

The Leader We Long For

1. What are some ways people try to have significant impact or influence in their world?

Invitation to pray: Ask the Lord to open His precious and living Word to your heart.

Very briefly, **scan Isaiah 9:21b-12:6**. Remember, King Ahaz of Judah faced attack for refusing to join Israel and Aram in alliance against Assyria, and he had appealed to Assyria for help. Chapters 10-12 finish up God's response to this.

Our first section, **Isaiah 9:21b-10:19**, speaks about the rulers of Israel and Assyria, people who would seem to have very little in common. In this passage you will notice references to areas already conquered by Assyria (10:9) and the use of poetic imagery (e.g. 10:17-19).

2. **As you read** the following passages, summarize what you observe God making clear.
 - a. Deuteronomy 16:18-20 (background); Isaiah 9:21b-10:4

 - b. Isaiah 10:4b-19

3. What do you think God desires to convey to Ahaz through this part of His message?

In **Isaiah 10:20-34**, the terms "that day" and "the remnant" reappear, as do more of God's present, future and ultimate plans for His people. The cities in vv. 28-32 lead down to Jerusalem. This doesn't necessarily mark the future Assyrian attack route, but may serve as a hypothetical picture of invasion. "Lebanon" (v. 34) cites likeness to the huge cedars of that land.

4. From this section, what crucial insights/hope are provided for any in Judah who will listen?

5. As you've observed examples of both human rule (over their own lives and over others) and God's rule here in chapter 10, what basic principals have you discovered?

Read Isaiah 11:1-10. A great Son of David will one day rule over all. But another truth is emerging: before His reign, He must face a far different role. Verse 1 begins to lay this out as it takes us 700 years ahead to Jesus' birth.

6. Contrast the terms used to describe the worldly leaders/forces (10:16, 18-19, 33-34) with those describing Messiah in 11:1a. What truth might that suggest about Him?

To dig deeper: Jesse—I Samuel 16:1,10-13; II Samuel 7:8,12-13; Isaiah 9:7; Luke 3:23,31-34.

This entire section and chapter will show us eternal qualities of the Son and the glorious characteristics of His coming reign. But at the same time we are also given insight into the great task the Messiah must first undertake. *One case of this is in v.2, which would strongly remind the Hebrew people of how, down through their history, God's Spirit had come in special empowerment upon human servants, so that they could do His mighty bidding.* This marked them as His chosen ones, encouraged them, and empowered them for their task. Let's investigate.

7. Read 11:2. What do you find out about Jesus in Matthew 3:13-17?

8. With its allusions to a humble appearance, receiving of provision, etc., one purpose of Isaiah 11:1-3 is to hint at the amazing earthly mission that is ahead for the Son. What further details are in John 1:1-3, 14a; Hebrews 2:14, 17; 4:15; and Romans 5:19?

The Son of God takes on human flesh. To show the Father's love and delight, and to fully equip the Son for His mission, essential gifts are bestowed upon and displayed in Christ by the Spirit.

9. *The "paired blessings" in v.2 are the crucial necessities Jesus will need to live His human life and complete His Father's plan.* Comment on the meaning/significance of each one. Consult a dictionary, etc., if you wish.

Wisdom: (lit. Hebrew "skill")

and **Understanding:** (Hebrew root "between")

Counsel:

and **Strength** (or **Power**):

Knowledge of the Lord:
(implies intimate personal experience)

and **Fear of the LORD:** (Psalm 76:7-12,
33:18-22; Colossians 3:22-25 may help)

10. Verse 3 tells us the Son's bottom-line response to the Father. What does it say and what do you think these words mean?

11. The following verses reveal some of what the words of verse 3 meant in Jesus' earthly life. As your time permits, tell what you discover.
 - a. Hebrews 10:5-7; John 8:28, 14:9-10

 - b. Luke 22:41-44; John 19:17-18, 28-30

12. How do Hebrews 2:9 and 10:12-13 connect with the sure promises of Isaiah 11?

For your own heart: One purpose of Isaiah 11:1-3 is to show the incredible beauty of the Son's earthly life. It's also intended to picture the relationship the Father desires with *each* of His dear children (all who are in Christ by faith). This is life as He intended it to be lived! Looking back at these 3 verses, what special insight/encouragement does the Lord provide for your life today?

Read again Isaiah 11:1-5, then 6-10. During Christ's first coming, we see wonderful glimpses of all the characteristics listed in vv. 1-5; but these true and eternal qualities of the Son blaze out in fullest glory as He comes the second time to reign forever.

Note: The word judge in v. 4 *does* mean retribution against all who scorn God's infinite goodness and cause suffering, but it also includes the strong idea of making things right—rewarding faith and delivering the helpless.

13. In His earthly life and in His ultimate rule, what a great contrast we see between Christ and the earthly rulers of ch. 10. From 11:1-10, list and comment on the wonderful things you see as the One called "the shoot from the stump of Jesse" comes into His eternal reign.

Read Isaiah 11:11-16 (quoted in Romans 15:12). This section is beautiful but has certain interpretive challenges. As your time permits, dig for yourself into this passage, seeking to determine the time period(s) being indicated, as well as the literal or symbolic meanings pictured here. And remember, as Christians look into passages and questions like this—important but not crucial to salvation—the wisest course is to study deeply and dependently, hold conclusions loosely and humbly, and show grace and respect to others, as pleases the Lord.

14. As you read through this section and look at God's actions, what main priorities of His heart are revealed?

Read the 2 songs that make up **Isaiah 12:1-6**.

15. As you remember what God has laid out in chs. 10-11, and see Him finish by giving these songs, how would you sum up what He wants all Judah, great and small, to understand?

16. These songs can be sung now and through eternity by all who have gone their own sinful way and then experienced being sought out and reclaimed by the great Savior Jesus Christ.
- a. Is this true of you? (See Romans 3:23-24.)

 - b. Read through these beautiful songs (aloud if you wish) and comment on each line that especially blesses you.

Although Jesus' complete rule is still ahead, it is now the Father's deep joy to present the Son as Head over all His church and the Ruler over every part of our lives (e.g. see Ephesians 1:19-23).

17. From what you have seen in this lesson, is He worthy to be your trusted King in all things? Write out your response to Him.