



Isaiah 11

The Branch of the Lord ~ Christ Will Subdue All Things ~ The God Who Restores

Suffice it to say, the 11th Chapter of Isaiah is one of the most well-known, studied and beautiful sections of this remarkable book. It paints a picture of the Messiah, the Spirit of God and the end times that is essential to not only the biblical scholar, but the passionate pursuer of Jesus as well. Let's dig in!

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Notes	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. 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.</p>	<p>a 11:1 That is, the royal family line of David. Jesse, the grandson of Boaz, was the father of King David. Jesse means “upright, firm, strong.”</p> <p>b 11:1 Or “Go forth.” Notice the contrast with the arrogant “trees” that are cut down (10:33–34).</p> <p>c 11:1 The Hebrew word for “branch” or “twig” is netzer (lit. “to grow green”), the root word for Nazarene, Nazarite, and Nazareth (Matt. 2:23). Christ is both the root and the offspring of David (Rev. 5:5; 22:16). This means that the “(scion) branch” that grows from the roots (his spirit/nature) points to the body of Christ, his church on the earth. Christ in us is the vine and we are his fruitful branches. Jesus Christ branches out through his people and grows from his root. Overcomers are the branches that bring forth the fruit of Christ’s life. This sprout will grow to become the rod of God’s power. See Jer. 23:5, 33:15; Zech. 3:8; 6:12; John 1:1–15; Rom. 15:12; Gal. 5:22–23.</p> <p>d 11:2 The Spirit of Yahweh is the Spirit of prophecy, the manifest presence of “God resting upon the Lord Jesus. In the Hebrew culture, to say “the Spirit of Yahweh rests upon” someone meant the Spirit of prophecy was upon them. See John 1:32–33.</p> <p>e 11:2 Or “the Spirit of Skillfulness” (Ex. 31:2–4). This gives equipping ability for music, art, business, writing, creativity, and wisdom for judicial decisions. Paul prayed for the churches to receive this “Spirit of wisdom” (Eph. 1:17–19).</p> <p>f 11:2 Or “the Spirit of Intelligent Insight.” This imparts the ability to discern the truth, to know the meaning of riddles, and to decipher parables and allegories. This “anointing was upon the prophet Daniel. See Dan. 1:17; 5:11–12; 9:21–23.</p> <p>g 11:2 Or “the Spirit of Guidance.” This is the Hebrew word etsah and is used numerous times in the Old Testament for “counsel, advice, or purpose.” It is also used for steering (guiding) a ship. This anointing imparts the wisdom and counsel needed for spiritual leadership. See Ex. 18:19.</p> <p>h 11:2 Or “the Spirit of a Mighty Warrior.”</p> <p>i 11:2 Or “the Spirit of Knowledge.” This is not knowledge that is learned from books or study but knowledge that comes from experiencing intimacy with God.</p>	<p>Isaiah 11:1 The cut-off stump of Jesse a will sprout, b and a fruitful Branch will grow from his roots: c ² the Spirit of Yahweh will rest upon him, d the Spirit of Extraordinary Wisdom, e the Spirit of Perfect Understanding, f the Spirit of Wise Strategy, g the Spirit of Mighty Power, h the Spirit of Revelation, i and the Spirit of the Fear of Yahweh.</p>

