



He is described as a man of the Spirit.
This is sometimes called the sevenfold Spirit.

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | The Spirit of the LORD |
| 2 | the Spirit of wisdom |
| 3 | and of understanding, |
| 4 | the Spirit of counsel |
| 5 | and of might, |
| 6 | the Spirit of the knowledge |
| 7 | and fear of the LORD |



What do these mean?

How did Jesus fulfil them?

What is the overall picture of this descendant of David? cf. Matthew 3:11, 16, Luke 1:32.



Read Isaiah 11:6-9

How does this passage make you feel?

This is an amazing vision of the future.

What makes a lion a lion?

What makes a lamb a lamb?



Being a carnivore is what makes a lion a lion; it is its defining feature. Lions are powerful, aggressive and dangerous. They have claws.

This passage is poetry, and we need to interpret it carefully. It is not saying that one day lions will become vegetarians. The point is deeper than this.



What kind of world do we live in?

Our world is dominated by the rich and powerful. It is based on competition, oppression and greed. It is a world of inequality and injustice. Full of fear and uncertainty. Dog eat Dog. It is a world of the wolf and the lion, where lambs are in danger. The passage describes a different kind of world. One not based on the survival of the fittest but on equality and fairness.



But in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. 2 Peter 3:13

What would a world led by righteousness be like?

The promise here is probably Isaiah 65:17-25. FYI Isaiah 11:6&9 = Isaiah 65:25



This is not the end. The Emmanuel child has not disappeared. The key is found in verse 6: "and a little child will lead them." We are not being told that the world will change so much that even a little child will be safe. The wolf lives with the lamb, because the little child leads them. This is the Emmanuel child. And the world changes because of the sign of Emmanuel, because a child is born for us.



Christmas is great. It is a wonderful narrative with stable, manger, shepherds and star. But because of this, we are redeemed. The work of Christmas is not yet finished. Christmas points to a New World, a New Age and a better world. The book of Emanuel is an eschatological vision.

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The Book of Emanuel



Isaiah is a lengthy book, and it can be challenging to comprehend. Like the other Major Prophets (Jeremiah and Ezekiel), it is best to understand it as an anthology. A collection of discrete sections put together, like a magazine or a book of short stories.

Isaiah 7 to 12 is one such block. Sometimes it is called the Book of Emmanuel. It is significant to us at this time of year because it contains three major prophecies of the coming of Jesus that are often read at Christmas time. Isaiah 7:14, 9:1-7 and 1:1-10. It is also noted that children are mentioned a disproportionate number of times in this section.



Read Isaiah 7:1-16

'Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.' But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test.' Isaiah 7:11-12



Why would Ahaz, the King of Judah, not ask for a sign?

How does he sound, pious or demanding?



This passage is 700 years before Jesus' Birth.

To understand this, you need to get the (terribly complex and convoluted history).

War is brewing. The Assyrian Empire is moving East. Between it and Judah are Israel, led by Pekah and Aram, led by Rezin. King Ahaz must decide what to do to keep his people safe.



He has four options. He can ask Egypt for help, but Egypt is often unreliable. He can join the alliance of Israel and Aram to fight the Assyrians, but he thinks they will then turn on him. He is probably right. That leaves making a deal with Assyria, voluntarily joining their empire or staying independent, and trusting God. This is the choice Isaiah wants him to make. But he has already decided to side with Assyria.



This is why he does not want to ask for a sign. He knows it will tell him to do what he does not want to do.

How pious does he sound now?

You can understand why Isaiah gets so exasperated.



If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.' Isaiah 7:9

What does Isaiah mean by this when he said it to King Ahaz?

What does it mean for us?

Isaiah jumps into Aftermath, the kind of prophecy, the kind of prophecy that deals with what God will do in the future, rather than dealing with the things that are wrong in the nation now.

What is the sign Isaiah promises?



