

# Isaiah 13:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.

## Analysis

Terror seizes Babylon's inhabitants: pangs and sorrows like a woman in labor, amazement at each other, faces aflame with shock and fear. The childbirth metaphor describes sudden, intense, unavoidable agony. 'They shall be amazed one at another' suggests mutual shock and helplessness—no one can help anyone else. 'Faces shall be as flames' indicates either shame, terror, or the glow of burning city. This depicts comprehensive panic when God's judgment strikes.

## Historical Context

Fulfilled when Babylon fell to Persia (539 BC). Belshazzar's feast (Daniel 5) shows this terror—the king's face changed, joints loosened, knees knocked. The sudden conquest produced panic as prophesied. The imagery also applies to all sudden divine judgments throughout history and ultimately final judgment when terror seizes the wicked. The labor metaphor indicates unavoidable suffering with sudden onset.

## Related Passages

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does the childbirth metaphor illustrate the sudden, intense nature of divine judgment?
2. What does mutual amazement and helplessness teach about judgment's comprehensive nature?
3. How should certainty of coming judgment produce urgency in our evangelism and holy living?

## Interlinear Text

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|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| וְיִירְאֶת לְאָנֹחַ               | אֵיכֶם                               | תִּתְבְּלִימָד            | וְיִאָכַז אֵלֶיךָ      |
| <b>And they shall be afraid</b>   | <b>pangs</b>                         | <b>and sorrows</b>        | <b>shall take hold</b> |
| H926                              | H6735                                | H2256                     | H270                   |
| כִּיּוֹלֶד הָ                     | וְיִחְיל אֵלֶיךָ                     | אֶל אֶשְׁ                 | רֵעַ הַוְ              |
| <b>as a woman that travaileth</b> | <b>of them they shall be in pain</b> | <b>one</b>                | <b>at another</b>      |
| H3205                             | H2342                                | H376                      | H413 H7453             |
| וְיִתְפַּתְּחֶה הַ                | לְפָנֶיךָ יְמִים                     | פָּנִיהם:                 | פָּנִיהם:              |
| <b>they shall be amazed</b>       | <b>their faces</b>                   | <b>shall be as flames</b> | <b>their faces</b>     |
| H8539                             | H6440                                | H3851                     | H6440                  |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 26:17** (Parallel theme): Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD.

**Nahum 2:10** (Parallel theme): She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness.

**1 Thessalonians 5:3** (Parallel theme): For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

