

**Sunday, December 19**  
**Isaiah 11:1-10 (When Rebellion Ends)**  
**Pastor Eric Dubois**

**Intro**

What will heaven be like? Recently I noticed an interesting Facebook discussion amongst my wife's family. One family member was put off by the vision of heaven he was taught as a young boy: "singing praises in heaven for eternity." An unshakeable mental image "which sounded incredibly awful."

I must confess as a new believer when that vision of heaven was presented to me I wasn't incredibly thrilled. How boring to sing songs and do nothing else forever.

When non-Christians think heaven will be like a never-ending church service it shouldn't surprise us when they're not interested. If they don't want church services now, why would they want an eternity of them?

The picture we have in today's passage is more than singing praises. The beauty of heaven isn't never-ending church services. The beauty of heaven is Jesus present. A fallen creation restored. We need to see the beauty of a world that joyfully submits to God's rule. A world free from rebellion against God. **That's what heaven is.**

Let's look at Isaiah's vision of the future that awaits God's people...

**READ PASSAGE**

**PRAY**

**Body**

**Passage Focus**

- The believing remnant's hope. A word of hope to those living at a time when righteousness was odd and international threats abounded.
- These are pictures of what will be when the Messiah, Jesus Christ, arises on the scene. Isaiah is declaring the distant future of God's people.
- "*In that day*" (11:10, 11) indicates the day of the LORD is when these things happen. In other words, these things occur at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus (see 1 Thess 5:2; 2 Thess 1:10; 2:2 with 1 Thess 4:15-17; 2 Thess 1:7; 2:1). He came first to be a suffering servant, dying for our sins. He will come again to rule on the throne of David and restore our broken world.

## **Point 1: Jesus possesses wisdom (11:1-2)**

### **The branch**

One will arise on the scene who's referred to as "*a shoot from the stump of Jesse*" and "*a branch from his roots*" (11:1). If you recall, Jesse was the father of David. In the genealogy that begins Matthew, Jesus is the son of David and Jesus is a descendant of Jesse. Shoot and branch = descendant of Jesse and, therefore, David. You'll recall last week how the Prince of Peace will rule eternally on the throne of David (Isa 9:6-7). Jesus is the Messianic hope, the son of David (2 Sam 7:12-16; Matt 20:30-31; 21:9).

### **The Spirit**

This branch will be especially empowered by the Spirit:

#### 1) Wisdom and understanding

- wisdom = ability to use God's word well in the practical affairs of life, like making good choices...thus God is the source of all wisdom
- understanding = ability to make correct assessments (very similar to wisdom)

#### 2) Counsel and might

- counsel = able to plan well
- might = ability to carry out those plans ("*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God*" – Isa 9:6)

#### 3) Knowledge and fear of the LORD

- knowledge = knowledge gained by the senses...something God teaches to man (Prov 2:6)
- fear = reverence for God that plays out in allegiance...treasuring God above everything else...fear is a result of faith...because we trust what God says, we respond to him respectfully, not casually
- Jesus respects the Father. He obeys his will. We see this frequently in the Gospel of John (John 4:34; 6:38).

Generally these represent skills necessary to rule well. Jesus possesses what's necessary to rule over the kingdom of God.

### **Jesus: source of instruction**

This is who Jesus will be in the future. Having the rest of the Bible, like Matthew, we know this is who Jesus was during his 1<sup>st</sup> coming. Who Jesus has been from all eternity.

### **Illustration: knowledge is necessary to accomplish tasks**

Computer science class at UNH, 1997 before windows was commonplace. I had never used windows before. Assignments with minimal instructions where you experimented and figured it out yourself. By the end of the class when I got to databases I would spend 5 hours on the assignment and wind up with literally grades of 10 out of 100. Assignments should have taken 15-30 minutes if I knew what items to click on in sequence.

Computers are very simple if you know what icons to click in sequence. Horrifically frustrating if you don't know what to click and in what order to click.

I lacked the knowledge and it was futility to figure it out on my own. **I needed outside help!**

Just like we need Jesus' help in navigating life well.

