

• Both Judah and Israel will be judged for their rejection of God's word

• A remnant will continue

1. The Saviour will have humble origins

• A fresh twig will appear from the house of David

2. The Saviour will minister in the power of the Spirit of God

• Jesus is a true man, enabled by the Holy Spirit

3. The Saviour will be full of joyful enthusiasm for God

• Jesus has a careful concern not to displease God

• The Saviour uses the weapon of His Word

Isaiah is going round in a circle twice. First he says that **Judah** is in need of salvation because the nation has rejected the way of faith^{□1} and will come under God's judgement^{□2}. The only hope is that the remnant will continue^{□3} and eventually salvation will come to Israel^{□4}. Then he says that **Israel** is in need of salvation, for they too have refused faith in God's word^{□5} and will come under God's judgement^{□6}. But even in Israel there will be a remnant who continue^{□7} and there is hope for the future^{□8}. Isaiah 11 introduces us to Israel's king.

1. **The Saviour will have humble origins.** God likes to do things in a way that contrasts with human pride. Isaiah 11 forms a contrast with 10:16–34.

¹But a new twig will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a branch will bear fruit.

God uses Assyria to chop down Israel like a mighty tree, and then Assyria is also chopped down like a mighty tree. Even the house of David will have only a stump left. But in the midst of judgement and failure a fresh twig will appear. He will not at first be a mighty tree; instead he will be a small and insignificant twig. We think of the circumstances of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, and the location of his ministry mainly in Galilee.

2. **The Saviour will minister in the power of the Spirit of God.** Like David^{□1} his ministry will begin with an enabling of the Holy Spirit.

²The Spirit of Yahweh will rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Yahweh.

The Spirit is divine (the Spirit of Yahweh) and gives the gifts of discernment ('wisdom . . . understanding'), good planning, skilful action ('counsel . . . power'), good results ('knowledge . . . fear of Yahweh'). Jesus is a true and real man, requiring and being given the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

3. **The Saviour will be full of joyful enthusiasm for God.**

³And he will delight in the fear of Yahweh. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; ⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

It is strange to read that anyone should delight in fear! Yet there is such a thing as a careful concern not to displease God; God's Messiah showed great delight in this kind of fear.

Isaiah moves on to consider his weapons.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. ⁵Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

The Saviour uses the weapon of his Word. He speaks and things happen. He breathes out his revelations and changes take place. He wears a belt (symbolizing readiness for action); what makes him ready for anything is

- 1 7:1-17
- 2 7:18-8:8
- 3 8:9-22
- 4 9:1-7
- 5 9:8-10:4
- 6 10:5-15
- 7 10:16-34
- 8 11:1-16

□1 see 1 Samuel 16:13

• He is utterly faithful

The Saviour will achieve worldwide victory for God's people

• The Saviour renews creation

• Isaiah tells us of the birth of Jesus but also about the new heavens and earth of the future

• May be fulfilled before the second coming – healing comes by preaching the gospel

• The 'holy mountain' of God becomes the whole earth

• Isaiah sees the whole world being drawn to the Messiah

• Jesus draws many people after Him to restful victory – like a second exodus

• God will rescue His people from all nations

• One united people of God will be gathered

his righteousness. Another way of making the same point is to say that he is utterly faithful, holding firm to that which he knows to be right.

The Saviour will achieve worldwide victory for God's people. Isaiah goes on to consider the Saviour's **achievements**. He renews creation.

*⁶The wolf will visit the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.*

*⁷The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.*

*⁸The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,
and the very young child will put his hand on the
viper's young.*

In reading this one must remember the principle that prophecy is generally panoramic. That is, it takes in a total survey of all that is to happen in the future from the standpoint of the one speaking. The times and the seasons unfold as God sees fit. So Isaiah 11 begins with the birth of Jesus (putting it in Christian words) but at the same time stretches forward to the new heavens and new earth in which righteousness dwells. Perhaps parts of it might be fulfilled even before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Who knows how much creation might be healed in the gospel-age – by the preaching of the gospel? For the healing of the planet comes by the preaching of the gospel.

*⁹They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of Yahweh
as the waters cover the sea.*

The 'holy mountain' of God (the place where the temple was to be found, with the indwelling presence of God) becomes the whole earth, in the new redeemed world that is coming.

Isaiah envisages the entire world being drawn to the Messiah.

*¹⁰In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples;
the nations will seek him, and his place of rest will be glorious.*

Jesse was David's father. The 'son of David' becomes a banner and people of many nations come to get to know him. He enters into restful victory himself and then draws many people after him to the same restful victory. The place of final victorious restfulness will be full of the glory of God's character.

This coming redemption which achieves restful victory for God's people is like a second exodus.

*¹¹In that day the Sovereign Lord will again stretch out his hand a
second time to take possession of the remnant that is left of his
people from Assyria, from Egypt, from Paphros, from Cush, from
Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea.*

'Stretching out the hand' is what God did when rescuing Israel from Pharaoh. Only this time he will rescue his people not only from Egypt but from all of the nations.

*¹²He will raise a banner for the nations
and gather those who have been dispersed from Israel;
he will assemble the scattered people of Judah
from the four quarters of the earth.*

*¹³The jealousy suffered by Ephraim will vanish,
and Judah's enemies will be cut off;
Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah,
nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim.*

will be gathered from the nations

• *No hostility between them*

• *All enemies defeated*

• *The people of God will be mightily exalted – predicts unity and victory for the church*

• *God will lead His people out of paganism, as He earlier led them out of Egypt*

One united people of God will be gathered from the nations. There will be no hostility between different sections of God's people (no hostility between Judah and Israel). All enemies are defeated. Verse 14 mentions Philistia, Edom, Moab, Ammon.

¹⁴They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia to the west; together they will plunder the people to the east. They will lay hands on Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites will be subject to them.

It all symbolizes the mighty exaltation coming to the people of God. Using the language of Israel's ancient history, it predicts unity and victory for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's re-structured Israel. (The idea that verses 11–12 refer to the state of Israel created in May 1948 rips two verses out of context. The nations of Philistia, Edom, Moab and Ammon no longer exist. They are used here as pictures of the enemies of God.) While it happened quite literally in the days of the Maccabees, it surely looks beyond that time to the gospel-age, and to the new heavens and earth.

¹⁵Yahweh will utterly destroy the gulf of the Egyptian sea; with a scorching wind he will wave his hand over the Euphrates River. He will break it up into seven streams so that men can cross over in sandals.

¹⁶There will be a highway for the remnant of his people that is left from Assyria, as there was for Israel when they came up from Egypt.

The picture of victory continues. Egypt and Assyria (whose mighty river was the Euphrates) will be destroyed. It will be easy to escape. God will lead his people out of paganism as he earlier led his people out of Egypt.



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