

Isaiah 11:2-10 + 16

A description of the Messiah

Isaiah 11:1-2 - "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 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 of the fear of the LORD;"

rod = *choter*, meaning a rod, or a twig or shoot.

Stem is "geza", meaning a stump or a cut down tree

Branch is "netzer" meaning shoot

Jewish commentators saw a prophecy of the Messiah here:

Rashi: "a shoot [*choter*-rod]: This is symbolic of] the royal scepter. Eventually, the King Messiah shall come and redeem them."

So did the New Testament writers:

Matthew 2:23 - "and came and lived in a city called Nazareth (Hebrew: *Natzeret*). This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: "He shall be called a Nazarene." (referring to this verse)

A "word play" may here be employed that implies a connection between the Messianic prophecy in Isaiah, and the appellation applied to Jesus. "Branch" would suggest an insignificant beginning, which would correspond with the humble environs of Nazareth in which the Lord grew up. When Nathanael heard that Jesus was from Nazareth, he asked: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46) In the book of Acts, "Nazarenes" is used as a slur-expression for Christians (Acts 24:5) Reference to "Prophets" plural would seem to suggest a general theme reflected in all the Messianic prophecies, rather than to a single verse.

(See discussion at [christiancourier.com - https://buff.ly/2u8c4TO](https://buff.ly/2u8c4TO))

The stem (or stump) of Jesse:

Wesley explained: "The Messiah should be born of the royal house of David, at that time when it was in a most forlorn condition, like a tree cut down, and whereof nothing is left but a stump or root under ground."

Compare **Jeremiah 23:5** - "Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch (a different word, *tsemah*); And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land."

Historically, the prophecy is saying that Jerusalem will survive the devastating siege by the Assyrians. A shoot (Heb. *nezer*) would arise from the chopped down stump of Jesse, David's father. The Davidic monarchy, the "House of Judah" will survive: specifically the

Messiah will eventually emerge.

Why refer to the stem of *Jesse*, David's father? Many bad kings had sprung from David's line and led Israel into idolatry. This would be like a new David. The Messiah would be like the reappearance of David himself, i.e. the true Son of David.

Revelation 22:16 - "I am the Root and the Offspring of David." i.e. both the Creator of David and the Descendant of David!

Messiah will follow only the will of the Father

Isaiah 11:3 - "And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:"

Judging by our senses inevitably leads to idolatry. We want a god we can touch and see, like the golden calf.

In contrast, He will judge and act in total dependence on the Father, not relying on his own wits or reasonings, impressions or sensory input.

Isaiah 11:4 - "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth..."

John 5:19-20 - "Truly I tell you, the Son is not able to do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing."

John 5:30 - "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

In other words, his reasonings, impressions, and sensory input are used, but not on his own initiative - only in submission to the Spirit, which reflects the Father's will. The selfishness inherent in the human "I" - the "evil inclination" of the Jewish sages - is absent in Christ.

Isaiah 11:6-9 - "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."

Describes the state of existence in the Kingdom of God. In some ways this is already true now, but in other ways, it will only be fulfilled at the end of time.

Restated in Isaiah 65:25.

Compare **Revelation 21:4** - "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the former things have passed

away.”

The cross displays God’s banner: Jesus

Isaiah 11:10 - “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.”

The Hebrew word for ensign (*nec*) actually refers to the pole on which the ensign or banner hangs, and could be interpreted as the cross.

John 3:14 - “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up”

John 12:32 - “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.”

“to it shall the Gentiles seek” - Paul mentions this scripture in Isaiah, when defining the prophecies as being fulfilled in his own day: **Romans 15:8-12**

And finally, as the story of Joseph in the readings is about to relate how Israel ended up in Egypt, there is a link back to the Egypt of Joseph and later Moses, and the redemption from slavery:

Isaiah 11:16 - “And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.”