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<p>³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, ⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.</p> <p>⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them.</p>	<p>j 11:3 Or “his smelling (sensing),” a Hebraic figure of speech for finding pleasure in something. The Septuagint reads “He will fill him with the spirit of the fear of the Lord (absolute loyalty to God).” The Aramaic can be translated “He will shine forth with the reverence of the Lord.” The seven Spirits of God mentioned in these verses are also mentioned in Rev. 1:4; 4:4–5; 5:6. The Holy Spirit is one (Eph. 4:3–4) but revealed in seven dimensions. The golden lampstand in the tabernacle had seven branches. The sevenfold Spirit of God is the illuminating influence over God’s people.</p> <p>k 11:3 Or “by the glance of his eyes.” Jesus, our Messiah, sees clearly into our hearts and knows our every motive. See James 3:16–17.</p> <p>l 11:3 Or “by what is heard by his ears.”</p> <p>m 11:4 Or “by judging with righteousness.” Isaiah uses this word (Heb. tzedeq) fifty-one times.</p> <p>n 11:4 See Rev. 2:26–28.</p> <p>o 11:4 Or “spirit.”</p> <p>p 11:4 See 2 Thess. 2:8.</p> <p>q 11:5 That is, fairness and truth will be his clothing. The first five verses of this chapter show us that the Messiah would be from David’s lineage and would have the sevenfold Spirit of God resting upon him. His government would be equitable, full of righteousness, and a demonstration of his loyalty to God. Jesus fulfills all these attributes completely.</p> <p>r 11:6 The list of animals in this section represents various attributes and spiritual conditions within human beings (cf. Calvin). Some are clean and some are unclean; some are wild and some are tame. They typify aspects of human nature (e.g., the nature of a wolf, a lamb, a lion, a leopard) because elsewhere in Scripture they refer to human beings. Each reveals an aspect of “the nature of Adam or of the nature of Christ. This figurative passage of Scripture points to the subduing power of the life of Christ within his people, taming the “wolf,” the enemy of a lamb (John 10:12; Acts 20:29–30), to be subdued and to lie down with the lamb (Christ’s nature within us). The Hebrew word for “lamb” (kebes) is taken from the root word “to subdue, dominate.” There are fifteen natures (creatures) mentioned in this passage that are reconciled and rest together. Fifteen in the Bible is the number of rest.</p> <p>s 11:6 The leopard is mentioned eight times in the Bible, and in every instance, it is used figuratively for an aspect of human beings or of spiritual powers of darkness. It is emblematic of an aspect of human nature that cannot be changed or tamed. See Song. 4:8; Jer. 5:6; 13:23; Dan. 7:6; Hab. 1:8; Rev. 13:2.</p> <p>t 11:6 Or “stretch out.”</p> <p>“u 11:6 Or “kid,” meaning either a male lamb or a male goat (Song. 1:8). The Hebrew word for “kid” (gēdiy) comes from the root word “cut off.” As the Lamb of God, Jesus was cut off from the land of the living for our salvation.</p> <p>v 11:6 See 1 Peter 5:8.</p>	<p>³ He will find his delight j in living by the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord. He will neither judge by appearances k nor make his decisions based on rumors. l ⁴ With righteousness he will uphold justice m for the poor and defend the lowly of the earth. His words will be like a scepter of power that conquers the world, n and with his breath o he will slay the lawless one. p ⁵ Righteousness will be his warrior’s sash and faithfulness his belt. q</p> <p>⁶ Then the wolf will be subdued and live with the gentle lamb, r and the leopard s will lie down t with the gentle lamb. u The young calf and the ferocious lion v will be together, and as a shepherd drives his flock, a small child will guide them along!</p>

