

Jehovah who did this. *Zebulun... Naphtali*; lower and upper Galilee. *Beyond Jordan*; the land of Gilead (see 2 Kings 15 : 29). *In Galilee of the nations*; omit "in." Better "the circuit of the nations." This prophecy had a new significance when Jesus preached the gospel in Galilee.

Vs. 2, 3. Sudden change of style. The prophecy breaks into poetry. *Have seen*; the past tense, because the prophet sees all this as already accomplished. *Not increased the joy*; the Hebrew words for "not" and "to it" are pronounced alike, and so sometimes confussed. But it is clear that this should read, "To it thou hast increased the joy." *Before thee*; as at the Jewish festivals (see Deut. 12 : 7).

Vs. 4, 5. In these two verses the destruction of the oppressor is pictured. *The staff of his shoulder*; the staff with which his back was scourged. The reference is to Israel. *The day of Midian*; "day" in Arabic often means "day of battle." The phrase here means the day when the dominion of the Midianites was broken (see Judges 7). *For every battle, fuel of fire*; "after Jehovah's great victory every vestige of war shall be burned up in preparation for the kingdom

of universal peace" (Skinner).

II. The Light Come, 6, 7.

The greatest cause for Israel's joy is to be the birth of the Messiah, who is to rule so righteously. The perfect tense is used, since the prophet regards himself as standing already in vision in the Messianic age.

V. 6. *Unto us*; those who survive the judgment previously described. *His name shall be called*, the name of the Messiah is to consist of a series of titles of honor, such, for example, as were given to the kings of Egypt and Babylon. The names given to the Messiah in this passage express the characteristics of His government. *Wonderful, Counsellor*; it probably gives the sense better to compound these titles, thus: "Wonder-Counsellor," (See Isa. 28 : 29.) *The mighty God*; better, Hero-God. Wisdom and strength are two fundamental necessities for a successful King. The remaining two titles suggest that the Messiah's rule is to be fatherly and peaceful.

V. 7. Tells us of the spread and stability of the Messiah's Kingdom. *To order it*; the Messiah's throne does not depend so much upon force as upon judgment and righteousness.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—Christmas Lesson.

Introduction—Around the board have a string of Christmas bells either of paper or outline. Speak of the coming Christmas day and its meaning to us. What do the Christmas bells say to us? Repeat with swaying motion of arms:

"Beautiful bells, joy-giving bells,
Sweet is the story your glad ringing tells;
Beautiful bells that seem to say
'Christ the Redeemer is born to-day.'"

Tell the Christmas story (Luke, ch. 2). It was while the shepherds were doing their duty, and minding their sheep that the good news of Jesus' birth was told to them. Boys and girls who neglect duty need not expect blessing.

Golden Text—Repeat.

The Prince of Peace—PRINT, CHILD, SON, WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.

At His birth the angels sang, "Peace on earth, good will toward men", and when He was leaving this world, He said to His disciples, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." We are told to "follow after those things which make for peace."

A Promise of Peace on Earth—God gives a wonderful promise through Isaiah (v. 7), and we are seeing day by day the government and peace of Jesus spreading over the world.

A Christmas Promise—

"And now we all will promise the heathen children, that we

Will send the knowledge of Jesus' love to lands beyond the sea,

Till all the world shall Christmas keep, rejoicing for His birth,

At which the shining angels sang, 'Good will and peace on earth.'"

Flag—CHRISTMAS.

Something to Think About—I should have peace and good will in my heart.