



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"God is With Us: Either Hide IN Him, Or You'll Trip Over Him"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts: Isaiah 8:9-22; Is. 7:14; 8:5-8; 9:1-6; 2 Kings 16:7-9; Romans 9:32-33; 1 Cor. 1:23-24; Ps. 118:22; Matt. 21:42-44; Heb. 2:13; Ps. 46:1-2; John 1:4-5

The book of Isaiah brings us face to face with a sobering reality: *Immanuel—God is with us*. Whether people acknowledge Him or not, whether they see Him or not, He is present. The question isn't whether God is there; the question is how we will respond to His presence. Isaiah 8 closes in utter darkness—deep distress, hunger, anguish—but tucked into this darkness is a bright, unwavering truth: God is still there.

Isaiah speaks into a time when fear is rampant. Nations are gathering, conspiracies are swirling, and God's people are trembling like trees in a storm. Yet, in the middle of the chaos, Isaiah stands steady. Why? Because the strong hand of the Lord has come upon him. God says, "*Do not walk in the way of this people.*" (Isaiah 8:11) Isaiah has learned where true refuge is found—not in political alliances, not in fear-driven strategies, not in conspiracies—but in the Lord alone. God is with us. The question is: Will you hide in Him, or will you keep tripping over Him?

1. GOD IS WITH US – AND THE PLANS OF THE NATIONS WILL FAIL (9-10)

Isaiah begins this section by speaking to the nations that are girding themselves for battle. He says: "*Make an uproar, O peoples—but you will be broken in pieces. Give ear, all you of far countries. Gird yourselves—but be shattered! Gird yourselves—but be shattered! Take counsel together, but it will amount to nothing. Speak a word, but it will not stand. For God is with us.*" (Isaiah 8:9–10 TLV). This is the defiant confidence of someone who knows who stands behind him. The nations can gather. They can strategize. They can raise their banners and form alliances. But Isaiah declares, "It will not stand. Why? Because *Immanuel—God is with us.*"

We live in a world that loves to plan without God. Nations, governments, and influencers believe their strategies will shape history. But Isaiah reminds us: history bends to God's purposes, not human power. God was using Assyria to discipline Judah, but even Assyria's own arrogant plans would eventually be shattered. God overrules. When fear grips us, we're tempted to look at the nations and tremble. But Isaiah calls us to look higher. God is with us. His presence nullifies the best-laid plans of those who oppose Him.

2. DON'T WALK IN THE WAY OF FEAR—SANCTIFY THE LORD IN YOUR HEART. (11-15)

Isaiah says, "*For thus Adonai spoke to me with a strong hand, warning me that I should not walk in the way of this people*" (v. 11). Everyone else is panicking. Conspiracies are spreading. Political schemes are swirling. People are aligning themselves with earthly power to feel safe. But God strongly warns Isaiah: *Don't think like them. Don't fear like them. Don't walk in their way.*

Verse 12 says, "*Do not say, 'A conspiracy!' about everything these people call a conspiracy. You must not fear or tremble at what they fear.*" How relevant is that? We live in a time when fear spreads faster than truth. People are consumed by speculation, headlines, and what-if scenarios. But God says, "*Adonai Tzva'ot—Him you will sanctify. Let Him be your fear, trembling at Him.*" (v. 13). To "sanctify the Lord" means to set Him apart in your heart as utterly unique. He's not one option among many. He's not a piece of the pie—He's the whole. If we fear what the world fears, we treat God as if He were helpless or irrelevant. But when we revere Him above all, He becomes our sanctuary.

Verse 14 says, *“He will be a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”* How we respond to God determines whether He is a refuge or a stumbling block. If we trust Him, we find shelter. If we reject Him, we trip over Him. He doesn’t change—our response determines how we experience Him.

3. BIND YOURSELF TO GOD’S WORD, NOT TO THE DARKNESS (16-22)

As the darkness deepens, Isaiah models a different response: *“Bind up the testimony. Seal the instruction with my disciples.”* (v. 16) He’s saying, “Hold fast to what God has spoken. Don’t chase after the latest trends or spiritual fads.” Isaiah says, *“I will wait for Adonai, who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in Him.”* (v. 17) Even when God seems hidden, Isaiah chooses endurance and expectant trust. He and his children stand as living signs: God’s salvation endures; a remnant will return; His promises remain sure.

In contrast, the people turn to mediums and necromancers—those who chirp and mutter. They look to the dead for answers while ignoring the living God. Isaiah cries out, *“To Torah and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it’s because they have no light of dawn.”* (v. 20). The chapter ends with a grim picture: hungry, enraged people cursing God as they wander into *“distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish, and they will be driven into darkness.”* (v. 22) They refused to hide in Him, so they keep tripping over Him.

But Isaiah knows: the story doesn’t end in darkness. The next verse announces, *“There is no gloom to her who was in anguish... In the future, He will bring glory... Galilee of the Gentiles.”* (Isaiah 9:1) A light is coming.

CONCLUSION

Isaiah 8 confronts us with a choice. God’s presence is not optional—it’s real. He is with us. The only question is whether He will be your sanctuary or your stumbling stone. The nations may rage, fear may spread, darkness may deepen—but God is still on the throne. Will you hide in Him, or will you keep tripping over Him?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does Isaiah’s declaration *“It will not stand, for God is with us”* challenge the way we view global and personal crises?
2. What does it mean to “sanctify the Lord” in your heart, and how is that different from simply believing in Him?
3. How do modern fears and conspiracies mirror the fears of Isaiah’s time? How should believers respond differently?
4. Why do you think people often turn to human solutions or spiritual fads instead of trusting God’s Word?
5. Which part of Isaiah 8 most speaks to your current situation, and how can you apply it this week?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Abba, we thank You that You are *Immanuel—God with us*. You are not distant. You are here, in the middle of the chaos, unshaken. Lord, forgive us for the times we’ve feared what the world fears or walked in the way of this people. Today, we choose to sanctify You in our hearts. Be our refuge. Be our sanctuary. Help us bind ourselves to Your Word and to wait on You, even when darkness seems to surround us. Let Your light break through in our lives.

In Yeshua’s mighty name, Amen.