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<p>⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. ⁹ They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.</p> <p>¹⁰ In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.</p> <p>¹¹ In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.</p>	<p>w 11:7 There is a subtle play on words found in the Hebrew. The word for “graze (feed)” is tir’ēynâ, and the word for “become friends” is titrâ’ēynâ. So the cow and bear grazing together become friends.</p> <p>x 11:8 The Hebrew word for “hand” is yad and can also be translated “power.” Although many translations render this “A child will put his hand over the serpent’s den,” the Hebrew text uses the word meuwrah, which means “an opening of light.” Jesus told us that unless we become like little children we can never enter heaven’s kingdom reality. Even little children in God’s kingdom have power over the serpent and bring light into its hiding place. The Hebrew word for “toddler” is “weaned child.” This word (gāmûl) is a homophone that can also be translated “ripe fruit, reward, deal bountifully, do good (to another).” This “weaned child” is the nature of Christ being produced in us. All is subdued and hostility removed in the kingdom of God. See Phil. 3:21.</p> <p>y 11:9 See Isa. 2:1–5.</p> <p>z 11:9 Or “destructive.”</p> <p>aa 11:9 The Septuagint uses a present-tense verb, is (presently) filled (to the brim).</p> <p>ab 11:9 Or “as the waters form a covering for the sea.” See Jer. 31:34; Hab. 2:14; Heb. 8:11.</p> <p>ac 11:10 That is, the royal family line of David (a metonymy). John took this phrase from Isaiah and quotes Jesus referring to himself as the Root of David. See Rev. 5:5; 22:16.</p> <p>ad 11:10 Or “standing up.” Jesus was lifted up on the cross to bring us salvation (John 12:32).</p> <p>ae 11:10 The contemporary Hebrew word nes means “miracle,” while the ancient Hebrew means “sign (signal).” The translation includes both concepts. The Septuagint is “He will arise to rule the nations (gentiles).”</p> <p>af 11:10 Or “Gentiles will put their hope in him” (LXX). See John 12:21; Rom. 15:12.</p> <p>ag 11:10 Instead of saying “glorious,” the prophet simply employs the noun glory (kabod). The bride of Christ is now his resting place (Song. 1:16–17). The Hebrew word menuhâ is also found in Psalm 23:2, “He offers a resting place for me. ... His tracks take me to an oasis of peace.” He had nowhere to lay his head (headship), but the heart of a believer is now his resting place. Glory is found at the place where he rests.</p> <p>ah 11:11 God is a God of restoration, even for those who have miserably failed him.</p> <p>ai 11:11 Possibly a loan word from Egyptian indicating the region of Upper Egypt. Pathros means “desert dryness.”</p> <p>aj 11:11 Or “Cush,” which means “scorched” or “blackened.”</p> <p>ak 11:11 Or “Elam,” a nation-state in the southwestern region of modern-day Iran, whose ancient capital was Susa. Elam means “hidden” or “concealed.”</p> <p>al 11:11 Or “Shinar (Babylonia).” Shinar means “divided land” or “divided stream.”</p> <p>am 11:11 Or “Hamath,” west-central Syria. Hamath means “walled-up fortress.”</p> <p>an 11:11 Possibly the “islands of the (Mediterranean?) sea.” These eight regions are eight areas that Christ will restore within the hearts of those who follow him. Eight is the number of a new beginning.</p>	<p>⁷ The cow and the bear will graze alongside each other; w cubs and calves will lie down together. The lion, like the ox, will eat straw. ⁸ The nursing child will play safely near the rattlesnake’s den, and the toddler will stretch out his hand and shine light over the serpent. x ⁹ On all my holy mountain of Zion, y nothing evil or harmful z will be found. For the earth will be filled aa with the intimate knowledge of the Lord Yahweh just as water swells the sea! ab</p> <p>¹⁰ On that day, the root of Jesse ac will be lifted up ad as a miracle-sign to rally the people. ae Gentiles will diligently seek him, af and his resting place will be glorious! ag</p> <p>¹¹ On that day, the Lord will extend his hand a second time to restore ah the remnant of his people from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, ai Ethiopia, aj Iran, ak Iraq, Syria, am and the coastlands of the sea. an</p>

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<p>12 He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. 13 The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, and those who harass Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not harass Ephraim. 14 But they shall swoop down on the shoulder of the Philistines in the west, and together they shall plunder the people of the east. They shall put out their hand against Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites shall obey them. 15 And the LORD will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt, and will wave his hand over the River with his scorching breath, and strike it into seven channels, and he will lead people across in sandals. 16 And there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that remains of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.</p>	<p>ao 11:12 Or “He will gather the dispersed of Judah.”</p> <p>ap 11:13 This is the healing of the divided kingdom. See Jer. 3:18; Ezek. 37:22.</p> <p>aq 11:14 Or “on the shoulder of Philistia.” The shoulder becomes a metaphor for the hills.</p> <p>ar 11:14 The Ammonites lived in modern-day Jordan.</p> <p>as 11:15 Or “divide” or “destroy.”</p> <p>at 11:15 Or “tongue of the Red Sea.”</p> <p>au 11:15 Or “wadis.”</p>	<p>12 He will lift up a banner among the nations and will gather the scattered Jews, ao and assemble the outcasts of Israel from the four corners of the earth. 13 Then Ephraim will be cleansed of envy, and those who are hostile to Judah will be cut off. Ephraim will no longer be jealous of Judah, and Judah will no longer be hostile toward Ephraim. ap 14 But they will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia aq to the west; together they will plunder the people of the “east. They will rule over Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites ar will obey them.</p> <p>15 The Lord Yahweh will dry up as the gulf of the Egyptian Sea. at He will raise his hand over the Euphrates, and with the might of his wind, he will split it into seven streams au that can be easily crossed in sandals. 16 Then there will be a highway leading out of Assyria for his remnant people to return, just as there was for Israel when they were set free from Egypt.</p>

