

American Standard Version seem to differ greatly. In the first half of this verse the King James Version says, "Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy." The American Standard Version says, "Thou hast multiplied the nation; thou hast increased the joy." There is a Hebrew word which means "not" in one spelling, and "to him" in another spelling. Both spellings are pronounced the same, and both have been transmitted to us. Consequently, we do not know for certain which was the spelling of the original. However, it does not affect the thought of the verse at all. It either means that the nation was multiplied without its joy being increased, but now great joy comes; or it means that the nation is multiplied and great joy is increased, such tremendous joy as is here described.

Verse 4 gives the reason for the joy. It is the destruction of the rod of the oppressor. As in the day of Midian, when Gideon suddenly had his men break their pitchers and show forth the light of the coming of God's deliverance, here the coming of Christ causes the light suddenly to shine out and shows the certainty of the coming deliverance from sin and oppression that results from sin through the death of Christ on Calvary's cross.

Verse 5 points out the eventual results of the coming of the Prince of Peace. The cruel Assyrians would come with confusion and noise and garments rolled in blood, but all this is to be burned and given to the fire. Wars are to come to an end when the reign of the Prince of Peace is finally consummated.

A Child is Born

All this is to be introduced, in the first instance, not by the coming of a great conqueror but by the birth of a child. Verse 6 describes the coming of this child in poetic language. Two parallel phrases are used, "a child is born" and "a son is given." This unusual manner of statement might possibly be considered as simply presenting the coming of a child who is to be a son of David. It would not in itself prove the two natures of Christ but when we compare it with the statement which Isaiah has already given in 4:2, in which he described the Messiah as both "the branch of the Lord" and "the fruit