

## Isaiah 11-12 Handout

In chapter 10 we saw how God was going to use Assyria as an instrument of punishment on Judah for their sin, and how He would then turn around and would judge Assyria for its pride and arrogance. Their pride would be the nation's downfall. The chapter ended with the promise of a remnant that would be saved from Judah and who would no longer rely on human power for help but on God alone.

In today's chapter we are going to see the perfect future reign of Christ described with its humble beginnings, indescribable power, complete and total justice and its perfect peace. It will have a universal reach to the very ends of the earth.

We are going to see the events of chapter 11 unfold across two time frames:

- A partial fulfillment happens in Jesus' first coming
- A complete fulfillment will come in His future kingdom

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We know in our country that every four years voters weigh and evaluate a new array of grand promises made by candidates aspiring to be the next president of the United States. Throughout history, we have seen the many promises broken that were made during these campaigns.

- In 1916, Woodrow Wilson pledged to keep the United States out of the "Great War" (WWI), which he broke in 1917 with the declaration of war on Germany.
- Hebert Hoover pledged in 1928 to end poverty in America when he famously promised to put "a chicken in every pot and a car in every garage." This promise was broken within one year by the worst economic depression in the history of our country.
- Franklin Roosevelt pledged to maintain a balanced budget, to decrease government spending by 25% and to keep the United States out of WWII. All of these promises were broken.
- George H. W. Bush famously said, "Read my lips: no new taxes". This pledge was broken in his 1990 budget compromise to reduce the federal deficit.

We've seen throughout history how people have sought the perfect society and the perfect government to rule it. The yearning to achieve this shows how people so often and consistently believe new promises with grand visions of government. We are going to see in today's chapter how the promises of the kingdom of Jesus Christ are not only far more glorious, but actually certain to come to pass.

### Coming of the Messiah (vs.1-5)

#### Verse 1

At the end of the last chapter Assyria was described as being cut down like a forest of trees. It also showed how Judah would only have a remnant left after God's judgment was over. Now we get this picture of a "shoot" coming up out of one of the stumps left.

**What will come up from the stump of Jesse?** \_\_\_\_\_

The stump of Jesse symbolizes the royal line of David. The stump shows us that something has been cut down – the nation of Judah. All that is left after God’s judgment runs its course are stumps. From one of these stumps (remnant) will come a shoot.

This shoot will come from Jesse’s family tree stump. Jesse was the father of King David whom God made a covenant with back in II Samuel 7.

**What will come from his roots?** \_\_\_\_\_

This “Branch” will be life-giving and fruitful unlike the kings of the past who failed to bring peace and justice.

**Who is this “Branch”?** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Verse 2**

Many see this verse as giving us a seven fold description of the Spirit and that it represents the perfection of Christ’s anointing.

1. Spirit of the Lord – shows that the Messiah’s mission and authority came directly from God. He is empowered by God’s Spirit.
2. Wisdom – enabled to live righteously and to rule effectively.
3. Understanding – Provides insight into motives and truth in situations.
4. Counsel – ability to guide, advise and lead correctly; decisions are divinely guided.
5. Might – power and courage to act decisively and to carry out justice. Not physical strength, but spiritual and moral authority.
6. Knowledge – knowledge of God’s will, law and truth which ensures righteous judgments.
7. Fear of the Lord – reverence of God that motivates humility, obedience and moral integrity.

The Spirit would distinguish the Messiah. That was one thing we saw lacking in most of the Davidic kings. This future Messiah would have everything needed to fulfill His task.

## **Verses 3-5**

**What will He delight in?** \_\_\_\_\_

“Fear of the LORD” = Reverent awe + joyful submission

We talked before about how the ‘fear of the Lord’ is not terror, dread or anxiety, but rather reverent awe, humble worship and glad obedience towards God. In practical terms it means that we recognize the greatness of God and trust in His wisdom. It means we align our lives with His and value what He values.

The Hebrew word for 'delight' literally means to smell with pleasure. It's taking deep pleasure in or finding something beautiful or enjoyable. Isaiah is saying that the Messiah finds the fear of the Lord both beautiful and satisfying, like a wonderful fragrance.