- Bible Knowledge Commentary ~ John A. Martin

• THE RISE OF GOD’S GLORIOUS EMPIRE (11:1-12:6)

The Assyrian Empire would fall (10:5-34), but another empire would arise. This section about God’s empire (11:1-12:6) includes a description of the Messiah, the kingdom itself, and the remnant who will inhabit the kingdom. Besides contrasting this kingdom with the Assyrian kingdom, Isaiah also contrasted it with the sinful actions of Israel in his day.

- **11:1.** The Lord would cut down the forests and the mighty trees (10:33-34), that is, foreign soldiers and leaders, but God’s kingdom will arise by a Shoot coming up from the stump of Jesse, David’s father (cf. Rev. 22:16). Isaiah undoubtedly was thinking of God’s promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16) that a Descendant of David will rule over his kingdom (cf. Isa. 9:7) forever. This Branch, the Messiah (cf. Jer. 23:5), will bear fruit, that is, prosper and benefit others. (He is the Root; cf. Isa. 11:10.) This Hebrew word for branch (rRx’n) differs from the word used for branch in 4:2 (jAmRx). However, the concept is the same. (q’nwøy) in 53:2 for “tender shoot” is still another word.) He will come directly from the line of David (cf. Matt. 1:1) and will fulfill God’s promises in the Davidic Covenant.
- **11:2-3a.** In these verses the character and work of the “Branch” are described. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, that is, the Holy Spirit would empower Him (at Jesus’ baptism, Matt. 3:16-17) for His work which would be characterized by wisdom ... understanding ...

counsel ... power ... knowledge, and the fear of the LORD. The attributes of the Holy Spirit would characterize the Messiah. Because of His wisdom, understanding, counsel, and knowledge He is the Wonderful Counselor (Isa. 9:6). Isaiah referred to the Holy Spirit more than did any other Old Testament prophet (11:2 [four times]; 30:1; 32:15; 34:16; 40:13; 42:1; 44:3; 48:16; 59:21; 61:1; 63:10-11, 14). He is characterized by the fear of the LORD and has delight in it (11:3) just as His people should have. To fear God is to respond to Him in awe, trust, obedience, and worship. (Interestingly all three Persons of the Trinity are suggested in vv. 1-2.) The Messiah constantly seeks to do what God the Father wants Him to do. This contrasted with the religious leaders in Isaiah's day who were unconcerned about following God's Word.

