

Isaiah 10:33 - 11:16

*33Behold, the Lord, the GOD of hosts,
will lop off the boughs with a terrible crash;
Those also who are tall in stature will be cut down
And those who are lofty will be abased.*

*34He will cut down the thickets of the forest with an iron axe,
And Lebanon will fall by the Mighty One.*

*11:1Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.*

*2The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and strength,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.*

*3And He will delight in the fear of the LORD,
And He will not judge by what His eyes see,
Nor make a decision by what His ears hear;*

*4But with righteousness He will judge the poor,
And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth;
And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.*

*5Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins,
And faithfulness the belt about His waist.*

*6And the wolf will dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard will lie down with the young goat,
And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little boy will lead them.*

*7Also the cow and the bear will graze,
Their young will lie down together,
And the lion will eat straw like the ox.*

*8The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra,
And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.*

*9They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain,
For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea.*

*10Then in that day
The nations will resort to the root of Jesse,
Who will stand as a signal for the peoples;
And His resting place will be glorious.*

Thank you all for coming. It's glorious to be in the house of the Lord this morning to honor the birth of the King of Kings.

I hoped it would be fitting this morning to spend just a very few minutes while the music is fresh in our minds and thoughts looking at an old testament prophecy of what it will be like the second time Jesus comes to dwell on earth.

We've looked at the humility of His birth and life and we're in a continuing study of that life spent in humility in the book of Luke each week.

Isaiah 11 blends both together, the advent, but also the glory. And to be fair, it doesn't see two distinct visits. We *do* see *that* now with our 20-20 hindsight, and the completed revelation of scripture.

But to the jews this sounded like it would all happen at once. Messiah

comes and everything is perfect. It didn't go down quite that way. It pleased God to do it just exactly how He has accomplished it, with redemption from sin, and a 2000 year calling of the gentiles from the nations, while Israel sleeps.

Let's look quickly at this beautiful story of Isaiah's. It's really God's revealed story, Isaiah being the inspired amanuensis.

I purposely went back two verses in chapter 10 to lay the groundwork. The original volume had no chapter divisions.

What's happening in chapter 10 is that God is describing how He is going to use Assyria to punish His unfaithful people, Israel. Assyria is going to come and cut down the forest. The forest being a literary designation for the families of Israel. They're about to be whacked.

God's sending His punishers who are depicted as wielding an iron axe. Israel is the forest that is going to be cut down.

*10:33 Behold, the Lord, the GOD of hosts,
will lop off the boughs with a terrible crash;*

The picture is almost like a giant with a huge scythe knocking down the forest the way a mower mows down a field of wheat. God swings His scythe and lops off the tops of an entire forest!

*Those also who are tall in stature will be cut down
And those who are lofty will be abased.*

God hates pride, and the proud, the self important, the folks who think they are indispensable to God, the religious leaders, the kings and the nobles will be cut down the same as the ordinary.

34He will cut down the thickets of the forest with an iron axe,

And Lebanon will fall by the Mighty One.

Israel is God's forest. Like the cedars of Lebanon, Israel is the forest that will be cut off. But not forever. Not forever.

This prophecy was fulfilled when Judah was taken captive and carried off to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. From that day until 1948, Israel was never a sovereign nation again. For more than 2500 years they have been trodden down by the gentiles, forced to pay tribute to gentile rulers. Not a sovereign people.

You could argue that even though there are treaties in place today, and Israel is back in the land, they are still subservient to gentiles in a way. We all know that without the balance of power represented by the military might of the United States, Israel would vanish in a mushroom cloud overnight.

So in some sense, they are still trodden down by the gentiles. I'll let you work that out to what degree you think that is or isn't true. Many of us believe the only importance of the United States in biblical prophecy is that we are the big stick that hovers over anyone who would poke Israel in the eye.

When that big stick collapses, the nations are free to do as they will to Israel. And if that was the case, as we saw just this last week in the United Nations, Israel is still hated by everybody. It's OK for everybody to throw rockets at them. It's evil if they defend themselves. Take the USA out of that equation and see what happens.

God cut down the forest, and in the imagery of this poetry of Isaiah, it's still scattered on the ground. Except . . .

*11:1 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.*

The forest is cut down. There is a field of stumps. Families of Israel cut off. A forest of stumps. And from the stump that was Jesse, a shoot.

Who is Jesse? 1 Samuel 16:

10 Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." 11 And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are these all the children?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here."

12 So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward.

David is the annointed root of Jesse. But this is centuries before God cuts down the forest in Isaiah 11.

So the shoot of Jesse that Isaiah is talking about is yet future. It isn't David. But it's a son of David. The shoot that will grow out of the stump that was Jesse and David, is a Son of David's who will be King of all the earth. The Messiah.

Now we said that the two iterations of Jesus aren't seen in this poetry in chapter 11.

But both distinct versions of the shoot, are in Isaiah. Listen to the first couple of verses of Isaiah 53. Same shoot. Totally different things that happen.