*Why does all of this matter?* A leader's heart shapes the world that he rules. The coming kingdom is a place of justice, peace, righteousness and restoration because its king loves God above all else. He is able to rule this way because He delights in God's ways.

He will make decisions based on righteousness and justice rather than on appearances. Unlike the oppression and injustice that had been happening to the poor, Israel's coming King would do what was right and fair for the less fortunate.

The end of verse 4 shows that by just His words, the Messiah would judge the wicked. All He has to do is utter the words and it will be done.

**What will be His belt in verse 5?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How about the sash around His waist?** \_\_\_\_\_

A belt in this culture held everything that was worn together. This gives us the picture that righteousness and faithfulness would characterize who He was.

The rest of the chapter points to a time not yet fully realized.

### **Peace in all creation (vs.6-9)**

#### **Verses 6-8**

The imagery we see here suggests that we will see a complete reversal of the curse of sin on creation and that security, safety and peace would be a result of the rule of this King.

Wolf → lamb

Leopard → goat

Calf → lion

**What will lead them?** \_\_\_\_\_

Cow → bear (their young will lie down together)

Lion → will eat straw like an ox

Infant → play near cobra's den

Young child → put its hand in a viper's nest

So, we see that creation will be transformed:

- Natural enemies will live in peaceful harmony
- Danger, fear and violence are removed
- The guiding principles of leadership will include innocence, humility and trust in God.
- Creation will reflect God's peace, justice and wholeness.

Romans 8:19-22 refers to this transformation of creation. It says, *"For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."*

Here in chapter 11, Isaiah gives us a visual image of what this liberated creation will look like.

### **Verse 9**

We see a world transformed by God's kingdom:

- No more harm or violence will exist
- God's presence and holiness will reign over all
- Everyone will fully know and follow God which will lead to universal peace.

### **The Gathering of God's People (vs.10-16)**

#### **Verse 10**

**We get a time reference here. What is it?** \_\_\_\_\_

This is referring to a future time of the Messiah's reign. It will be a time of peace, restoration and justice that we read about already in this chapter. It points us to a new time when God's kingdom will be fully established in all the world.

**What will stand as a banner in that day?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Which we know is who?** \_\_\_\_\_

Notice that back in verse one it said that "a shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse." Now in this verse He is called a "root". This shows us that He is not just a descendent of Jesse, but He is actually the source and foundation of the Davidic line. So we see the Messiah being portrayed as both human (descendent of David) and divine (the root and origin of life itself).

#### **Verse 11-12**

We are told the Lord will reach out His hand a second time. That makes one ask, when was the first time? The first time is thought to be referring to when He delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt.

Exodus 13:3 says, *“By a strong hand the Lord brought you out from this place.”*

### **What is the Lord going to do?** \_\_\_\_\_

These were God's people who are scattered all over the place, so this will be a worldwide gathering. Being gathered from the four quarters of the earth shows that there is nowhere that God's hand cannot reach.

### **Verses 13-14**

Internal conflict between the northern and southern tribes will no longer exist. Instead of fighting among themselves, they will come together to subdue their common enemies and take the whole Promised Land. It seems that this conflict will come before the peace we read about in verses 6-9.

### **Verses 15-16**

Whether these things will literally happen we don't know. What we do know is that God will remove every obstacle that could prevent His people from returning.

This chapter gives us:

- ❖ God's promise of a righteous king
- ❖ The Spirit's fullness in the Messiah
- ❖ Justice and peace in His kingdom
- ❖ Harmony in God's restored creation
- ❖ The nations gathering to the Messiah
- ❖ God's people gathered and restored

So we see that even in times of darkness, God has a plan for His people. He is giving them hope before a very dark time. Even though they are about to receive a terrible judgment because of their sin, they have the hope of a righteous king, a renewed creation and being a restored people.

**Why is it impossible for human governments to make good on their grand visions for a perfect society? Why are Christ's promises different and better than theirs?**

## **Chapter 12**

Now we will see in this chapter a song of praise and thanksgiving that people will sing in response to the reality described in chapter 11. It is a joyful response to God's ability to save and deliver His people. Some see this as Israel's song of salvation.

