

Midweek Advent Series:
WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

Isaiah Foretells A King

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| 1. A King Who Is "God with Us" – Isaiah 7:14 | (12/3) |
| 2. A King Who Rules with Justice – Isaiah 9:6-7 | (12/10) |
| 3. A King Who Is Righteous – Isaiah 11:1-5 | (12/17) |
| 4. A King Who Accomplishes Peace | |
| <i>Isaiah 11:6-12</i> Christmas Day | |

4. A King Who Accomplishes Peace

Isaiah 11:6-12

(for context, read 11:1-16)

INI

Grace and peace ...

Isaiah 11:6–16

- 6 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,
The leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
The calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall lead them.
- 7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
Their young ones shall lie down together;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole,
And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.
- 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord
As the waters cover the sea.
- 10 "And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a banner to the people;
For the Gentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be glorious."
- 11 It shall come to pass in that day

That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time
To recover the remnant of His people who are left,
From Assyria and Egypt,
From Pathros and Cush,
From Elam and Shinar,
From Hamath and the islands of the sea.

¹² He will set up a banner for the nations,
And will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
And gather together the dispersed of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.

Lord, sanctify us by Your truth; Your Word is truth. Amen.

In the name of ...

A wolf lays down to rest with a lamb at his side. A young calf and a lion bend down together to take another bite of grain. It was a place of peace. A world at rest. It was Eden – a place where there was truly peace on earth. A Peace was the nature of all things God created and rest was the goal of all God had planned. Adam and Eve lived in perfect communion with God so that He could walk among them and they could live in His glory. But this peace would soon be broken. Adam and Eve sided with the serpent and did what they thought they needed to do to survive. And in doing so, they became enemies of their God.

So where were they supposed to go now? They'd been cast out. Out of God's presence. Out of paradise. Adam and Eve had effectively ended all peace talks between the creation and the Creator and were now thrust out into a scattered world. They are thrust out into a world where people are doing what they must do to survive. There is no longer peace on earth.

We have been thrust into a scattered world where there is no peace on earth. The creation groans together in the pain of being separated from its creator. Survival of the fittest. The wolf eats the lamb and the calf flees from the lion. We have been thrust into a world where people and animals are doing what they must to survive. {A world driven by discord, violated by violence, suffering from sin.} A world full of violence, unrest, and discord.

But God has promised peace. Angels have come singing of it. Shepherds have rushed to find it. Peace on earth. Where will we find it? Isaiah pictures a world where a child can safely stick his hand in a cobra's den. Isaiah pictures a world where nations are

united; where the church is united. Isaiah pictures a King who will accomplish peace on earth. It leaves us thinking Isaiah is full of it. The angels are mistaken. The shepherds were dooped. It leaves us asking the question: What Child is this who comes to accomplish peace?

Where is peace to be found in the days of Isaiah? Judah needed a king – a king who could bring peace. They longed for the days when they would return to the days of King David. There was a day when they were all one people, they were called the sons of Israel, one nation under God, but now the nation is divided into two – Israel and Judah. They have become divided and the hostility would grow and grow until God would give them over to their unbelief.

They thought they must do what is necessary to survive. Israel in the north has allied with Syria. Judah in the south is seeking alliance with the Assyrians to the far north. So rather than turning to God to save them out of their conflict, they turn elsewhere. They reject the covenant God had made with them and go after other gods. They figure they must do what is necessary to survive.

So God will scatter them in their unbelief. He stirs up a power to the north in King Tiglath Pileasar III of Assyria and to the east in King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. And He scatters His own people into other nations.

First the Assyrians invade Israel, taking their people captive and displacing them across their lands. Then 140 years later the Babylonians invade Judah, taking their people captive and placing them into exile in Babylon for the next two generations.

There would be no time of peace for God's people. From the 6th century BC onward, they would be subject to other nations and other kings. God's people were scattered and in need of rest. Where is peace to be found?

Where is peace to be found in our lives? We need a king – a king who can bring peace. But there is none and we must do what is necessary to survive. How many of us have someone in our family who won't be showing up for Christmas this year? Or how many of us have someone in our family who will be showing up for Christmas, only to stir up some kind of conflict? How many of us have some unspoken problem or irritation with someone, some unsaid resentment, some unresolved anger that will go on festering while we try to put on a happy face this Christmas?

We often think we must do what is necessary to survive. So we dig our heels in; we protect ourselves or puff ourselves up. Rather than turning to God to save us out of our

conflict, we turn elsewhere. We get our defenses up striking back with our “well, what about you!”; We go on the attack and try to get other people on our side; or we slink away into our shells unwilling to take responsibility for our calling and leavening nothing resolved. There is not only a conflict between us and other people, but us and God Himself. We are scattered and looking for a place to rest. Where is peace to be found?

Where is peace to be found in Jesus’ life? He was born into a family that had been scattered and divided. He was the adopted son of Joseph of the tribe of Judah. Matthew records the genealogy. Joseph was the son of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, the son of Uzziah, the son of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, the son of David, the son of Jesse. These men were kings. Joseph was of the tribe of Judah; he is a descendant of the king. But here he is living in Galilee, a Gentile territory, working as a carpenter. He is too poor to afford a housemaid to care for Mary while he makes the journey to his hometown of Bethlehem for the census. He has to bring his nine month pregnant wife along and when they arrive late in the day, there is no room for them in the inn.