Jesus' knowledge and wisdom = reason to trust him. Jesus knows what's true and what's a lie. He knows what's helpful. He knows what's harmful. Jesus knows what the wise course of action is. After all, he made us.

Why would we follow the moral directives of a confused culture when the one who made us has revealed how we ought to live?

### **Jesus: how to relate to God**

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.* – Prov 1:7

- No knowledge without reverence for God. No knowledge without respect for his authority and his word.
- It's foolish to despise what God has chosen to reveal to us and create our own way of doing life. We're going against the fabric of reality as God designed it. In the Bible we have what God chose to communicate to us. A sufficient guide for navigating life. A Bible that corrects our erroneous assumptions.

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. <sup>7</sup> Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.* – Prov 3:5-7

Proverbs 3:5-7 = walking in faith and repentance. Trusting God's word. Letting it correct our way of doing life. Trusting what God has revealed. Acknowledging where God's word speaks to our conduct, our decisions. Following the counsel of Scripture and trusting God to direct our paths.

What am I saying? Because of his infinite knowledge, Jesus is a reliable voice to turn to. Who could be a better voice than our maker?

That's Jesus' help in this life. Christians aren't just looking to escape. We're seeking to honor God today.

## **Point 2: Jesus judges righteously (11:3-5)**

### **Just judgment**

Jesus not only reveres the Father, he delights in revering the Father. Their loving relationship results in joy.

Being God the Son in human flesh, the task of eternal judgment has been committed to Jesus. His judgment has several aspects:

- 1) *"He shall not judge what his eyes see"* = not according to appearances
- 2) Won't judge by what he hears = not according to gossip or hearsay or empty claims
- 3) Dealing with the poor with righteousness and equity

Oppression of the unprotected (poor, sojourners, orphans, widows) was a problem in Judah:

*Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, <sup>17</sup> learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause. – Isa 1:16-17*

When the Prince of Peace comes evils like phone scams against the elderly will be a thing of the past. The return of Christ is a good thing because evil will cease! Did you catch God's mercy here? The wicked oppressors are given opportunity to repent and escape judgment despite their wickedness!

- 4) Will strike the earth and kill the wicked

▪ Removing wicked, oppressive people that trample the poor is necessary for a world of human flourishing = judgment framed positively. **The Bible frames judgment positively!**

### **Jesus' character**

How will Jesus govern?

- 1) Righteousness = ethically and morally sound (what's ethical is what conforms to God's character)
- What Jesus does is always right.
- 2) Faithfulness = certainty, dependability, firmness of one's promises, a consistency what one says and does = God will do what he says because he is reliable
- Jesus will be faithful to keep every promise and threat uttered in the Bible!

### **Application**

Don't you want a good judge? A judge who punishes evil and rewards righteousness. A judge angered and grieved when the powerful inflict harm on the less fortunate. A judge who lays out

his law clearly in a way that we don't have to guess whether or not we're right with him. A judge who will eliminate all sources of harm from his creation. A judge who offers mercy to even the most guilty (oppressors of orphans and widows).

### **How can I be sure I'm right with God? (non-Christians)**

#### **God**

As Creator God dictates how we must relate to him.

As holy God can't tolerate rebellion.

#### **Man**

Our problem is rebellion. Doing what's right in our own eyes. The Bible calls this sin. The Bible says everyone has rebelled.

Have you ever broken God's law? Have you lived as if God is irrelevant to your life?

The punishment for sin is hell. A place to be avoided at all costs. Eternal punishment.

#### **Christ**

The Father sent the Son to die so that we might be rescued from the punishment. This is called substitutionary atonement.

On the cross God treated Jesus as if he had lived our life (rebellion). If we respond to God in faith and repentance, God treats us as if we had lived Jesus' life. God's holiness means sin must be punished.

#### **Response**

Turn from rebellion and trust in Jesus' death and resurrection, not your deeds, for God's forgiveness.

God is merciful.

A Savior who keeps his word. A Savior who hates wickedness and loves justice. Isn't this a Savior we should follow?