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The word for Virgin here is עלמה, Almah. It means virgin or unmarried women; within their cultural setting, the two are the same. The event is a sign, something out of the ordinary. Something that does not happen every day. Virgin is the right translation; the Septuagint confirms this.

Emanuel or Immanuel אֱלֹהִים עִמָּנוּ means God with us. There are different ways this could be expressed in Hebrew; the idea here is of God with us on our level. God as one of us.



Read Matthew 1:20-25

How was this prophecy fulfilled?

In what way is Jesus Emanuel?

What implication does this have for us?

Who is the baby born in Bethlehem?

What is God like?

That is a big question; a big part of the answer is Jesus.



Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'?" John 14:9

In what way is this a sign for us?

Like Ahaz, we are being told to trust God. To recognise God's way and to follow it. Jesus is the sign that God is still with us. He is still involved in our world and our lives. God loves us. He is offering us a way of salvation and a way out of our danger. We have to do what Ahaz would not. Accept the sign and follow it. Obey and find redemption. Jesus is God's sign for our future. Jesus is a sign of peace, and of joy and of hope in our dark lives. He is the way forward, the way to God.

What does this practically mean for us?



In what way was Jesus Emmanuel?

In what way is Jesus Emmanuel

God became one of us. The Christmas story tells us who God is.

Does this make a difference?



What kind of God is born in a stable?

What kind of God is worshipped by shepherds?

The Name Jesus means He will save.



Effectively, what King Ahaz and we are being told is;

- I am going to step in and rescue you.
- I am going to be with you.
- I am going to change everything.



Isaiah also ties this into the now; It is possible he sees one of his children as a precursor of this role, Isaiah 8:1-4. But it is more likely that he has Hezekiah, Ahaz's 6-year-old son, who would become one of Israel's better kings, in mind. He is saying that by the time this son has grown up, the problem will have solved itself. Israel and Aram will be laid waste. The Assyrian army is forced to return home to deal with an invasion from the north. Who knew? Isaiah was right! This is not before Israel, and Aram turn on him.



Curds and Honey were considered royal food.

Choosing Good and evil refers to the age of Bar Mitzvah, when a child becomes responsible for their own behaviour. I.e. in 15 years you will be sweet.

Isaiah sees this child as the future of David's Kingdom.

Ahaz was everything that was bad with David's Dynasty; Jesus was everything that was good.

The prophets often juxtapose the future and the present this way. It is like they don't see separations in time, only a path moving forward.



Is Jesus still Emmanuel?



Read Isaiah 9:1-7

This passage promises hope for the Gentiles (nations here means Gentiles). The Messiah as a hope for the Gentiles is a theme in the book of Isaiah.



Read Matthew 4:13-16

How does Matthew explain Jesus' move to Capernaum?

Who are the people walking in darkness?

What is the result of the child's coming?



This is the same child as Isaiah 7, the Emmanuel child.

The passage tells a story. The nation is in deep trouble. There is darkness all around. But a child is born, who brings an end to war and establishes an eternal kingdom. He will bring Justice and Righteousness. This is the ideal king who will bring the dawn. The war ends because of the Child.

There is an idea behind this passage of human strength and wisdom failing, and God bringing wisdom and peace.



What kind of a feel does the passage convey?

There is sudden hope, Joy and victory. Relief. War comes to an end and is forgotten.

Midian probably refers to the Gideon story.



What oppression has broken for us?

What war has ended?

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5



Who is the child born to? v6

What will he be called?



What does; Wonderful counsellor, mean for you?

What does; Mighty God, mean for you?

What does; Everlasting Father, mean for you?

What does; Prince of Peace, mean for you?

How does Jesus fulfil this passage?



Jesus is Emmanuel – only He can show Mighty God.

What parts of this passage are now, and what parts are still to be completed?

Who is this baby for you?

How do we change because of this child?



Read Isaiah 11:1-5

Jesse was David's father.

What does a shoot from the stump mean?

Jesse's shoot is the Emmanuel child.