

IV. Advent in Biblical Perspective  
*Isaiah and the Coming of Christ*  
“Stumps and Roots”  
Isaiah 11:1,2; Matthew 1:1–17  
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December 23, 2018 • Morning Sermon

We continue our study of Christmas in Isaiah. Isaiah 10:33–34; 11:1–2 says

[33] *Behold, the Lord GOD of hosts  
will lop the boughs with terrifying power;  
the great in height will be hewn down,  
and the lofty will be brought low.*

[34] *He will cut down the thickets of the forest with an axe,  
and Lebanon will fall by the Majestic One.*

[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.*

The grass withers, the flower fades, God’s Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

I think there is an experience that this text brings us to that is common to all of us. Perhaps it’s on a hike with family or friends that you have encountered this or on a two lane road. Around here hunting is a big thing. All I did growing up was play basketball, baseball and football but when I moved here the elders said I had two years to go hunting or my Alabama visa would be revoked. So what is it that you encounter? All of a sudden you come to an area that is deforested in some way but it’s almost a devastating picture to you because there is nothing living there. Once there were these lofty trees standing but now they are cut down or burned down. Nothing lives there anymore. Everything that would fly to it has to fly over it or everything that would go through it has to go around it. There is nothing there to sustain it.

It almost reminds you of areas that had been fought over in the world wars and it is that picture that Isaiah paints in Isaiah 10. It is the picture of the judgment of God that has come against the arrogance of humanity’s sin against Him. The lofty have been cut down. The arrogant have been reduced. All of that takes place in a context. We have been looking at this during our Christmas Advent season.

The reason we have been looking in Isaiah because we see it in the New Testament, in the Gospels and Matthew in particular that when they are speaking of Christ, the birth of Christ in particular, they are constantly taking you back to the Old Testament as prophesied. The prophet that they tend to go to the most of the 60 plus prophesies of Jesus that are scattered through the Gospel is the Prophet Isaiah. In other words, they go back 800 years to the ministry of Isaiah and to other prophets when they quote about Christ.

For instance, there is a man named Joseph who is betrothed, all of a sudden gets word that his wife who is ceremonially committed to marriage yet not consummated, is with child. Obviously he assumes she has been unfaithful and the law would cause him to divorce her and his mercy says he is going to do it compassionately. Then he is interrupted where an angel is

sent from the throne of God to tell him that what he has in Mary is the fulfillment of the Prophet Isaiah. The angel quotes from Isaiah 7:14 from what had been revealed 800 years earlier from the Prophet Isaiah. Matthew 1:22–23 says [22] *All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: [23] “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).*

This is God among us, God becoming one of us without diminishing His deity yet laying aside the glory that was due to Him. He humbled Himself to be with us. [14] *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth* (John 1:14). He has done this that He might die for us so that we could have life evermore. This is what the angel is telling Joseph that he has in Mary. She is the virgin that will bring forth the Royal King in that stall in that Bethlehem.

This is a reason we are looking at Isaiah in this Advent season because Isaiah gives this prophecy in Isaiah 7:14 in a context. Isaiah’s father was Amoz and Isaiah ministered to four sons of David who ruled in succession – Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. We are looking at the time specifically when he gave this prophecy and that was during the time of Ahaz. There were two countries – Ephriam and Syria – that had banded together and had planned to unseat Ahaz to put their own king in place. Ahaz was frightened by this and when he was afraid the people were afraid but he had come up with a plan to write a letter to a pagan empire – Assyria – and basically said ‘we are your servants, I am your son, would you deliver us from these two nations?’

God sends His prophet Isaiah to Ahaz to tell him not to fear those who rise up against him because they are nothing. He goes on to tell him that in 65 years those two kingdoms will be no more and if Ahaz needs a sign to tell him of this then God will give any sign he asks. But Ahaz turns from the Word of the Lord and would rather put his trust in a pagan empire and king. Then two more prophecies come. One is that what Ahaz looks for to deliver him will not deliver him. In fact, not only will his idolatry (in the king and kingdom of Assyria) not deliver him but they will devour you. This is what idols do.

