

Small Groups – Isaiah 11 – myfishbites.com

This is one of the many Old Testament places prophesying about 'the branch' who is of course Jesus!

In Isaiah 4.2 Isaiah had looked forward to 'that day'. That day would be the coming of the Messiah, the promised one – *"In that day the branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and adornment of the survivors of Israel."*

There are a few references beyond Isaiah 11 to 'the branch':

Jeremiah 23.5-6 – *"The days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness."*

Zechariah 3.8 – *"Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch."*

Isaiah 53.2 – *"He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him."*

Do you know of any other titles that Jesus has in the Bible?

Take a look at the words of Jesus in John 15.4-5. He now describes us (his disciples, followers) as being the branches and himself as the vine. This shows how God has put his Holy Spirit in the life of a believer - putting 'God in us'. Jesus is called the branch, now Jesus calls those with the Holy Spirit in them the branches!

Isaiah 11.1

It's interesting that in Isaiah 11.1 we read about a 'root' and a 'shoot' coming from Jesse. The 'shoot' referred to means something that has fallen into decay (just like the stump of a tree – note how in Isaiah 10, God has already been using the analogy of trees). Whatever would 'grow up' would also be from the family / line of Jesse (and his son, David).

Who else was in the family history of Jesus? Look at Matthew 1:

Where the Hebrew translates 'branch' it speaks in terms of a twig or a new suckling – something that requires special care. The Septuagint translates this as 'flower'.

Isaiah 11.2

In Isaiah 11.2, we learn that the "Spirit of the Lord will rest on him." There is a sense of peace about resting. Some translations speak of the dove coming out of heaven and resting on Jesus (see John 1.32 – where the Bible tells us that the dove remained (abided, dwelled, remained) on Jesus.

See also what God spoke through Isaiah in [Isaiah 61.1](#) – "The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners." This is the life God has called us to as believers!! We're called to be fruitful!

See also Galatians 5.22-23 (the fruit of the Spirit): "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Do you see the fruit of the Spirit operating in your own life?

This spirit promised in Isaiah 11.2 would also be a Spirit of wisdom and understanding. Ephesians 1.17 sees Paul praying for the church at Ephesus and saying, "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better."

The Spirit would have counsel and power too. [In John 14.16](#), Jesus tells his disciples, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever." The Counsellor is the 'parakletos', the Holy Spirit. In 2 Timothy 1.7 Paul adds, "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline."

The Holy Spirit is also one of knowledge (see 1 Corinthians 12) and the fear of the Lord. Psalm 111.10 says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. This 'fear' is referred to as 'reverence, exceedingly, fearfulness' in the Hebrew and in Psalm 110 the word used means the same.

Isaiah 11.3

Verse 3 goes on to say that, "he will delight in the fear of the Lord." To delight in the fear of the Lord is to delight to do God's Will. If we love God and revere him, we will want to do what he says. This isn't through fear and dread - it's because he's written in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, as prophesied by Jeremiah in chapter 31.33, "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

Psalm 36.4 says, "Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart." Jesus confirmed this in Matthew 6.33 when he was teaching his disciples, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

How do we seek God's Kingdom first in practical ways?

Isaiah 11.4

Jesus will command with justice and with righteousness. This is a great encouragement to many. There is so much pain and injustice in the world that we can sometimes lose hope. But one day Jesus will judge and he will be the perfect judge. He will do what his Father says. In John 12.49 Jesus says, "For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it." Jesus also affirmed that his 'food' was to do the will of his Father. (John 4.34).

John 5.19 also says, "Jesus gave them this answer: I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." But Jesus understands man and man's heart (see John 2.24-25).

Part of Isaiah 11 is talking about the future. We know from Revelation something about the future and know that Jesus will judge. Rev 19.11 says, "I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war." Verse 15 says, "Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron sceptre. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty."

2 Thessalonians 2.8 also reminds us that the evil one will be destroyed by the breath of Jesus' mouth. This parallels with Isaiah 11.4 when reminding us that Jesus will slay the wicked with a breath. When Jesus won the victory on the Cross it wasn't really a contest. Jesus will win over the evil one and all evil - and it won't be difficult!!

People often ask how a God of love allows suffering? How would you answer them?

Isaiah 11.5-9

We move to a new time of prophecy in Isaiah 11 with verses 5-9 initially... Here we have an incredible picture of heaven on earth – this is very much like Revelation 21. Many people believe this to be the 'millennial' reign of Jesus on the earth – a 1000 year period of Christ as King on the earth. Others just see this as a perfect picture of Christ's perfect peace and heaven – Isaiah 9.6 reminds us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Still others also see a picture of the church here especially from [Isaiah 11.9](#), "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." [Habakkuk 2.14](#) says, "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

In Exodus 17, we find the amazing account of when Israel were fighting the Amalekites. As long as Moses had his hands raised, the Israelites were winning. In the end, Aaron and Hur had to hold up his hands to help him, but Israel won the battle. Then God told Moses to make sure the event was remembered. Moses set up an altar in verse 15 of Exodus 17 and dedicated it, 'The Lord our banner.'

Isaiah 11.10

[In Isaiah 11.10](#), we find that "the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples..."

We gain an understanding here (and throughout Isaiah eg [Isaiah 42.1](#)) that the Messiah will be a blessing to other nations of the earth – Gentile nations. There was no real clue at this time that God would do this, but Isaiah saw a future, of Jew and Gentiles united under the banner of Christ. This would be something that would also give rest. We know that we have rest in Jesus. [Matthew 11.28-30](#), we find Jesus speaking to give us this assurance, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

We also know that just as God rested on the 7th day of Creation not because he was tired, but because the work was complete, so Jesus went to be with his Father and 'rested' because his work was complete. We know that Christ died once for all – [1 Peter 3.18](#) says, "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit."

Hebrews 1.3, 8.1, Colossians 3.1 and elsewhere make it clear that Jesus is sat on the right hand side of his Father. He's sat because his work on earth is done (for now anyway!!)

Isaiah 10.12 talks about the regathering of Israel. While this happened in 1948 with the miraculous 'born in a day' state of Israel, this probably also has a deeper meaning about unity under Christ. This wasn't just the regathering of God's people at the time in Babylon. This was only one corner of the earth. The regathering spoken of in Isaiah 10.12 was from 'the four quarters (or corners) of the earth. This also parallels with Revelation 7.1 which speaks of something global, "After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree."

What have you learned from this small group session about yourself, God and the Bible?