- **11:3b-5.** As world Ruler, the Messiah will judge the world (cf. 2:4). But He [Vol. 1, p. 1057] will not be like an ordinary judge who may be swayed by superficial knowledge. He will judge impartially and in righteousness. The needy and the poor will not be oppressed by Him as they often are by human leaders (10:1-2). The oppressed will be the beneficiaries of His justice, and the wicked will be slain. His reign will be characterized by righteousness (11:5; cf. 9:7; 16:5) and faithfulness as if they were integral parts of His clothing, as a belt and sash.
- **11:6-9.** Isaiah described the righteous kingdom which the Messiah will set up. The curse will be lifted, peace and harmony will be present, and wild animals will again be tame and harmless to domesticated animals and humans. The wolf ... leopard ... lion, and bear are mentioned as examples of wild animals that will dwell safely with farm animals (the lamb ... goat ... calf ... cow, and ox). A little child will be safe with lions, bears, cobras, and vipers (cf. 65:25). And on the temple mount (God's holy mountain; cf. 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11, 25; 66:20) tranquility will prevail. Many Bible students interpret these verses nonliterally, because they suppose such changes in the animal world are not possible. However, because the Messiah is "God (is) with us" (7:14) and He will be dwelling with His people, it need not be difficult to envision these changes in nature. Though the curse of sin will be removed to some extent it will not be totally removed until the end of the millennial kingdom when finally death will be abolished (Rev. 20:14). The reason such tranquility is possible is that all the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD (Isa. 11:9; cf. Jer. 31:34; Hab. 2:14). This means more than people knowing intellectually about the Lord. The idea is that people everywhere will live according to God's principles and Word. Animals will be affected, as well. This will occur in the Millennium when the Messiah will be reigning (Isa. 9:6-7), Jerusalem will have prominence in the world (2:2), and Judah and Israel will be regathered to the land in belief and will be living according to the New Covenant. The Millennium can hardly be in existence now since these factors do not characterize the present age.
- **11:10.** Israel will have a special place in the kingdom because of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 15:18-21; 17:7-8; 22:17-18), the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:16), and the New Covenant (Jer. 31:33-34). But people in other nations will also benefit from the kingdom. The Messiah, the Root of Jesse (cf. comments on "stump of Jesse," Isa. 11:1), will be a means of rallying for the nations (cf. v. 12; Zech. 14:9, 16). Jesus Himself made the same point that many people from outside Israel will have a part in God's kingdom (Luke 13:29). God had promised Abraham that through his line all peoples on the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). The dispensational teaching that Israel has a special place in God's program because of His promises to Abraham does not exclude the Gentiles from also having a special place.
- **11:11-12.** In verses 11-16 Isaiah spoke of the Lord's gathering the people of Israel and Judah from all over the world. He compared it to a second "Exodus," like the release from Egypt about 700 years earlier. That first Exodus was one of Israel's most significant events for in only three months after that God gave the Mosaic Covenant, thus marking the beginning of Israel as a nation. The remnant will be drawn

by God from the north (Hamath), south (Egypt and Cush), east (Assyria ... Elam ... Babylonia) and west (islands of the sea)—from the four quarters of the earth. Both Israel and Judah will be regathered (v. 12; cf. Jer. 31:31-34). This was important as the Northern Kingdom would go off into captivity, and Judahites in Isaiah's day might have thought it unlikely that both parts of the nation would ever be united.

- **11:13-14.** In that day of regathering, Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom) will not be jealous of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) and the South will have no hostilities toward the North. Reunited they (Israel and Judah) will occupy the land and defeat their enemies. Philistia refers to the southwestern edge of Israel along the Mediterranean Sea. People to the east may be those in northern Arabia (see comments on Job 1:3) and beyond (see comments on Isa. 11:11). Edom ... Moab, and the Ammonites were south and east of Israel. In the kingdom period Israel will no longer [Vol. 1, p. 1058] be bothered by these or other enemies (cf. Obad. 19).
- **11:15-16.** When Israel returns to her land at the beginning of the Millennium, God will prepare the way for her. The Gulf of Suez will be dried up to enable Israelites to return from Egypt and Cush (cf. v. 11), and the Euphrates River will be divided into shallow canals so that the people can return to Israel from the east. This drying of the waters will be reminiscent of the first Exodus when Israel crossed the Red Sea (lit., "Sea of Reeds") on dry land (Ex. 14:21-22). The return from Assyria (Isa. 11:16), perhaps representative of all places from which the remnant would come, will be like Israel's "exit" from Egypt. Isaiah did not know when this new Exodus would take place; he may have thought it would occur soon.

- **Discussion Questions:**

1. If we are the "fruit" that comes out of Jesus, what might that fruit look like? What characteristics would the fruit have that comes out of Jesus have?
2. Verse 9 says that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea." How will this reality effect the way we do life? Could that reality be at play on the earth today?
3. Again, verse 12 talks about the Messiah will "raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel." Is this past, present or future event? How do the gentile believers fit into this scenario?
4. How would you go about teaching Isaiah 11 to a 8-year-old child? What would you tell that child was most important to know in this chapter? What illustrations would you use? What verses might you have them memorize?