



THE KING OF THE KINGDOM

Advent Series

ISAIAH

THE KING'S KINGDOM: ISAIAH 11

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Isaiah has repeated the same idea from multiple angles in Isaiah 7-12: God will save his people amid great distress for his glory. This promised salvation is a beckon of hope to a people who walk in darkness. It is a picture of the new creation to an old dying creation, and this hope is rooted in a coming son. Isaiah has alluded to this future son three times in Isaiah 7-12. First, this son will be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14). Second, Isaiah told us that this virgin-born son would be the king of God's people. Third, this virgin-born son accomplishes a new creation by completing the mission of the old creation.

The main point of today's passage is that the coming king orchestrates an amazing salvation: a new creation.

I hope that this idea transforms us so to live like citizens of new Creation. We could apply this in many ways, but Isaiah 12

itself is an application of Isaiah 11. In Isaiah 12, we are called to thanksgiving, evangelism, and sing praises to the Lord. I hope that we are encouraged to do that today.

THE KING OF THE KINGDOM (ISAIAH 11:1-5)

Isaiah describes the king that God's people need. Isaiah describes him first as a "shoot" from the stump of Jesse (1). Isaiah does not identify this king as a branch of David, which is the standard way biblical authors identified Davidic kings. Instead, Isaiah identifies him as a branch of Jesse. This slight shift indicates that this son is a New David. God's people do not need a mere son of David; they have one. His name is Ahaz, and he is lousy. God's people need a new David, and this new David is what God promises his people.

Isaiah furthers this coming king as one who bears fruit (1). This idea might seem insignificant, but it is not. Church family, we learned in Isaiah 7:23-25 and Isaiah 9:18 that the landscape of Israel is not fruitful. Instead, the landscape is briars and thrones because of the faithlessness of Ahaz. Still, God's people are not merely physically barren but spiritually. They are utterly fruitless. God's people and God's land do not flourish under Ahaz's leadership. This coming king, though, transforms this land from briars and thrones to fruitfulness.

This coming king also possesses the Spirit of the Lord (2). In the OT, the Spirit of the Lord would come upon kings, judges, and prophets, but the Spirit would often only be with a person temporarily. The Spirit, however, rests upon this coming king permanently. The Spirit is precisely what Ahaz lacks. He relies on human wisdom and understanding amid trouble (Isaiah 7:12) while his counsel and might are insufficient for the enemies that God will raise against him (Isaiah 7:18-20). Ahaz neither knows the Lord nor fears him (Isaiah 10:20). Ahaz is the complete opposite of this coming king. This coming king has the Spirit of the Lord: that is, the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and fear of the Lord (2). Oh, Emmanuel, is what God's people need, and this is who God gives us!

This coming king delights in the fear of the Lord (3). Remember, this is how God's people are to act amid trouble. The Lord instructed Isaiah in Isaiah 8:12-13 to fear him, not enemy armies. Isaiah is to dread the Lord, not a military invasion. This coming king does this perfectly since he delights in fearing God. The idea here is this: the future king finds relief in trusting God even when circumstances seem to indicate that God is not trustworthy. God has told Isaiah to wait on him even though several foreign militaries are coming to defeat Jerusalem. At this moment, God's people can either trust God's word – God said that the plan against them would not stand (Isaiah 7:7-9) – and wait on God, or they could

appeal to other nations for help. Ahaz and the people appealed to other nations. This coming king will not. He will find relief waiting on God amid trouble.

Church family, we can find relief and delight in waiting on God amid trouble. Let's hear that again: when a crisis exists around us, we can have delight in fearing God. Now, how often would our waiting on God amid trouble be characterized as delightful? The answer is probably not often. Yet, this coming king finds relief in waiting on God because he believes that God is trustworthy. God will keep his word to his people despite scary circumstances. The point then is this: our delight in God amid trouble depends on us trusting God's word. Let's be a people who are so confident in the Lord that we wait on the Lord with joy!

The reality that this coming king has the Spirit means that righteousness is administered (3-5). Church family, Ahaz did not possess the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, he did not fear God or rely on him. The result of this faithlessness was moral decay and corruption. Isaiah prophesied about this in Isaiah 9:8-10:4. Let's remind ourselves that Isaiah prophesied that God's anger was upon his people in these verses because of their pride – that is, their lack of faith in the Lord – which led to moral decay. Isaiah describes this decay in Isaiah 10:1-4 as a failure to administer righteousness. The lawmakers wrote awful laws that oppressed the weak. They administered unrighteousness because they did not trust the Lord.

This coming king is not like Ahaz. He makes laws not based on what he sees or hears but based on fear of the Lord (3). He might listen to a foreign king who is coming to wage war against him, but this news does not change his approach to governing his people. He might see an economic collapse on the horizon, but this coming king is steadfast in his commitment to caring for the weak of society. This future king, therefore, protects the poor and vulnerable and punishes the wicked (4). Isaiah graphically describes this coming king as one who wears righteousness and faithfulness.

Church family, this coming king is nothing like Ahaz; instead, he is a new David who administers justice so that the weak are protected and so that the wicked are punished.

THE KINGDOM AS NEW CREATION (ISAIAH 11:6-9)

When the king of the kingdom comes and establishes justice and righteousness, cosmic peace is achieved. In other words, this king reigns rightly and thus brings old Creation to completion. He is the true and better Adam. In these verses, we see that this king brings New Creation. There is peace between predator and prey in verses 6-9. Still, the weakest of society, a nursing child, experiences no danger even in the most venerable place. A child can put a leash on a wolf or lion or play over the hole of a venomous snake and be safe (8). Although the weak were prey for Ahaz and his government (10:1-2), they are safe with this coming king!