### **Verse 1**

“In that day”, points us to a future time. It is seen as being fulfilled in part when God brought His people back from exile, but still has to be filled in full when Christ returns.

### **Why will the people praise God?** \_\_\_\_\_

God’s anger and judgment has abated and now He brings comfort and reconciliation.

### **Verse 2**

This verse reflects the song sung after Israel is delivered from Egypt. In Exodus 15:2 it says, *“The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.”*

The people are looking at the Lord in a new light:

- Trust and not be afraid
- My salvation - it’s not just something God gives, but who He is
- My strength
- My defense

This is so different from what God’s people have been like so far in the book of Isaiah. Once God’s judgment is over, they will see Him for who He truly is.

### **Verse 3**

Drawing water is seen as receiving life and satisfaction from the Lord. Just as water sustains our physical lives, so God’s salvation sustains our spiritual lives.

John 4:14 says, *“but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”*

This is a picture of ongoing joy brought about by the saving grace of God!

### **Verse 4-5**

These verses are proclaiming the greatness of God. The joy that we just read about in verse 3 will overflow into worship to the Lord and sharing His greatness with the nations. God’s people were almost meant to be a light to the nations.

### **Verse 6**

The greatest joy of the people isn’t just about the freedom and blessing they have received. It is God’s presence with them.

We see the themes of forgiveness, faith, joy, witness and presence in chapter 12.

God’s anger has turned away from His people and they are now comforted. He has become their strength and salvation which brings a deep, lasting joy. This in turn spills over so that the people are declaring His greatness to the nations. God’s presence is among His people.

Some things we see from this chapter:

- ❖ God's goal is always restoration.
- ❖ Real security isn't found in circumstances, but in God Himself. When we trust in Him, fear loses its grip on us.
- ❖ God's grace is never ending. The more we draw near to the Lord, the deeper our joy gets.
- ❖ When you truly experience God's salvation, you just want to share it with others.

**What verse from chapter 12 resonates with you the most?**

I want to look at the difference between God *giving* us salvation and God *being* our salvation.

God giving you Salvation:

- ❖ Emphasizes what God does for us
- ❖ The focus is on the action or gift — it is the result of God's word
- ❖ It points to an act – can be seen as a one time thing

God being your Salvation:

- ❖ Emphasizes who God is
- ❖ It's not just a gift – it's a person. It's His very presence in our lives that sustains us.
- ❖ It means God doesn't just rescue us – He is our refuge.
- ❖ To say that "God is my salvation" is to say that I'm not just saved by what God has done for me. I'm secure because of who God is.

If God is our Salvation, it means that:

- ❖ Our trust is rooted in Him and not our circumstances
- ❖ We can face trials and fear with confidence
- ❖ We see our salvation as a journey, not a one-time event

Illustration to help us understand –

Imagine you are on a small boat in the middle of a stormy sea and you fall overboard. Someone throws you a life jacket. You pull it on and you stay afloat. You are saved from drowning, but you still feel the effects of the waves, wind and fear. Your safety depends on the effectiveness of the life jacket.

God giving salvation is like being given a life jacket.

Imagine that a lifeguard jumps in the water and stays with you. He holds onto you and helps guide you through the waves. He calms you and ensures you reach safety. You are still in the storm, but your fear is gone/less because the lifeguard himself is with you. Here, safety comes from the person, not just the tool.

God as our salvation, is like a lifeguard in the water with us.

When we look at Isaiah 12, God is the lifeguard. We don't have to be afraid of the storms of life because His presence is always with us. We can trust Him. The result of that trust is peace, joy and confidence that no circumstances can take away.

### Prayer

Lord, my salvation and my song, thank You that You are not distant from my struggles but present in them.

You are not only the giver of life — You are life itself.

When I feel weak, be my strength.

When I am afraid, remind me that You are near.

Teach me to trust You not only for what You can do, but for who You are — my refuge, my Redeemer, my peace.

Let my heart say with confidence:

*“Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid.”*

Amen.