I don’t know where you are putting your trust but you are religiously trusting in someone or something. I plead with you to abandon it and come to Christ if you don’t know Him because whatever you are trusting in, if not Christ, will not deliver you and it will devour you. The prophecy that Isaiah gives to Ahaz here will not only be fulfilled in 65 years but it will continue to be fulfilled and the kingdom of Israel will be no more in 200 years. Also no king from the line of David will be on the throne for the next 600 years. He will bring His people low by using other nations and will bring those nations low.

God will first cut down the Assyrians, then the Babylonians, the Medo-Persians, the Greek Empire, the Romans Empire and all will be brought low for the Majestic One will level the field and it will be devastating. Then Isaiah gives even more information in Isaiah 9 that this Immanuel that will be brought forth has a Name like no other Name. Isaiah 9:6–7 says

*[6] For to us a child is born,*

*to us a son is given;*

*and the government shall be upon his shoulder,*

*and his name shall be called*

*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,*

*Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

*[7] Of the increase of his government and of peace*

*there will be no end,*

*on the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.*

He will not be like these other kings who lay the weight of their burden on your shoulders and not like the sin that you bear on your shoulders and in your heart. He will take your sin away and set you free from sin, death, hell and the grave. The rule and reign of that government (grace) will rest on His shoulders and His Kingdom will know no end. One day all the nations of the earth will be gone including this nation and are brought low under His hand of judgment but this King has a Kingdom drawn from all the nations of this world for He is the desire of nations. The increase of His government knows no end and the joy of His people knows no boundaries. It is abounding and overflowing.

In this prophecy we see just some of the titles He has – Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. He doesn't need to be advised because He is the Truth. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and nothing can stop Him – God Almighty. He will always protect and provide for those whom He has purchased as your Everlasting Father. In Him you have peace with God and the peace of God. Those who belong to Him are precious in His sight and are numbered from every tribe and nation forever and ever.

Now we fast forward to Isaiah 10 which describes the landscape of humanity when this King shows up. The prophecy in Isaiah 11:1 says *[1] There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.* When Jesus comes everything is devastated. At this time the world knows nothing but tyranny and oppression yet praise the Lord He still has His remnant there. Throughout the world we see the nations rising up as trees that ought to be majestic before God now declaring their majesty above God so the Majestic One is hewing them down as He spreads out His judgment but there's a stump in the field.

The stump has a shoot and the shoot becomes a branch. When this Savior comes into a world of darkness where sin seems to be victorious and over half the world is in chattel slavery, this Branch bears fruit forever. He is relentless and unstoppable. This is not just any stump. It's the stump of Jesse. Who is Jesse? He is the father of David. Not only is a Redeemer coming from the seed of Abraham, the scepter from Judah but it will come from the line of David and he will have a son greater than him. When Jesus arrives the kingly line of David has not been on the throne for 600 years nor the kingdom. God has been silent for the last 400 years.

Matthew not only knows his prophecies so that when he is telling people that this Jesus is no afterthought, he immediately brings us back to this prophecy by putting in the Gospel of Matthew a genealogy. Every stump has roots and Matthew gives us the roots. I know these days people are into the ancestries and DNA but that all started back when I was a kid and there was a movie that portrayed a man named Kunta Kinte. The movie was Roots. Matthew was interested in it long before we were because Matthew is giving us the root that brings the stump that brings the branch from which you read this today if you know Christ as Lord and Savior. I love this genealogy.

Matthew 1:1–17 says *[1] The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.* (The reason he says this is because the Messiah had been promised to Abraham in Genesis 22 that through Abraham and his seed would come The Seed and it wasn't Isaac – the King born of a virgin).