Two great questions to ask now are how old creation turns into a new creation and why this happens? Isaiah 11:1-5 explains to us how the new creation of Isaiah 11:6-9 is achieved: the rightful king of God's people administers justice and righteousness. Then, Isaiah 11:9 explains the reason why this transformation happened. New creation becomes a reality by the king, accomplishing the goal of the old creation. Thus, we see in these verses that the kingdom of God dwells with man when the king of God's people complete the mission of God's people.

This latter point is made beautifully in Isaiah 11:9. "They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea." In this verse, Isaiah summarizes New creation: there is no hurt or destruction in this new creation. Then, he explains why: because the knowledge of the Lord has spread over the entire planet (9)! This is the goal of Creation. God's purpose in creation is to establish his kingdom on earth so that knowledge of him permeates every corner of the planet. We learn, church family, in verse 9 that this goal has been achieved. The result is new creation. When the purpose of the old creation is completed, the new creation begins! This New David is, therefore, pictured as the one who fulfills the role of Adam!

Let's imagine this new creation together. There are no viruses that kill people or tsunamis that wipe out entire villages. There will be no more genocides or little girls being kidnapped

and trafficked for sex in this kingdom. There will be no more boys being kidnapped and forced into the fishing industry in Thailand. There will be no more slavery or abuse. Church family, this is what we want. We want desperately for Jesus' kingdom to come. How does it come? It comes once the knowledge of the Lord spreads over the entire planet; then the end comes.

Therefore, church family, let's be passionate about spreading the glory of God over the entire planet. Let's continue to spread it here in Upland, and let's not stop until every nation, tribe, and language knows that the Lord is the true God! Right now, we can participate in this effort in a few direct ways:

1. We can give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. 100% of this offering goes to support our international mission board.
2. We can develop a burden for the lost by using our South Asian pamphlets.
3. We can pray for the unreached using our pamphlets or an app like the unreached people group of the day.
4. We can begin to make plans to go on a short-term mission trip once international travel opens again.

Church family, we need a new David who completes Adam's mission of spreading God's glory throughout the entire planet.

THE MULTI-ETHNIC KINGDOM (ISAIAH 11:10)

Verse 10 represents the second part of this prophecy, and in case we missed the significance of Isaiah 11:9, which we have not, Isaiah marks verse 10 off as a paragraph of its own, something our English Bibles are keen to show us. This verse stands alone as a one-sentence restatement of verse 9. Isaiah says, “in that day.” Again, Isaiah contrasts the current day of Ahaz’s turbulent reign with this glorious future day (10).

In that coming day, the future king will be a banner for the people. Armies used banners used to identify groups of people. For example, in war, troops would carry banners. When in battle, soldiers knew where their comrades were by these banners, and if separated, they would flock back to these banners. Notice that this coming king is a banner for all people. All peoples flock to this coming and inquire of him (cf. Isaiah 8:19, 9:13). The idea of “inquiring” is one of dependence. The people no longer depend on idols, but this coming king! The result of this reality is that this future king’s resting place is glorious (Isaiah 11:10).

In this one sentence paragraph, Isaiah emphasizes again that this kingdom is for all peoples. This New David, then, achieves the goal of the Abrahamic covenant: a multi-ethnic kingdom.

The New Exodus of the Kingdom (Isaiah 11:11-16)

The third section of this prophecy describes God's kingdom in terms of a New Exodus. The first exodus happened when God saved his people from Egypt by leading them through the Red Sea. Isaiah, here, is describing for us a New Exodus that is similar to the first, but much bigger and better. In verse 11, Isaiah says that he will extend his hand a "second time." The first time was in Egypt when God saved his people with a mighty hand. Then, in verse 16, Isaiah says, "there will be a highway from Assyria for the remanent that remains of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt." God will bring about New Creation through a new exodus.

This exodus will be similar to the first since God will save the nations through the Exodus. During the first exodus, God saved a great horde of people, not merely Israelites, from Egypt. In short, some of the Egyptians believed in the Lord after witnessing the signs and left with them. Similarly, people from all nations will flock to this coming king during this future exodus (Isaiah 11:12).

Like the first exodus, God will judge many as he saves his people. In the first exodus, the Egyptians pursued the Israelites and drowned in the Red Sea. They were judged for opposing God and his people. Likewise, the Lord will judge many of Israel's neighbors who opposed them: Philistia,

Edom, Moab, Ammon, and Egypt are all listed here (11:15). Interestingly, many of these people were fighting God's people in Isaiah's day.

Finally, the hostility that plagued Israel and Judah during Isaiah's day will be gone in this coming day (13). God's people will once again be united as they were during the first exodus.

Church family, God's people need a new David who completes Adam and Abraham's mission through a New Exodus.

CONCLUSION

Church family, do see how Isaiah is interpreting the Old Testament? He is taking the most influential people of the OT and the most critical event, the exodus, and he is interpreting them all in light of Christ. Christ, this coming king is the fulfillment of the entire OT!

Let's also see in Isaiah 11 how the trajectory of the entire Bible is the mission. Spreading the knowledge of the Lord over the whole planet is our mission, and when that mission is complete, the kingdom comes. Ahaz was not concerned about the mission of God. He had done such an awful job that the Assyrians believed that the Lord was like all of the other idols (10:15). The knowledge of the Lord was not spreading over the planet. Jesus, however, has brought God's kingdom and the kingdom is now spreading. Therefore, let's live as members of

this kingdom during this Christmas season by giving thanks to God for his grace, by sharing the gospel with the lost, and by singing songs regularly to our God.

Prayer

Oh Lord, help us to spread your glory over the entire planet. Help us, in this new year, to be passionate about living for your glory. We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.