

Isaiah 11

Chapter 11 begins with a contrast. The worldly empire falls never to rise again, but the kingdom of David, which is pictured as also being lopped down to its very roots, sends forth a new shoot, and out of its roots there comes a Branch. (Although the same figure is involved, the Hebrew word for "branch" used here is not the one used in Isaiah 4:2 and in Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15.)

The following section may be divided into two parts. Verses 2-5 describe His enduement and His actions; verses 6-9 portray the characteristics of His kingdom.

In verses 2-5 the main emphasis is on what He is rather than on what He does, although the latter aspect is also included. His actions are confined to verse 4, while the other three verses tell about His wonderful character.

In Isaiah 9:6-7 and 4:2 the deity of the Messiah was emphasized. The present verses barely touch upon that aspect of His character. Instead they stress His infilling with the Holy Spirit and the righteousness of His actions.

Verse 2 gives a wonderful description of six different aspects of the power of the Holy Spirit which are manifested as He rests upon the Messiah. It would be interesting to examine each of these aspects to see the great part it played in the work of our Lord during His earthly ministry. Verse 3 stresses the righteousness of His judgments. It reminds us forcibly of the statement in John 2:25 that He did not need that anyone should tell Him what was in man, for He knew what was in man. His eyes pierced to the very center of the character of each one with whom He had to deal. This wonderful insight is to be manifested far more widely in future days.

The only verse in this section of the chapter which describes His activities (v. 4) seems to center upon things He has not yet done. We note that He is to judge the poor, to reprove with equity for the meek of the earth, to smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and to slay the wicked with the breath of His lips. All this describes the activity of a powerful ruler rather than that of a teacher. It is hard to imagine that it is a description of His activities at the time of His first coming, but much more natural to think that it