*[2] Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, [3] and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, [4] and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, [5] and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, [6] and Jesse the father of David the king.*

*And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, [7] and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, [8] and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of **Uzziah**, [9] and Uzziah the father of **Jotham**, and Jotham the father of **Ahaz**, and Ahaz the father of **Hezekiah**, [10] and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, [11] and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon (Why is this important? It is because after this there was no longer a kingdom of Israel or a king from the line of David).*

*[12] And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, [13] and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, [14] and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, [15] and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, [16] and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.*

*[17] So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.*

Luke records Mary's genealogy and there we find out that she is of the line of David. So the adopted father and the appointed virgin, the mother, are both from the line of David. So here we see Jesus' genealogy from His humanity so what about the genealogy of His deity? That is in the Gospel of John – In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, (John 1:1). The second Person of the Trinity comes down *[14] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth* (John 1:14).

Jesus' legal line comes through Joseph. His biological line comes through Mary through which the Holy Spirit conceived Jesus and brought forth the King. The last set of 14 generations mentioned here were the ones laid low, hewn down and now the stump of Jesse with its roots brings a shoot that has a branch who is Jesus, Immanuel. Now let's look at the last verse from the text for this study, Isaiah 11:2 which says,

*[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.*

That Spirit will show His evidence because this King (Jesus) has the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord. I want to focus on the fact that this Spirit will rest upon Him. In the Old Testament the work of the Holy Spirit is there, only vaguely understood and yet to be elucidated as God's Word unfolds and revelation makes its progress so we have a fuller understanding of the ministry of the Triune God. But know this, no one in the Old Testament was saved without the Spirit of God because everyone is dead in their sins and it's the Spirit of God alone that can bring life. So they are saved, sealed and

secured by the Spirit through the work of Christ yet to come that will be on their behalf as it is on your behalf. That is the work of God in salvation but that is not what is being talked about here in this verse.

Here He is talking about the work of the Spirit of God in our lives for our calling from the Lord. Even though the Spirit of God has saved, sealed and secured you, you can grieve Him, quench Him, neglect Him and dishonor Him. That's why David says in his repentance in Psalm 51:11, *[11] Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.* David is not referring to the positional, sealing presence of the Spirit but the felt, empowering presence of the Lord to do that which God has gifted and called you to do. Some of you are functioning better in the body of Christ due to this whereas some are playing drive-by church. When you have a gift and a calling then you are a member of the body of Christ that is a commitment and engagement whereby the Spirit of God rests upon you and dwells within you so that you can serve Him.

You don't have the gift without the Spirit of God which is why they are called spiritual gifts and you can't minister them without the Spirit of God. You need the power, presence, wisdom, insight and understanding that the Spirit of God gives to you. But with this King there is no grieving of the Spirit for this King receives the Spirit and the Spirit of God rests upon Him. The One who says to you 'Come to Me and rest' is the One who when He comes, the Spirit of God is upon Him.

The Spirit of God is with Jesus in the womb. He is conceived by the Spirit. The Spirit of God is with Jesus as a child. Luke 2:52 says *[52] And Jesus increased (grew) in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.* The Spirit of God came upon Him in His ordination presence, His baptism. A king or prophet could begin their ministry at any time but a priest began his ministry at age 30 with a baptism by another priest which is why He goes to John the Baptist and John agrees. Mark 1:9–11 says *[9] In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. [10] And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. [11] And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."*

The Spirit of God that comes upon Him then leads Him in the wilderness and the Spirit of God sustains Him with the Word of God through the three temptations. Then the Spirit of God goes with Him in the Galilee as He teaches and is rejected by His own. Then the Spirit of God according to Romans and Hebrews leads Him to the cross. The Spirit of God is upon Him when they take Him down from the cross and put Him in the tomb. The Spirit of God brings forth the Son of God from the tomb, risen, triumphant, victorious for our sins and then after His post resurrection ministry the Spirit of God receives Him into the clouds back into the throne.

