a master potter molds a beautiful clay jar. Israel and Judah went into Babylon as two unfaithful nations that had turned away from the LORD to idols and other gods. Seventy-years later, Cyrus (King of Persia) who the LORD called His shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) gave permission to Israel to return to Jerusalem. Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel and Judah back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one united nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob (Israel never turned to idols or pagan gods again). Anyone watching these battles and Israel's captivity without the eyes of faith would simply think the stronger and smarter army won, they would not see that God was not only orchestrating the events, but was also in control of them.

- **Isaiah 8:11-15:** For the LORD spoke thus to me (Isaiah) 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. ¹³But

the LORD of hosts, him you shall regard as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. ¹⁴And 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. ¹⁵And many shall stumble on it. They shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken."

The LORD tells Isaiah not to follow the wicked ways of Judah and Israel or to fear the destruction that is about to come upon them, but to fear and trust in God.

In the immediate context of this chapter, the words:

- The Lord of Hosts 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 and many shall stumble on it (v14-15)

Refer to the wickedness of Judah and Israel before the LORD, rather than believe the words of Isaiah the prophet that Assyria would invade their land, they believed it was all a conspiracy most likely to get them to change their wicked and corrupt ways. So, in this sense the LORD would be a stumbling block and a rock of offense to those who refused to follow the ways of the LORD, but would be a sanctuary to the faithful, but the stumbling Stone is also an echo of the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter wrote:

- For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." ⁷So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," ⁸and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do (1 Peter 2:6-8).

The words:

- They shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken" (Isaiah 8:15)

Refer to Assyria's captivity of the land of Judah and Israel and King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquering Assyria and taking the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of Israel captive for seventy-years, but it also transcends the era of Babylon and echoes a future day when the unfaithful of Israel will deny the child named Immanuel and of Rome destroying their land their beloved city Jerusalem and their temple, but the faithful finding the one named Immanuel their refuge and sanctuary.

The LORD is hiding His face from the house of Jacob

- **Isaiah 8:16-18:** Bind up the testimony; seal the teaching among my disciples. ¹⁷I (Isaiah) will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. ¹⁸Behold, 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.

Isaiah says that even though God at the moment is hiding His face from Israel he will put his hope in God. The words, "Bind up the testimony" refer to all the words Isaiah has spoken concerning the stumbling stone of Judah, Israel and to all the words concerning Assyria and the child named Immanuel.

NOTE: perhaps there is a faint echo in the words, "Seal the teaching among my disciples" of the twelve disciples of the future son named Immanuel the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah's words, "The children whom the LORD has given me (of which Maher-shalal-hashbaz maybe one) are signs in Israel" could refer to Isaiah's own children or to the faithful that are with Isaiah.

These children will be signs to Israel in the following two ways:

1. That the word Isaiah has spoken regarding Judah and Israel's defeat and Assyria's victory is true and will come to pass.
2. When Israel is in captivity to Assyria and Babylon, they will be signs that God is with them.

For further insights see the following titles:

- A Virgin shall Bear a Son and call his Name Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14).
- The People who walked in Darkness have seen a Great Light. (Isaiah 9:1-3).
- Both titles are on the index of this article.

This story and prophecy begin in Isaiah chapter seven and majestically flows through to Isaiah chapter nine echoing the Lord Jesus Christ.

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