

## **IN THAT DAY TO COME (Isaiah 11:1-12:6)**

History may not have been your favorite subject in school, but if asked you what happened on December 7, 1941, I think most of you could tell me. That was the day Japan launched an attack on Pearl Harbor, a day that President Roosevelt said would live in infamy.

What about November 22, 1963? What happened on that day? Yes. On that warm, sunny day in Dallas, Texas, the world turned dark and gloomy when President Kennedy was assassinated.

As an Oklahoman, you will remember where you were when you heard what happened in OKC on April 19, 1995. We will never forget the images of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building after it was destroyed by a fertilizer bomb, and we won't forget the 168 people whose lives were tragically cut short on that day.

As an American, you won't forget what happened in NYC, Washington D.C., and in a field outside of Shanksville, PA on September 11, 2001. I don't even need to describe to you what happened on that day.

Historians, encyclopedias, textbooks, and the internet can tell us what happened on various days throughout history. For instance, on this day, November 27<sup>th</sup>, back in 1895, the Nobel Prizes were established. They were named after and funded by Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite. Also, on this day in 1924, the first Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade was held in NYC.

Through study and a little research, we can discover what happened on certain days in history. But who can tell us what will happen on November 27, 2023? Who can discern what will take place on December 6, 2041? No academic scholar nor any internet site can accurately predict what will transpire on any day in the future.

We know the Hebrew prophets occasionally foretold certain things that would happen in days far removed from their day. They didn't, however, give specific dates, but they did engage in some specific prophecies.

Isaiah had a certain phrase he liked to use. In fact, he employed it 42 times in the book that bears his name. It is the phrase "in that day."

The word *day* in Hebrew, like the word *day* in English is rather elastic. It can refer to a 24-hour day, such as Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, etc., but it can also be used to denote an indeterminate period of time, such as "back in the day."

Our text will cover two chapters, a total of 22 verses. In Isaiah 11 & 12, Isaiah uses the phrase "in that day" four times. We are not going to focus so much on when that day is but rather on what will happen in that day. Personally, I believe the day to which he refers is the eternal state following Jesus' return. The City of Heaven will come down to a re-created earth, and we will be with Him forever. But again, let's not get caught up on the when.

You know the name *Jesus* is found nowhere in the text of Isaiah, but I would say Jesus can be found everywhere in this book. Jesus quoted often from Isaiah, and Isaiah holds the distinction of being the most-quoted prophet in the NT.

This book points us to Jesus. That is why Isaiah is called the fifth gospel. The prophecies of this book encompass both the first and the second coming of Jesus.

It is His Second Coming that is in view in our text. Let us look at what will happen and what God will do on our behalf in that day to come. Look at how chapter 11 begins. Verse 1 is a contrast to what happens in the previous chapter. In chapter 10, God assures His people that while the Assyrians will be used to discipline His own, in time, God will destroy the Assyrians (10:24-25). Notice the imagery God uses at the end of the chapter (vv. 34-35). Assyria is the tall tree, and God is going to cut that tree down, and the Assyrian Empire will be no more.

His people, while they have undergone a severe pruning and appear to be no more than a stump, there is still life there, and from the stump of Jesse, there will come a Ruler. That brings us to the first of four truths I want you to catch.

### **In That Day, God Will Give Us a Ruler Greater Than King David**

Who was Jesse? Jesse was the father of David. It was his son, David, the runt of the family who was anointed to be king, and he became king following the death of Saul. Why does our text not mention David? Why doesn't the text say that there shall be a shoot from the stump of David? After all, since the death of Zedekiah, the last King of Judah in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., until now, there has been no Davidic King ruling over the land of Israel. You would think the stump of David has long been dead.

There was no king held in higher esteem by the Jewish people than King David. He was loved and adored by his people when he reigned, and he has been revered and honored by his people long after he passed from the scene. That is why the absence of his name in this text is surprising.

Geoffrey Grogan, in his commentary offered an explanation: "The reference to Jesse . . . rather than to David . . . may point to the total absence of royal dignity in the house of David when the Messiah would come." In other words, to refer to the people of Israel as the stump of Jesse robs them of any cause for boasting. It seems as if there is no hope, but then one day from that stump, there is life that springs forth; there is a new Ruler that arises.

