

A. Introduction

1. Utopia – Living in an ideal human society (?)

2. Scripture reading

Isaiah 11

3. A chapter with a Messianic message – today: David's Greater Son

- a. His Humble Beginning
- b. His Great Anointing
- c. His Perfect Reign

B. His Humble Beginning Isaiah 11:1

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. (NAS)

C. His Great Anointing Isaiah 11:2-3

² The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³ And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; (NAS)

D. His Perfect Reign Isaiah 11:4-5

⁴ But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. ⁵ Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist. (NAS)

E. Application

1. This is Messiah – Jesus of Nazareth – God with us
2. How in our heart of hearts do we really think of Him?
 - a. Reject? Deny? Ignore? Disdain?
 - b. Accept? Rely? Receive? Love?
3. The outcome is night or day; death or life.

A. Introduction

1. What would it be like to live in an ideal society?

- a. In 1516, Sir Thomas More in dreaming on this thought, wrote of a 'perfect society' on an imaginary island, called Utopia, off the coast of South America
- b. the towns are so alike that to know one is to know all 54 of them; no one considers his house his own, and every 10 years they change house by lot; each cultivates their land into gardens as they have done for 1760 years
- c. there was a perfect system of magistrates, with 30 families choosing their local magistrate, every 10 of whom in turn is ruled over by a higher magistrate, and so on up to a prince who is elected for life, unless he design to enslave the people – nor can any magistrate promote enslavement
- d. women are not married until 18, nor men until 22, and breaking of the marriage vows results in enslavement.
- e. no man may live idly, and yet shall not wear out with toil, but work 3 hours each day before, and 3 after, dinner, yet using the rest in some proper edifying exercise and not in idleness
- f. maybe that does not sound so ideal to you

2. but the idea of an ideal human society is still out there

- a. it is even promoted sometimes by evangelical Christians
- b. Charles Colson, in his BreakPoint Commentary, wrote the following some years back^{—{2}}.
- c. 'I have huge respect for Dr. Mark Noll. He's a first-rate scholar, thinker, and historian. His book 'THE SCANDAL OF THE EVANGELICAL MIND,' written ten years ago, remains a tough-minded challenge to develop a Christian worldview.
- d. 'That's why I'm so saddened by an essay he wrote titled, "None of the Above: Why I Won't Be Voting for President."
- e. 'Noll writes, "As has been the case for the past few presidential elections, on Election Day I will almost certainly cast my vote once again for none of the above."
- f. 'He goes on to list seven issues and his convictions about those issues: race, the value of life, taxes, trade, medicine, religious freedom, and the international rule of law. Noll writes, "My position on each

is related to how I understand the traditional Christian faith that grounds my existence. Yet neither of the major parties is making a serious effort to consider this particular combination of concerns or even anything remotely resembling it." And so, because both parties and their nominees are flawed, Noll will vote for no one.

- g. 'That position is dead wrong ... It's the utopian notion which assumes divine perfection in fallen humans. His assumption is that we can support only candidates who have perfect scores according to our reading of the Bible ...'
- h. The point is simple: there cannot be an ideal society while we live in a fallen world; but there is still hope; yes there is!

3. « Read Isaiah 11 »

4. This passage is Messianic; it builds upon preceding verses

- a. Messiah is Emmanuel – God with Us – 'Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.' (Isaiah 7:14)
- b. Messiah is Ruler – '6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.' (Isaiah 9:6-7)
- c. Lord willing, we shall examine Isaiah 11 on His Messianic rule over this and some following weeks in three messages
 - (A) today, 'David's Greater Son'
 - (B) then, 'The Coming Peace'
 - (C) and finally, 'A Highway Will Be There'
- d. today, we are considering Messiah as 'David's Greater Son'
 - (A) His Humble Beginning
 - (B) His Great Anointing, and
 - (C) His Perfect Reign

B. His Humble Beginning Isaiah 11:1

1. **Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.**

a. Jesse, David's father, is given as the source of this shoot, not David (though that is the case) for several reasons

(A) showing first of all, that God's purposes in sending the Messiah, were established long before David
(B) as Jesse was but a dweller in Bethlehem, the least of the towns of Judah, a man of humble circumstances, so Messiah would come, a man of humble circumstances, and not with pomp of the royal throne

(C) for at this time, the royal throne, had already lost its splendour because of men like Ahaz who sat upon it

(D) and would soon lose all splendour, as exile would come and then successive domination of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, the throne of David sat vacant

b. so Messiah, when came, came not as a royal prince in the palace of the king, Herod, as expected by the magi, but rather in a lowly stable in the town of Bethlehem

(A) born of the line of David, unto a young girl betrothed to a poor carpenter

(B) who in his ministry said of himself, **'The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.'** (Matthew 8:20b)

2. yet from this humble root

a. this shoot would grow into the Branch

b. a growing branch full of life; in fact the word **'grow'** means that it does so not just as a sport or sucker, but grow with a purpose, the purpose of bearing fruit

c. this fruitful, living Branch is the Messiah

d. the One chosen and anointed of God to reign

e. with both the first and second coming Messiah blended in this passage

f. let us look then at ...

