

Daily Devotional, December 3, 2021 The Greatest Prophecy Fulfilled

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. Isaiah 11:1-5 (NIV)

This is a prophecy about the Messiah's coming from the family of David. Since Jesse was David's father, the root of Jesse refers to the Messiah and His coming from that lineage. The tree mentioned is like a genealogical family tree. This new Messiah will sprout up firmly from the good stock of King David's line.

This prophecy has much to say about the Messiah's character and His occupations. We don't see that the Messiah will be a military or political leader. Justice and wisdom are where His attention will lie. This judge cannot be bribed or swayed by earthly power or its luxuries. His clear insight and understanding are principal in His identity. His judgments are not adversely influenced by someone's poverty or meekness; He will be fair to all. But He will not be a pushover: "he will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked." This Messiah is not to be toyed with; the wicked will be erased.

Then we have a final image of the Messiah as He dresses for hard work. He will strap up his garments so that He can work for righteousness and faithfulness. This is a Messiah who will get His hands dirty in doing God's good work.

How was this prophecy fulfilled? In the very life and saving work of Jesus. We can see that military power and political power were not His aim at all. Instead, He came to bring the mind and heart of God to us, to share God's wisdom, God's insight, God's way of seeing the world down to His listeners and followers. He is still opening the mind of God to us. He came to seek out the poor and lowly, the lost sheep of His Father's flock. He did not come primarily to engage with the wealthy and powerful. And we can see touches of His righteous indignation and righteous anger against the Pharisees, the money changers in the Temple, and those who injured the "little ones," the poor and needy.

Jesus rolled up His sleeves and lived and worked among us, demonstrating the righteousness and faithfulness of the Father. He who could have been a distant King instead walked and wept and laughed and worked and loved as one of us. He ate and celebrated, prayed and taught, slept and walked down the road of life: our humble King who came to be God with us.

Prayer: Lord Jesus our king, we are ever grateful that You came to be God with us, that You understand our lives from the inside. We are so thankful for the kind of king You were sent to be and are. Help us to see people with Your mind and eyes. Help our hearts to be moved by the poverty, hurts, and suffering of others, especially those whom we often ignore. Help us to remember to aim higher than political or worldly power, to the spirit-filled power you lend us. Thank you for being our messiah and our savior. In Your holy name, Amen.