He is referred to as *a Branch*. *Branch* is a big, important word in the Book of Isaiah. This is not the first time it appears. In Isaiah 4:2 we read, "In that day (there is that phrase again) the branch of YHWH shall be beautiful and glorious." Commentators differ on who or what *branch* refers to, but I take it as a designation of the Messiah. Jesus is the branch who will be seen as beautiful and glorious when He appears.

In our text, Isaiah describes this branch or ruler in several ways.

#### *1. Notice His Character.*

In v. 2, He is described as possessing a seven-fold Spirit. The Spirit of

YHWH will rest upon Him. At His baptism, the gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, and John) describe the Spirit descending on Jesus much like a dove would come to rest upon a branch. Jesus was that branch.

After identifying this Spirit as the Spirit of YHWH, Isaiah further describes the Spirit with three pairs of descriptive words. This Spirit is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding. As our Ruler, Jesus is wise and endowed with great understanding.

He also possesses the Spirit of counsel and might. Do you think those qualities might be needed by a Ruler, by a King?

Finally, Jesus is filled with the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of YHWH. It is interesting how the wisdom literature of the Bible, often combines fearing God with either wisdom or knowledge. Isaiah joins all three words in Isaiah 33:6. That verse reads, “And He [YHWH] will be the stability of your times, abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; the fear of YHWH is Zion’s treasure.”

Everything you need in a leader Jesus possesses. He has the character necessary to reign upon the throne of your life and to guide you with excellence. When we try to lead ourselves, we make a mess of things. If we will let Him lead, we will experience His peace, and His blessing, and His fruitfulness. Look at the last words of v. 1.

## *2. Notice His Justice.*

Look at vv. 3-4a. Because Jesus possesses the right character, He will be able judge justly. Wherever justice is perverted it is because those in power lack the character to judge well. And when that is the case, it is often the poor who get the short end of the stick. It is those who cannot grease the palms of wicked or greedy politicians who pay the highest price.

Such is not the case when Jesus reigns and rules.

Those who lack the Spirit of wisdom and the Spirit of understanding can only judge on the basis of what they see and what they hear. The problem is that those with the greatest influence can hide the truth so that the truth is not seen, and they can silence the testimony of those who would otherwise tell the truth and thus the truth is not heard.

Jesus, however, knows the truth without ever having to see it or hear it. Accordingly, He will judge justly and righteously every time.

We need Jesus reigning from His throne and judging from the bench.

## *3. Notice His Victory.*

Look at the last half of v. 4 and v. 5. Jesus is the Victor, and those who are with Him will share in His victory.

I told my wife the other day that what we are seeing and witnessing in our culture and our community is a war of worldviews. There are those in our society who, when it comes to moral questions, do not think in terms of right and wrong. Right and wrong hold no meaning for them. They want the complete freedom to do whatever they want, whenever they want, and with whomever

they want. When you try to put guardrails in place to protect others from being victimized by what is wrong, all they see is that you are trying to limit their freedom, and they will cry, “Foul.” And they will fight back, and when they fight, nothing is off the table because right and wrong hold no meaning for them.

The culture wars are really a war of worldviews.

Friends, Jesus is going to win that war. His weapon is His mouth because what He says goes. We see that in v. 4. We find in v. 5, He is clothed with righteousness and faithfulness.

The last book of the Bible, Revelation, was written to a beleaguered Church, to a people who were facing persecution. It was written to give them hope by assuring them and us that in the end, Jesus wins, and those who are with Him win, too. Listen to this passage from Revelation 19. Take note of the imagery with which John assures us that Jesus wins.

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. <sup>13</sup> He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. <sup>16</sup> On his robe and on his thigh, he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

One greater than King David is coming. He will rule over us mercifully and wisely forever.

### **In That Day, God Will Grant Us More Safety Than We Have Ever Known**

Beginning with v. 6 and on through v. 9 we have some stunning words. What is said here is contrary to our present experience. It is what we read in these verses that leads me to say we are being presented with the picture of a re-created earth that has been redeemed and returned to God’s original intent.

In reading these words, you might wonder, “Is the prophet using hyperbole? Is he simply exaggerating in order to make a point?” Some might think so. I think he is speaking literally of a future that we will one day enjoy.

