

Isaiah 11:1-10 Who is worthy to sit upon the throne?

1. This text of hope sits in the middle of Isaiah's pronouncement of God's judgement upon the sins of the earth. In the chapters leading up to chapter 11 God is pronouncing judgment upon the kingdoms of the earth who have ruled with arrogance, injustice, and oppression. The imagery he uses is of God with an axe hewing down the trees. How do you respond to the reality that God is a God who moves in judgement against the kingdoms of the earth?

There could be many responses to this question.

There may be a yearning for this reality to come about as we look around and see the devastation wrought by governments and leaders who lead without the wisdom and character to bring about flourishing for all.

There may be a general unease with the judgement of God that comes out. It may be important to reflect on God's judgement to be an expression of his love. For if he did not burn against what is destroying his creation we would have no business calling him good, calling him loving.

There may be some attempts to point out where God's judgement is being expressed in this way in world events. Tread carefully here, it is indeed a reality that God is continually bringing judgment upon the kingdoms of the earth but we lack the clear prophetic voice to name specific events as such, or attribute their cause to some specific sin. Some may remember Christian voices during 9 11 speaking of it as God's judgement upon the greed of America, or Hurricane Katrina as God's judgement upon the sexual sin rampant in the French quarter. This is to be avoided – stay general and avoid getting specific.

Read Isaiah 11:1-10

2. (1-5, 10) What are the identifiers, qualities, and attributes of the King that Isaiah is promising will come?

I'll give responses here that will cover questions 2 and 3.

- *shoot of Jesse – the Gospel's track Jesus' lineage to David – the root of Jesse – not just a descendent of David – a new David*
- *Spirit of the Lord resting upon him – at his baptism the Spirit descends – in Luke 4 Jesus reads Isaiah 61 about the Spirit's work that expands on Isaiah 11 – and links the fulfillment to himself.*
- *The 7 qualities of the Spirit could be named – and examples of his wisdom etc. given*
- *His delight is in the fear of the Lord – is central joy is glorifying and obeying God – he speaks of obeying his Father – of only doing what his Father wants.*
- *He is not swayed by power or position – speaks to his reaction to Roman and religious leaders*

- *He judges FOR the poor – he takes the place of the poor – born in a manger to poor parents – he becomes poor so we become rich – he becomes sin who knew no sin that we would become the righteousness of God.*
- *When you strip everything else away from him you get the central desire to do what is right – and to live consistent with his character and promises.*
- *He is not only the shoot – he is the root – the source – no earthly king could fulfill this promise – he must be a heavenly King – God incarnate*

3. How do you see your answers in question 2 pointing to and being fulfilled in Jesus?

See above

4. (6-9) What will be the result of his reign over our lives individually and over our world?

- *The cessation of all natural hostilities – this can be fleshed out in so many ways – poverty – racism – inequality – injustice – violence*
- *Not just a temporary cessation but one that goes on forever – their young will lie down.*
- *Although not spoken of in the sermon – the child and the snake should remind us of Satan in the garden – that Jesus' reign breaks the power of Satan.*
- *The lion will eat straw – this points to an utter transformation of our very nature.*

5. (9b) The word for is a causative word in Hebrew. All of this will come about because "the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord". How can we as followers of Jesus display the knowledge of Jesus such that the earth gets a glimmer of the knowledge of the Lord that will come to its completion upon Jesus' return?

In the sermon Tim mentioned worship and obedience as the means by which we are changed to reflect the character of the King.

You could add to this the work of Evangelism – sharing the good news of the King and his coming reign.

You could add to this the life of the church – that is meant to reveal the nature of the future human community where what divides us (Race, class, education, gender, etc.) Jesus breaks down and brings us together as a new human community.

You could add to this the work of social justice – as we seek to give a foretaste of what the cessation of poverty, inequality, violence, injustice looks like.