#### **The Christian hope**

A world with perfect justice where evil and corrupt leadership is a thing of the past. This is good news!

### **Point 3: Jesus restores (11:6-9)**

#### **Explanation**

Something remarkable happens at the time when Jesus takes the throne. Animal life is restored.

- 1) Predators will dwell peacefully with their former prey (wolf and the lamb).
- 2) Eating patterns will change (lions eating straw).

▪ In the garden, before the fall, man ate from plants and fruit. Before the fall, beasts ate from green plants.

*And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. – Gen 1:29-30*

- 3) Animals no longer dangerous to humans (little child leading the lion).

▪ A world without death and injury.

- 4) No animosity between snakes and humanity (nursing child playing with the cobra).

▪ Part of the curse was enmity between the snake and man (Gen 3:14-15).

The point? The curse is lifted. Creation is restored to Eden-like conditions.

#### **Application**

On the day when the earth is filled with the knowledge of the LORD, hurt and destruction will be a thing of the past (11:9). How is this so? Jesus returns. He removes all rebels. He grants all believers glorified bodies that can't decay or die or sin. He transforms animal life. Whether its partisan politics or viruses or racial division or terrorism or cancer or identity theft or nuclear arms races or drug cartels, they'll all be replaced with the knowledge of the LORD. **Heaven = Jesus ruling over his redeemed people.**

This is the gospel. This is eternal life.

At the day of the LORD the creation is restored!

What is the hope of the church? A world restored to its original beauty. A world where rebellion is vanquished. A world where Jesus reigns.

#### **Non-Christian**

Do you want a world where all that is harmful and destructive is gone?

#### **Point 4: Jesus dispenses knowledge (11:10)**

##### **Explanation**

Jesus will be a signal, a rallying point, for the nations outside of Israel (the peoples). The nations will inquire of Jesus = in paradise restored the nations will be present.

Signal = a rallying point like a trumpet call or pole or a flag to follow...like a signal to troops in battle of when to attack or retreat.

Jesus' resting place, the new heavens and new earth, paradise restored, will be glorious (radiant, shining, beautiful, something to behold...like the most beautiful sunset). The new heavens and new earth will be a thing of beauty.

##### **What will heaven be like?**

- 1) A wise and righteous ruler = a perfectly just society
- 2) The wicked removed = the end of being sinned against
- 3) Animal life transformed = interaction with animals
- 4) Knowledge of God = a worldview that is true and results in human flourishing
- 5) Nations inquiring = ongoing instruction from Jesus...we'll understand God's plan more clearly than we do now

*For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. – 1 Cor 13:12*

- 6) A beautiful world = a renewed creation to marvel at...enjoyment of the physical earth

This is good news for those who trust Jesus!

##### **Inquiring**

When I settled on Isaiah for our advent season inquiring of the LORD isn't what I expected to find. The verb is found in Isaiah 1:17 (translated "seek"), 8:19; 9:13; 11:10.

Inquire = to seek with care, inquire, seek out

To seek God for perspective or truth that speaks advice to my circumstance or truth that reveals the lies I'm believing or truth that reveals the idols that shape my desires or truth that gives me direction on what I ought to be living for.

We inquire of God today first and foremost by looking to the Bible. The preserved word of God in written form is the means by which God has chosen to communicate with us. Secondly, God has gifted teachers to explain and apply God's word. We might inquire of God by reading a Christian book on a particular topic (e.g., guidance, anxiety, depression/despair, anger,

addictions, etc.). CCEF (Christian Counseling & Education Foundation) is an excellent place to look.

Jesus is our source for knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and counsel. In heaven we'll seek him to understand more fully the glory of God's plan. We'll see more clearly. Today we need to inquire of him. To see clearly as best possible in this life.

### **Conclusion**

**Jesus possesses wisdom.** Make him your go to source.

**Jesus judges righteously.** Our hope is a person who will make all things right.

**Jesus restores.** Jesus' return will usher in a renewed creation.

**Jesus dispenses knowledge.** Inquire of him.