No zookeeper this side of the Fall and this side of eternity would ever put a wolf and a lamb in the same enclosure or allow a leopard and a goat to take a nap together or allow a calf, a lion, and a fattened calf to spend some time getting to know one another. This side of those two pivotal events, the only time the leopard and the goat lie together is when the goat lies inside of the leopard who is lying down.

Eternity presents us with a much different world. Have you ever seen footage of a lion with a flowing mane, and you just had an urge to pet the thing, but you knew you couldn't? In the new world, you can.

In this world, we are so ever-concerned with danger because danger is so ever-present. We are preoccupied with our safety. When working with power tools, we must wear safety glasses. When we get in the car, we buckle our safety-belt. Our medicine comes in a child-proof bottle. Our food comes pre-packaged with a safety seal. There are some places we don't go at night, and there are even areas we don't go during the day because it is not safe. We teach our young people to practice safe sex. I want you to know that sex was never meant to be dangerous, and it isn't when it is confined to the marital relationship.

In our country there are all kinds of departments, organizations, and agencies that have been set up to secure our safety. In addition to the five branches of the military:

- We have the Department of Homeland Security.
- We have the Food and Drug Administration.
- We have the Centers for Disease Control.
- We have the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
- We have the Environmental Protection Agency,

And we have a slew of other entities all focused on protecting us from ourselves and from all possible dangers.

Revelation pictures the City of Heaven as being a safe place. It has high, thick walls. Its gates are guarded by angels. There is no night in heaven. All its inhabitants are prescreened and pre-approved. In heaven there is no drug addiction or gun violence or violent crime.

On the new earth, I seriously doubt there will be any hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes, deadly tornadoes, runaway forest fires, or devastating floods.

This past week I got a safety deposit box at my bank to store certain items that I want to keep safe from theft, fire, or loss due to a natural disaster. While I think that a safety deposit box is safer than a closet in my home, the truth is that safety deposit boxes are not insured by the FDIC. They are not even insured by the bank that provides them. If the bank is leveled by a F-5 tornado or if the vault is burgled by a skilled bank robber, that's my loss.

That is why Jesus taught us, "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Matthew 6:20).

Heaven and the new earth are safe places.

### **In That Day, God Will Deliver Us in a Better Exodus**

In vv. 10-16, Isaiah uses beautiful poetry to show that in that day to come, God will bring His people home. It is a new and better exodus. Look at v. 11.

Grogan explained:

Like most of the OT writers, Isaiah had a lively sense of the special importance of the Exodus from Egypt, when God has stretched out His hand to deliver His people. Isaiah looked forward to a time that will see an event comparable with it in redemptive significance.

There are a couple of big differences between that exodus and the one still to come. First, in the exodus from Egypt, all the people came out from one place. In the one to come, God's people will come from many different places. Second, while the exodus from Egypt benefited one race, the Jewish race, in the new exodus, God will bring to Himself, as we read in Revelation, people "from every tribe and language and people and nation" (5:9).

Let me throw in a final truth from the next chapter.

### **In That Day, We Will Thank and Praise YHWH for our Salvation**

While chapter 11 is concerned with what God will do in that day, this chapter tells us what we will say in that day. Isaiah had little to no hope for the people in his day. When God called Isaiah to go for Him back in chapter 6, He warned Isaiah that the people wouldn't listen and they wouldn't understand. Isaiah asked, "Well, how long do you want me to do this?"

God answered him, "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste." I want you to look at 6:13. We find a word of *hope*. The stump of v. 13 grows in chapter 11.

Now, in chapter 12, we are told we will praise and thank God in that day. In Exodus 14 we read of the exodus from Egypt, how God delivered His people with a mighty hand. In Exodus 15, we can read the song of Moses where Moses praises God for what He did on behalf of His people.

When God brings about the new exodus in that day to come, He will be praised by all His people.

I love how the song in our text ends. Look at Isaiah 12:6. "In your midst is the Holy One of Israel." We said a couple of weeks ago that *holy* means, *separate, unique, special*. God is the One who is beyond us and not like us, and yet, despite all of that, He is still the One who is in our midst.

Grogan ends his treatment of chapter 12 with the words: "He is distinct but not aloof, for in Him holiness and grace find their perfect union."

That same Holy One is here today, and He comes with His grace. If we are going to praise Him in that day, we must receive Him in this day. If we are going to enjoy His presence in that day, we must be united with His Son in this day. Have you received Jesus? Have you owned Him as your King?