

## WEEK 3 — ISAIAH 11

### THE SERVANT KING: Rooted & Righteous

**Big Idea:** When the Servant King shines His light, righteousness takes root and life grows.

### INTRO / OPENING — *From Light to Life*

Family, last week in Isaiah 9 we saw this clearly:

**God's answer to darkness is Light.**

Not a lecture.

Not a threat.

Not force.

**Light.**

And Isaiah told us the Light has a name:

Wonderful Counselor.

Mighty God.

Everlasting Father.

Prince of Peace.

But as we **draw closer to Lent**, we're not just preparing for a season on the calendar—

we're preparing our hearts for a deeper walk with Jesus.

And that means we can't stop at a beautiful promise.

Because here's the question that presses in as we move toward the cross: **If Jesus is the Light... What does His light actually do?**

What happens when the Light doesn't just shine *around* us, but begins to work *within* us?

Isaiah 9 is the promise of Light. Isaiah 11 is the picture of Life.

Last week God said, *"I will shine."* This week God says, *"I will restore."*

And Isaiah tells us that restoration does not begin with a throne, or an army, or a political shift.

It begins with what looks like loss. It begins with a **stump**.

## **READ THE TEXT — Isaiah 11:1-10**

### **1. THE SERVANT KING BRINGS LIFE FROM WHAT LOOKS DEAD (Isaiah 11:1)**

"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit."

Isaiah is speaking into a moment of national decline.

Assyria is rising. Judah is shrinking.

The Davidic monarchy—once pictured in Scripture as a flourishing tree—now looks **cut down**.

A stump is not potential. A stump is aftermath.

The Hebrew word here for stump (גֵּזַע - **geza'**) points to something that has already faced judgment. And yet Isaiah says, *"A shoot will come up."*

The word for shoot (חֹטֶר - **hōṭer**) refers to a tender sprout—small, vulnerable, easily overlooked.

Isaiah is telling us something profound: **God's future grows quietly out of what looks finished.**

And notice the detail: Not the stump of David. The stump of **Jesse**.

That's pre-royal language. God is intentionally bypassing pride and returning to humility.

This is messianic prophecy, fulfilled in Jesus— born without political power, raised without royal privilege, yet carrying the full promise of God.

Paul confirms this interpretation when he writes: "The Root of Jesse will spring up... in him the Gentiles will hope." (Romans 15:12)

This King is not just for Israel.

He is for the nations.

For outsiders.

For the overlooked.

For people who feel cut down.

And as we **move toward Lent**, this is a word many of us need.

Some of us feel like stumps:

- faith cut down by disappointment
- joy severed by grief
- trust damaged by betrayal
- spiritual vitality dulled by compromise

Isaiah 11 says: **God grows life where judgment once fell.**

## 2. THE SERVANT KING REIGNS BY THE SPIRIT, NOT BY APPEARANCE (Isaiah 11:2-5)

“The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him...”

The word *rest* here (נָח - **nûah**) means to settle permanently.

This is not a temporary anointing.

This is abiding presence.

Isaiah then lists the fullness of the Spirit’s work—seven expressions, symbolizing completeness:

wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of the Lord.

This King does not rule by impulse.

He does not govern by optics or popularity.

He reigns through **Spirit-formed righteousness**.

“He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes...” (v.3)

This is a rebuke of shallow justice.

In the ancient world, kings ruled by appearances and alliances.

Isaiah announces a radically different reign:

- truth over image
- faithfulness over expedience
- righteousness over raw power

And pay attention to who He defends:

“With righteousness he will judge the needy...”

Righteousness here (**צְדָקָה** - **ṣedeq**) is not mere moral correctness. It means *right order restored*.

The Servant King does not ignore evil.

He confronts it.

But He confronts it in a way that **heals rather than hardens**.

### 3. THE SERVANT KING RESTORES WHAT SIN HAS FRACTURED (Isaiah 11:6-9)

Isaiah now paints a picture that feels almost impossible:

“The wolf will live with the lamb...”

This is not sentimentality.

This is **shalom**—creation restored.

Sin fractured everything:

- our relationship with God
- our relationships with one another
- even our relationship with creation
- and the divided heart within us

Isaiah is pointing toward the fullness of God’s restored world.

And while this finds its ultimate fulfillment in the new creation, it **begins now** wherever Jesus reigns.

That’s why Colossians 1 is essential:

“For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things...”

making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” (Col 1:19–20)

Peace does not come through domination.

Peace comes through **self-giving love**.

The Servant King restores what sin fractured  
not by crushing enemies,  
but by absorbing sin and breaking its power.

#### **4. THE SERVANT KING PRODUCES FRUIT IN HIS PEOPLE (Galatians 5:22–23)**

Isaiah shows us the Spirit resting on the King.

Paul shows us the Spirit producing fruit in the people of the King.

Fruit is not forced. Fruit is grown.

And fruit only grows when something is **rooted**.

This brings us back to our Big Idea: **When the Servant King shines His light, righteousness takes root and life grows.**

Galatians 5 describes what Isaiah 11 looks like in everyday lives:

love replacing hatred

joy replacing despair

peace replacing anxiety

gentleness replacing reactivity

self-control replacing chaos

This is sanctifying grace.

Not instant perfection, but ongoing transformation.

## ***Challenge - Let the Light Take Root***

Church, let me challenge us honestly.

Some of us want Jesus to be a spotlight— we want Him to show us what's wrong, confirm what we already believe, expose the darkness *out there*.

But Isaiah 11 tells us something deeper:

Jesus didn't come just to reveal what's broken.  
He came to restore what's broken.

And restoration always requires roots.

Here's the tension we need to sit in for a moment: You can admire the Light without ever allowing it to change the soil of your life.

You can sing about Jesus, quote Jesus, believe the right things about Jesus— and still keep Him on the surface.

But roots don't grow on the surface. Roots grow underground.  
In surrender.  
In hidden places.  
In slow obedience.

So here's the question we need to answer—not someday, but this week: Where am I letting the Servant King take root...  
and where am I keeping Him at arm's length?

Because when Jesus is truly reigning:

- righteousness doesn't just sound good — it starts shaping decisions

- peace doesn't just feel good — it starts changing reactions
- love doesn't just inspire — it starts costing something

And as we draw closer to Lent, this is the invitation God is giving us: Not to do more religious things. Not to perform better. But to open deeper ground.

So I want to give us three clear calls today— three ways to respond— so the Light of Christ doesn't just shine *on* us, but begins growing something *in* us.

### **3 CALLS FOR THE CHURCH**

#### **1. Bring Jesus your stump**

Name what feels cut down.

God grows shoots from stumps.

#### **2. Surrender your definition of justice**

Let Jesus restore what sin fractured—starting in you.

#### **3. Choose to cultivate THE FRUIT this week**

Not all nine. One. Preparation begins now.

**RESPONSE PRAYER:** Servant King Jesus, shine Your light into our lives. Where sin fractured us, restore us. Where life feels cut down, grow something new. Root us in Your righteousness, until our lives bear fruit that reflects Your coming kingdom. Amen.