

INTRO: I've heard these verses used by social activists and TV preachers to describe a goal of peace on earth. "If only we spent more \$ on education and school busing..." "If only we'd ban guns entirely..." If only we'd leave it to the UN to settle...." These people are expecting the impossible. (BTW, please don't watch those TV preachers!)

I. ISAIAH DESCRIBES IMPOSSIBLE OCCURRENCES

A. In the animal kingdom. (vv.6-7)

1. wolf dwell with lamb (named 'lunch')
2. leopard lie down with young goat (named 'snack time')
3. calf and young lion together; not for long
4. cow and bear grazing together; unlikely scene
5. lion eat straw like the ox; with no molars?

B. Impossible occurrences among children (v.8)

1. little child lead menagerie of wild and domestic animals
2. nursing child play by cobra's hole
3. weaned child put hand in viper's den
4. worse child abuse than leaving in locked car w/windows closed

C. Obvious Hebrew poetry/prophesy; having another meaning

1. parallelism is a good clue; repetitions examples
2. clearly referring to the impossible, the supernatural
3. look esp. for spiritual understanding/application; dig deeper

II. BECAUSE A ROD SHALL COME FORTH FROM JESSE

A. v.1 precedes these 'impossible' occurrences

1. stem of Jesse, i.e., David's father (poetic expression; not 'kid')
- 2...His roots = a descendant of David
3. both Luke and Matthew trace a lineage through David
4. "Rod" = Jesus; that which follows v.1 is about **Jesus**

B. Spirit of the Lord (v.2) rested on Jesus

1. visibly, at Jesus' baptism
2. to 'Spirit' (v.2) add: wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, fear of the Lord = 7 = **Holy** Spirit rested on Him
3. wisdom even as 12-year-old in temple; also, 'render unto Caesar'
4. understanding = rich young man's possessions
5. counsel - with Mary and Martha at Lazarus' death

(continued)

6. might - pick a miracle! stilling storm; exorcisms; healings
7. knowledge = forewarning Peter and Judas
8. fear of the Lord = resisting Satan; rebuking Peter
9. It's about Jesus! Isaiah is prophesying something about Jesus

C. A spiritual application is clearly indicated

1. nowhere else in Bible is changed animal behavior taught
2. on the contrary, all points to business as usual, nothing spectacular
- 3...until the end; as in the days of Noah (eating, marriage)

III. THIS FORETELLS CHRIST'S COMING(s) AND PURPOSE

A. Bringing peace on earth from God for man

1. Is. 11 is clearly Messianic when compared with Luke 2
2. angels' message of peace on earth, good will to men
3. peace via Atonement, Redemption, "It is finished"
4. a reality; done deal, by God Himself; foreseen by Isaiah
5. animals and infants are used to exemplify a spiritual reality
6. Old Testament promises fulfilled in Jesus; it's about **Jesus**

B. Bringing individuals to Himself

1. first, but not only stem, root, remnant of Jesse
2. a banner to **all** people (cp. H.S. band in parade; unopened umbrella in St. Peter's cathedral in Rome)
3. even Gentiles (you!) shall seek Him, as did the wise men
4. because He has made Himself known to us; invited us
5. each conversion is an impossible made possible: dead/alive; Born again? Impossible, says Nicodemus. But not so with Jesus, Spirit

C. Assuring an eternity beyond imagination

1. vv. 3-4 speak of a judgment; suggest end times (dual application)
- 2 v. 4 says 'strike the earth; slay the wicked'
3. Bible knows only two advents of Christ, and one is already past
4. maybe a new heaven and earth; impossible for me to comprehend
- 5 hence the wolf/lamb; child/cobra, et alii
6. nah, it's about Jesus; peace through His life, death, atonement

CONCLUSION: With God all things are possible. That is, all things that are His holy will are possible. And that holy will is made known to us in His holy word. That Word tells of a peace from God through Christ Jesus, the Redeemer from sin. Believers in Him will be at war with Satan and this evil world and our sinful flesh, but at peace with God and with one another. Amen.