

Day 1: Isaiah 11:1

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

Isaiah wrote during a time of national crisis. All were looking for a sign of hope, but looking in the wrong place. Isaiah told the people that their actions over a period of time had drawn them away from God. Their actions toward others and attitude toward the worship of God had caused the current bad times. There is hope, but that hope will come from God. David was selected by God and God would bring forth from the line of David a Savior.

Question: 9/11 was a terrible event in the history of our country. Have you seen any sign of hope that has come out of this event?

Challenge: Jesus came from an interesting family. How far back can you trace your family? What traits or values do you see running through your family to you?

Scripture: Psalm 45

Day 2: Isaiah 11:2

And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

The character of the ruler will be shaped by “the Spirit of God.” There are three pairs of gifts given to the anointed king; wisdom & understanding, counsel & might, knowledge & fear of the Lord. The Spirit represents the active creative divine presence. It is the same Spirit that was at creation. The belief was that the anointed king was directed by the Spirit.

Question: What pair of gifts do you think are the most important and what pair do you see in our national leaders today?

Challenge: To be a national leader today what “gifts” do you think are needed?

Scripture: Psalm 72

Day 3: Isaiah 11:3-5

And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.

These verses describe the king’s administration. He will judge with a deep understanding that comes from the gifts of the Spirit that God gives. His understanding will be so complete that none of the weakest in society will be denied justice. The king will have the power to enforce his rules simply by the words of his mouth. Verse 5 metaphorically tells us that the King will wear his moral code, which he has from God, around his most vital parts.

Question: In today’s world, who are the weakest in society?

Challenge: Is being poor a morally better position than being rich? If not, why do think being rich can cause us to act badly?

Scripture: Psalm 110

Day 4: Isaiah 11:6-7

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fating together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox

The peace that the king brings is so powerful that even nature will change. The image of the animals living together is a reminder that at first in creation all were vegetarians (Genesis 1:29-30). Verse 6 describes how predator and prey shall be at peace. Verse 7 describes how animals will not fight over the same place to eat but will all eat in peace. The little child is one who can just walk.

Question: Do you think we would be better off if we were vegetarian?

Challenge: Rewrite this verse using people instead of animals.

Scripture: Ezekiel 47:1-12

Day 5: Isaiah 11:8

The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den.

Now we see that even a baby will be safe from the bite of a poisonous snake. The snake is used not only because it is so dangerous but so again we see echoes of creation. In the fall it was the serpent that tempted Eve. Now even the serpent can be trusted.

Question: How do you feel about snakes? Would you have one as a pet? Could you love one?

Challenge: Pick someone or something that to you is very untrustworthy. Under what circumstances could you trust it?

Scripture: Genesis 3:1-13

Day 6: Isaiah 11:9

They shall not hurt or destroy in my entire holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

The peace that is spoken of in verses 6-9 comes because the whole earth has knowledge of God. To know God means cognition, intimate relationship and acknowledgement. For the whole earth to know God, we who do know God have a lot of work ahead of us.

Question: How would you define knowledge?

Challenge: Based on your definition, what do you really know?

Scripture: Isaiah 25:6-9