*1 Who has believed our message?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*

*2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,
And like a root out of parched ground;
He has no stately form or majesty
That we should look upon Him,
Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.*

*3 He was despised and forsaken of men,
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
And like one from whom men hide their face
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*

Same imagery. Same shoot. Totally different effects. In 53 He suffers and dies in our place to atone for our transgressions.

In Isaiah 11 the shoot is glorious. Beyond our imaginations glorious.

I'm not an outline person. I'm too disorganized and lazy to make good outlines. But if we were going to make a very rough outline of Isaiah 11 it would go something like this;

10:33 - 11:1 This is who He is. The shoot is the Son of David

11: 2 - 3 This is what He's like. He is altogether righteous, altogether Just

11: 4 - 5 This is what He will do. He will judge the whole earth, righteously

11: 6 - 10 These are the results. A world devoid of evil, devoid of Satan's rule.

What He is like;

*2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,*

*The spirit of counsel and strength,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.*

*3 And He will delight in the fear of the LORD,
And He will not judge by what His eyes see,
Nor make a decision by what His ears hear;*

You would want the judge of the whole earth to have these traits, right?

Spirit filled. Filled up with God's Holy Spirit, at all times. And that spirit includes all of the things that make up a righteous judge. Wisdom. Understanding. Counsel. Strength. Knowledge. He fears God. Not men.

*4 But with righteousness He will judge the poor,
And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth;*

He doesn't judge with surface things. He judges like God judges, because He is Righteous God. All knowing, all powerful, righteous and just.

Now, we all want the part where the lion lies down with the lamb, right. Unimaginable peace. Unfathomable to us.

But unfathomable for a reason. Satan is the king of *this* earth, this world we know. Righteousness and justice are the exceptions. Never the rule. We look around and see chaos closing in fast. If we didn't know what was coming, it would be frightening. And people are frightened.

The unfathomable peace doesn't come without a cataclysm. First, judgement must come to this evil, wicked, world. We see that in these verses. Before the peace, a cataclysmic judgement must take place.

Satan will be deposed, and the wicked of this world will be judged. We

pray for that every time we say the Lord's prayer. *Thy kingdom come.
They will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.*

Those words cannot come true without a cataclysmic judgement of evil, and a deposing of the king of this world. That's scary. Horrendous if you don't know and love the Saviour.

*And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. x2*

He judges and slays wickedness when He comes to His people, Israel. Then He rules with righteousness and faithfulness that are seen as offensive in the next verse. These belts are war like. He rules with a rod of iron.

*5 Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins,
And faithfulness the belt about His waist.*

But then comes a thousand years of peace that is eden like. The earth and the natural order of things will be changed.

*6 And the wolf will dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard will lie down with the young goat,
And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little boy will lead them.*

*7 Also the cow and the bear will graze,
Their young will lie down together,
And the lion will eat straw like the ox.*

*8 The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra,
And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.*

9 They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain,

This is the part we want in the picture on our Christmas cards. We don't want the judgement part. The slaying of the wicked. Or do we?

I find myself recently, just the last few years, I'll be listening to the news on KNPR as I drive in to work, and after I'm sort of overwhelmed with the disgust of the wickedness of this place, I'll pray those words out loud.

Thy kingdom come. Your authority to reign on this earth, as opposed to Satan, come. Your will be done on earth, like it is in all of heaven. I want that with all my heart. I long for the glory of the judgement of Satan and of rebellion on this planet, and the peace here, like it is in all the universes.

*For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea.*

When Jesus came the first time, nobody knew. A few shepherds. A priest and his family. His mother and adopted father. Wise men from the east. Herod who wanted very much to kill Him. Simeon and Anna in the temple. That was about it.

When His ministry began and the demons were recognizing Him, He silenced them. It was like God in a closet. Nobody knew.

Even the crowds of thousands who came to the miracles show like it was a carnival, they didn't get it. They didn't follow. After the resurrection there were only about 120 people who were the true believers. Nobody knew. Nobody got it.

But when He comes the second time; All heaven lights up with blazing glory. If you are a rebeller, terrifying glory. Beg for the mountains to fall on you and hide you . . . glory. Everybody will know. Wicked and

righteous alike will bow down to Him in His glory. Every knee will bow. Everywhere.

*For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea. As the waters cover the sea.*

Water touches everything under it's surface. It fills every void. It takes the shape of whatever is containing it.

That's kind of how the glory of Jesus will be. It will fill every void. The wicked won't be able to hide inside some cave, because the glory of God will be everywhere. Like the waters cover the sea.

Folks, this isn't hyperbole. We take this at face value. This is literal truth. All of it.

*10 Then in that day
The nations will resort to the root of Jesse,
Who will stand as a signal for the peoples;
And His resting place will be glorious.*

The nations will stream to Jerusalem, where David's throne is, to see Jesus. To know Jesus. To bow down to the glory of the shoot from the stump of Jesse.

That's my Christmas Card to you this morning. Think on these things. Turn off KNPR, and your cell phones, and your computers and dwell on the glory that is coming when Jesus returns to this world, and reigns on David's throne in Jerusalem.

And His resting place will be glorious.