Then the Spirit of God that rests upon Him is sent by Him to you. That is why Paul loves to call the work of the Holy Spirit in your life from the risen Christ, 'The Spirit of Christ is upon you.' The One who was with Jesus from the womb, to the tomb and back to the throne, from Jesus, is sent to you, from your new birth all the way to glory. This Spirit is sent by the Christ to bring us to Him. He is the shoot that brings forth the branch that bears the fruit for His glory.

Where is the fruit? It is no longer in one nation. Now it is from all the nations just like He promised Abraham. Genesis 22:16–18 says *[16] "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, [17] I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, [18] and in*

*your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”* Now I’d like to give you a couple of takeaways to think about from this study.

As you think about the birth of this Christ take these three lessons from the Stump and the Root with you. The first lesson is there are genealogical unmistakable signals. Signal number one is that some of those kings listed in the genealogy were corrupt but God is not dependent upon our abilities to use us. He loves to honor our abilities and preparation but God can draw straight lines with crooked sticks. Even though that line abandons Him, He will still use that line to bring Immanuel to us.

Another signal that stands out in this genealogy are the five women listed in it. In the Middle East of antiquity go find for me a king that has listed officially women in their genealogy. You won’t find it. Women couldn’t vote, bear witness in court or on property. By the time sin had come to the devastation of its place women were nothing more than a piece of property. In fact in some cultures once their husband and children died they had lost their usefulness and were left to die. These five women stand out boldly in this genealogy of Christ because God’s work of redemption is consistent with God’s work of creation.

In the work of creation forget the foolishness of Darwinian atheistic evolution for in the beginning God made man – male and female – in His image. Both are made in His image. When Jesus comes to save He doesn’t come just to save men but He comes to redeem men which are neither male nor female in Christ Jesus. There are also slaves listed in that genealogy and in Christ there are neither bond nor free. Of the five women four of them are Gentiles. God uses Gentiles to signal to Abraham that He is going to all the nations and women. He will reach men and women, Jew and Gentile, bond and free. The signals are there in the roots that brings the shoot that brings the branch that shows what the roots have established. Let’s not stop there for out of those five women two are adulteresses and one of those is a prostitute.

He uses sinners because He is giving us another signal. Look at the corrupt kings in that genealogy. He didn’t come to call the righteous for there is none. I came to call sinners. He came to save sinners, change sinners and use sinners. He brings them from death unto life. This genealogy shouts from the roots of the stump. There is no one so lost He can’t save or no one so far away that He can’t reach them. His genealogy signals His glorious, redeeming, majestic work that He saves sinners to His glory. Immanuel came to save sinners.

The second lesson is that the Holy Spirit will now be called the Spirit of Christ and the One that rests upon Him is the One that comes to you. For those of us who know Christ we have a battle everyday with the old man and we can’t kill the old man without the Spirit of Christ helping me fix my eyes on Jesus. What almost always happens when we begin to wander and grieve the Holy Spirit, we usually do it through creating a secret life – another computer, another schedule, another habit – and we wrap it up in secrecy, but there is no secrecy. You are the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19) and He’s always with you. Oh God, help me not grieve Your Spirit but by the power of Your Spirit let me see, love and follow Jesus. Patiently and persistently keep me fixed on Jesus.

I know we are close to a new year and we all tend to make resolutions for the new year as we evaluate what we’ve done this past year and where we’ve been or how far we’ve come. There is nothing Biblical about making resolutions but it is a good marking point. As you evaluate whether it’s at the end of year or every day or every week, and you see where you want to go and to grow in the grace and knowledge of Him, remember it’s by grace and in the Spirit that you do this. It’s not in your power and strength to resolve to do better. We don’t have a Nike life where we ‘just do it.’ We need Him to do it. We can’t work out unless He is working

in and that's the Spirit of Christ who was with Him from womb to glory who has come from glory to bring you to glory.

