



## Text, Interpretation and Exposition of the Messianic (Immanuel) Passages in Isaiah 7-8

*“Often . . . [these texts] are applied so directly to Jesus that they are treated in willful disregard of their present immediate context in Isaiah. The bits that fit the NT tend to be pulled out with no attempt to relate them to other things that are equally prominent in the passage . . .”* (H.G.M. Williamson.)

*“Immanuel is no longer the unborn child of 7:14, but the owner of Israel's land and the source of the divine force that brings the plans of conspiring nations to naught [Isa. 8:8, 10]; cf. Ps. 2:1ff).”* (B.S. Childs.)

*“Notwithstanding the extraordinary mystery and indeterminacy surrounding the giving of the sign of Immanuel [in Isaiah 7:14], there are many clear indications that it was understood messianically by the tradents [carriers] of the Isaianic tradition and shaped in such a way as both to clarify and expand the messianic hope for every successive generation of the people of God.”* (B. S. Childs.)

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### THE TEXT OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

<sup>1</sup>When Ahaz son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, was king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel marched up to fight against Jerusalem, but they could not overpower it. <sup>2</sup>Now the house of David was told, “Aram has allied itself with Ephraim”; so the hearts of Ahaz and his people were shaken, as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind!

<sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said to Isaiah, “Go out, you and your son Shear-Jashub, to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Launderer’s Field. <sup>4</sup> Say to him, ‘Be careful, keep calm and don’t be afraid. Do not lose heart because of these two smoldering stubs of firewood—because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and of the son of Remaliah. <sup>5</sup> Aram, Ephraim and Remaliah’s son have plotted your ruin, saying, <sup>6</sup> “Let us invade Judah; let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves, and make the son of Tabeel king over it.” <sup>7</sup> Yet this is what the Sovereign LORD says:

“ ‘It will not take place,  
it will not happen,  
<sup>8</sup> for the head of Aram is Damascus,  
and the head of Damascus is only Rezin.  
Within sixty-five years  
Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people.  
<sup>9</sup> The head of Ephraim is Samaria,  
and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah’s son.  
If you do not stand firm in your faith,  
you will not stand at all.’ ”

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, <sup>11</sup> “Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.” <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the

LORD to the test.”<sup>13</sup> Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and she will call him **Immanuel**.<sup>15</sup> He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, <sup>16</sup> for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste. <sup>17</sup> The LORD will bring on you and on your people and on the house of your father a time unlike any since Ephraim broke away from Judah—he will bring the king of Assyria.”

<sup>18</sup> In that day the LORD will whistle for flies from the Nile delta in Egypt and for bees from the land of Assyria. <sup>19</sup> They will all come and settle in the steep ravines and in the crevices in the rocks, on all the thornbushes and at all the water holes. <sup>20</sup> In that day the Lord will use a razor hired from beyond the Euphrates River—the king of Assyria—to shave your head and private parts, and to cut off your beard also. <sup>21</sup> In that day, a person will keep alive a young cow and two goats. <sup>22</sup> And because of the abundance of the milk they give, there will be curds to eat. All who remain in the land will eat curds and honey. . . <sup>25</sup> As for all the hills once cultivated by the hoe, you will no longer go there for fear of the briars and thorns; they will become places where cattle are turned loose and where sheep run.

**Is. 8:1** The LORD said to me, “Take a large scroll and write on it with an ordinary pen: Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.” <sup>2</sup> So I called in Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah as reliable witnesses for me. <sup>3</sup> Then I made love to the prophetess, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. And the LORD said to me, “Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. <sup>4</sup> 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.”

**Is. 8:5** The LORD spoke to me again:

<sup>6</sup> “Because this people has rejected  
the gently flowing waters of Shiloah  
and rejoices over Rezin  
and the son of Remaliah,  
<sup>7</sup> therefore the Lord is about to bring against them  
the mighty floodwaters of the Euphrates—  
the king of Assyria with all his pomp.  
It will overflow all its channels,  
run over all its banks  
<sup>8</sup> and sweep on into Judah, swirling over it,  
passing through it and reaching up to the neck.  
Its outspread wings will cover the breadth of your land,  
**Immanuel!**”  
<sup>9</sup> Raise the war cry, you nations, and be shattered!  
Listen, all you distant lands.  
Prepare for battle, and be shattered!  
Prepare for battle, and be shattered!  
<sup>10</sup> Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted;

propose your plan, but it will not stand,  
for **God is with us.**