The family had been scattered. It was a result of the sins of his fathers. The kings of Judah had failed to look for peace in the right place and as a result had been laid to waists. The line of kings had been cut so deep that it struck to the very root. Right down to Jesse, the father of the first king, King David. The royal lineage had been buried, dispersed into the surrounding lands by the Assyrians and Babylonians. Jesus’ royal family was exiled to the land of Galilee. And there is no room for them in the inn.

But Joseph must do what is necessary to survive. His wife has gone into labor, and they must take what they can get. So they find a stable. A place to house travelers’ animals. They are scattered and looking for a place to rest. Where is peace to be found?

But that is just the place peace is to be found.

10 *“And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a banner to the people;
For the Gentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be glorious.”*

There is peace on earth, you just have to know where to look. So pay attention to the signs. Look for the banner which says: “TURN IN HERE!”

The “banner” which is spoken of in verse 10 is the sort of sign that would be raised in the event of an invasion. A banner would be raised on a high mountain to signal where the community should assemble. It was a gathering sign. Kind of like when you hold a wedding banquet or graduation celebration, you’ll put out special signs that say: “TURN IN HERE!”

10 *“And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a banner to the people;
For the Gentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be glorious.”*

Look for the banner which says: “TURN IN HERE!” Because there you will find peace on earth.

Luke 2:9–12 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them ... and said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

It was a banner to the shepherds: “turn in here!”

Luke 2:13–14 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

As our King, Jesus submitted to lowliness. A sprout from the root of Jesse has sprung forth, and he stood as a banner to the people. When all the kings of Judah had been puffed up in their own failure, Jesus would spring forth. From the root of Jesse, in the city of David, in a the dirty, stinky, lowly residence of animals a place of peace is found. There in the suffering, in the one comes not in the glorious comfort of kings, but in the anointed humility of the Christ.

As our King, Jesus submitted to the hostility, submitted to the hatred between us and our brethren, between us and God. He became scattered Israel. He became my scattered life, your scattered life. Scattered and unknown to the world, Jesus stood as a banner to the people. He was thrust out, thrust out of heaven, thrust out of God’s presence, thrust into a world which is lost and dying, was thrust upon the cross; lifted for our sins, buried in our death, and raised from death as a banner to the people.

10 *“And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse,
Who shall stand as a banner to the people;
For the Gentiles shall seek Him,
And His resting place shall be glorious.”*

In His resurrection a banner is lifted so that we can find the rest that God intended for His creation and for His people. This is the banner which draws us here today.

How far have you come to get here today? I figure the average drive time for local members of this congregation to be between 30-45 minutes. Now, there are plenty of other places you could be right now. Sleeping. Opening presents. Lounging around in your pajamas drinking coffee. Getting dinner ready for the relatives. Getting an early start on your travels. But something has drawn you here. Just as something drew those shepherds. God’s Spirit has stirred up something to bring us from afar that we may find peace.

11 *It shall come to pass in that day
That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time
To recover the remnant of His people who are left,
From Assyria and Egypt,
From Pathros and Cush,
From Elam and Shinar,
From Hamath and the islands of the sea.*

12 *He will set up a banner for the nations,
And will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
And gather together the dispersed of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.*

You have come so far – but it was not your doing. This was God’s recovery. From among all nations and peoples, God has set his hand again, a second time and has gathered a remnant. The first time God redeemed His people from Egypt; the second time He redeems them from among all the nations in which they are scattered. After the Lord had scattered His people in judgment, He now reconciles them in the proclamation of a new born King. He sets up a banner that says: “Turn in here!”

The angels raise the banner and say: “For there is born to you, this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the LORD. And with the Shepherds we have come to see the thing which has come to pass. And God says: “Turn in here!” Come here, to My word and discover what child this is who laid to rest on Mary’s lap is sleeping? Come here to My stable and discover the King who calls us out of our corrupted lives and out

of our broken relationships and out of our sinful past and into His forgiveness. Come here to My Eden, into My presence once again, and there shall be peace on earth.

“Hark the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King; Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”

The peace we have is the peace of sins forgiven. And this is the peace which dwells with us here on earth. It is the peace which goes with us, into that Christmas dinner, into that relationship – it is the peace which now is our banner to the world.

So let us raise the banner, a remnant of God’s peace on earth. Let us go with the shepherds to share this good news which shall be to all people. Let us live this peace, by repenting where we have done wrong, by restoring what we have broken, by turning from our sinful past and living a new life in the peace of the LORD.

A wolf lays down to rest with a lamb at his side. A young calf and a lion bend down together to take another bite of grain. It is a place of peace. A world at rest. It is the new Eden – the land to which we go. Christ is risen and He brings forth a new creation for all who believe in His coming. Peace is the nature of this world, and rest is the goal for all God has planned. Isaiah pictures the fullness of what God is planning. This is what Christmas is all about. A picture of the new creation, even as we now receive it in the promises of God. A picture of that place of peace, where we shall cast off our sinful flesh and rise to perfect communion with God. He will once again walk among us and we will live in His glory. There will be nothing that can hurt or destroy in all His holy mountain. For we have a King who has accomplished peace. Amen.