The third and final lesson is that this text tells us of an expiration date. When Adam and Eve sinned God gave us a Gospel message. In Genesis 3:15 God told Eve she would have a seed which is anticipating the virgin birth and this Seed will crush the head of the serpent. He will be bruised on his heel for He will have to suffer but He will crush the head of the serpent. Then God takes this eternal covenant between Father, Son and Holy Spirit, ratifies it by the blood of Jesus by unfolding the covenant of grace first in the Old Covenant as the promise that went to Adam is then manifested to the covenant of Noah. This covenant gives way to the covenant with Abraham which gives way to the Mosaic covenant which gives way to the Davidic covenant which then gives way to the remnant renewal back from Babylon and then there is silence for 400 years. Now in the devastation of a world that is under the curse of sin and the absence of a covenant nation for 600 years, Israel, God is not defeated for that is His plan which is the expiration date of the Old Covenant.

Now from Jeremiah 31 the Lord says 'I will give you a New Covenant. I will forgive your sins. I will put my Spirit within you. I'll give you a new heart, a new record, a new family and a new life. My covenant people will be from all the nations of the world and I will take this same Gospel back to Israel again. That which has been chopped down I will re-graft this Gospel message back to her afresh and anew (Romans 11 and 14).' Here is this glorious message of God's work of redemption. The expiration date is done. There is no more sacrifices, no more circumcision, no more Passovers, no more offerings, no more prophets, no more priests, no more kings for now we have been made new in Jesus Christ.

Jesus says 'Behold I make all things new' for the expiration date of the Old Covenant has expired. You are now in the New Covenant. You walk in the triumph of Christ, not yet in the consummation of that triumph for that will be His Second Advent. You now walk in the triumph of Christ and He breaks us so that we walk in Him. And He fills us with His Spirit that we will fix our eyes on Him. The expiration date is no temple, no veil, no dead sacrifices and no atoning work for the atoning has been made. We are all prophets, all priests and all kings. There is no more Spirit in the holy of holies for now you are the holy of holies. You are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Now you bring living sacrifices. You are the temple of His presence and you now walk in the confidence that Christ has fulfilled all those prophecies, precepts, symbols, types and narratives. You walk in the triumph of Christ.

He has bound the strong man. So go out and plunder all of the nations. He has crushed the head of the serpent. You're forgiven of your sins. He has defeated death. He has opened the grave. He has swallowed up all the hell that is due to all His people. You can have not a reported relationship with Him but you can have a personal relationship with Him for now and all eternity. There is a new date for the New Covenant and it has no expiration. He is our Savior and King and we are in His Kingdom forever and ever. Immanuel!

That Promised Land that was promised to Abraham is done for that was just a down payment. That was to tell God's covenant people that the earth is the Lord's. May the praise of God cover the earth and He has promised you that all authority has been given to Him so go and make disciples of all the nations (Matthew 28:18-20). Praise God He makes all things new and He is making you. When there was no place for you in Bethlehem He took your place and now He has gone away to prepare a place for you and it's not even this earth. He has for you a new heavens and a new earth.

If you are reading this today and you haven't come to Jesus I can't think of a better time than now, at Christmas. When we celebrate the birth of Christ for you to be born again with no expiration date, life forever, that what a glorious day. Jesus says in John 6:47, *[47] Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.* Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, I thank You so much that we are marching through Immanuel's land to fairer worlds on high. God, thank You for Your patience with me and us. Thank You for saving us. Thank for the root and stump that came from Jesse's root, which is the Branch that comes to bear fruit to bring men and women from all the nations, rich and poor matters not, depth and breadth of sin God's grace is greater than all of our sin, for I praise Your Name. If are reading this seeking or God is causing you to seek I invite you to call us at (205)776-5200 and we'd love to pray with you. If you know Jesus and God is working on your heart by His Spirit who rests upon you and you just want to pray with someone you call as well. We're here but rejoice. O Come all ye faithful and worship Him. Then go get up on a mountain and proclaim 'Immanuel, God with us to save us to all' for I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.

#### Power Point

#### LESSONS FROM THE STUMP AND THE ROOT

I. Genealogical Unmistakable Signal

II. The Holy Spirit—Spirit of Christ

III. The Expiration Date