C. His Great Anointing Isaiah 11:2-3

1. **2 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. 3 And He will delight in the fear of the Lord, And**

He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear

a. Jesus the man of Galilee, was marked as Messiah, by this anointing, the anointing by the Holy Spirit of God

(A) thus John the Baptist testifies, '33 "I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' 34 I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God.'" (John 1:33-34)

(B) of Jesus beginning his ministry, it says '16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. 17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, ." 20 And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'" (Luke 4:16-21)

2. the grammar of this verse conveys the following message: 'He will rest upon him, the Spirit of Yahweh who is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding ...' and so on – the Spirit coming on Messiah in His human nature, upon Jesus born in Bethlehem – never forget that as well as being truly God, Christ is truly man

a. the Spirit was not just an influence or power for some task

b. was not the spirit of prophecy or some other gift – gifts that other men have received in the service of God

c. but the Spirit of Yahweh, that belongs to Yahweh, who works for Yahweh (as at creation): God the Holy Spirit

d. and the form in which this anointing Spirit is described

(A) reminds us of the 7-branched candlestick

(B) which had 3 pairs of branches, side by side

(C) each branch having a lamp filled with oil

(D) oil which is a type of the illuminating Holy Spirit

(E) so we find the Holy Spirit described in symbolical terms, as 'the seven Spirit of God' (Revelation 5:6); the picture of the candlestick illustrates one Holy Spirit, manifest in these seven ways

3. the equipping of Messiah for his ministry is complete
 - a. central is the Spirit of Yahweh, the Holy Spirit, then in six accompanying manifestations of Himself
 - b. the first couple equip Messiah in his intellectual life: **'The Spirit of wisdom and understanding'**
 - (A) it was wisdom that enabled Jesus to make the right decisions at the right time, in accordance with right, so that e.g., he could say, **'my time is not yet come'**
 - (B) it was understanding whereby he perceived the true nature of things, knowing the human heart, **'and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.'**(John 2:25)
 - c. the second couple equip Messiah in his practical life: **'The Spirit of counsel and strength'** – counsel, in that
 - (A) Jesus, in His plans always walked in perfect agreement with God's plan: **'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.'** (John 4:34)
 - (B) and might or strength that He could stand up against every evil attack and carry out that work to the end
 - d. the third couple equip Messiah in his spiritual life: **'The Spirit of knowing the Lord and the of fearing the Lord'**
 - (A) Jesus, as no man before or since, knew God: **'All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.'** (Matthew 11:27) - so intimately as to be able to impart that knowledge to others
 - (B) and that Jesus feared the Lord, recognized His absolute holiness, prepared Him for His Messianic work of dying for our sin so that we might have fellowship with Go
 - e. the same anointing of the Spirit that anointed Messiah in His coming to suffer for sin anoints Him in coming to reign
4. Thus equipped, Messiah has **'quick understanding'** (AV) or **'delight'** in the **'fear of the Lord'**
 - a. the word thus translated is literally, 'smell', particularly with appreciation; it is to savour those who fear the Lord
 - b. so Messiah, will savour in a man or woman when he or she fears the Lord, when he or she truly loves and serves God

c. these are his delight; these are the subjects he rules in ...

D. His Perfect Reign Isaiah 11:4-5

1. 4 But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.
5 Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist.

- a. this verse speaks of the two aspects of judgement
- b. there is on the one hand, the interceding justice that he provides to those who are poor – humble in spirit – to those who are afflicted – suffering for righteousness sake – those who cannot find justice in this world’s courts; on their behalf, He will straighten the balance of the scales of justice and deliver them from the oppressor, so that
- c. on the other hand, he will execute the penal justice
 - (A) this is addressed to the earth – not as the object of His creation – but rather in its fallen, accursed state as the result of sin – we will come to the redemption of that creation later in this chapter – but for now, he speaks his powerful word against the earth that is under the sway of the prince of this world
 - (B) and, then he speaks his triumphant word against the wicked himself – particularly against the great Enemy: ‘Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming’ (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

2. Messiah is ready for the conflict:

- a. ‘In ancient times the belt was worn by one who was ready to engage in a bout of wrestling with an opponent. The object of the bout was to wrest the belt {as a prize} from the opponent. Later, this conception took on a figurative meaning and came to be used of any who were ready to face a contest or struggle. When, therefore, the Messiah is described as so girded, we are to understand that He is to face a foe and to engage in a struggle, and that He is fully equipped for that struggle.’¹⁻³.
- b. girded with the greatest of prizes which no one can wrest away from him: righteousness and faithfulness – hence in the words of Luther’s great hymn, ‘He must win the battle’

E. Conclusion

1. that is Messiah – Jesus of Nazareth, God with us
 - a. His humble beginning, living his life as an itinerant rabbi, in a backwater area of the great Roman empire
 - b. Yet anointed by the Holy Spirit for a ministry that would turn the world upside down
 - c. And though reigning today as Lord of every true believer in the invisible church, will one day reign visibly, perfectly

2. in the face of the Salvation provided in Jesus, Messiah, Paul exhorts Pastor Timothy to remind the congregation of these truths
 - a. '11 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.' (2 Timothy 2:11-13)
 - b. much of the future blessed state of believers, their part in this reign, are unclear: '... just as it is written {that these are}, ""' (1 Corinthians 2:9)
 - c. but this I can say with absolute certainty
 - (A) those who will not accept Jesus as Saviour
 - (B) those who deny him will be totally excluded
 - (C) but if you receive him, then with a full heart and great assurance of hope you can sing our closing hymn, 'My Jesus, I Love Thee' (Praise! 386)

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Various other English versions of the Holy Bible may be used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in {braces}. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
ERV	The Revised Version of 1885
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

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2. BreakPoint Commentary, Charles Colson, October 20, 2004
3. EJY - *op cit in loc*