

Isaiah 11: 3-9; “The Root of Jesse, A Banner”, A Christmas Sermon
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 19th, 2021,
In the Afternoon Worship Service.

These verses speak of Christ’s righteous rule and His giving of grace to His people to represent Him as His body the Church, in many God glorifying ways, all through the Church age. The root of Jesse in verse 10 is our Lord Jesus Christ once again. His banner is the truth about Himself which is held up and waved before all peoples; the truth of the gospel and His blessed word. And it says here that His resting place will be glorious. His resting place is His Church. As it says in Psalm 132, verse 13 – “For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell for I have desired it.”

Since this is the case, the words – “He shall stand as a banner to the Gentiles” means 3 things in relation to His Church, His people that He has died to save; and over whom He rules in love and righteousness, forever. I pray that each of us realize through this message, that our great God and King, our Lord Jesus Christ is standing as a banner to the nations. May each of us desire to wave this banner of truth, in the way that we speak and in the way that we live our lives.

1st of all – He shall stand as a banner means that Christ and all of His people will delight in the fear of the Lord. (verses 3-5)

Verse 3 says – “His delight is in the fear of the Lord, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness He shall judge the poor; and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.” “Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist.” These words show us what a great and mighty and awesome Savior and Lord, our Lord Jesus was, in His time upon the earth. And they also tell us what He is like now, in the application of redemption. They tell us what He is like now, having all authority in heaven and earth, as He sits at the right hand of His Father, as a just Judge, in His rule over all men, from His position in heaven.

His greatest delight when He walked upon the earth was in the fear of the Lord, it says here. That is, He had a supreme regard to rejoice to do the will of His Father who sent Him. He did not come into this world in great pomp, wielding His authority like an tyrannical earthly king. He did not come in order to judge the world; that is, to go around with a ministry of condemnation to the people He ministered to. He came to save people from their sins, and the way that He would do that would be by having the fear of the Lord always before His eyes. He did not envy sinners, but He would walk in the fear of the Lord all day long. He knew His Father’s love for Him and because of this closeness of communion and fellowship that He had with Him.

He was always concerned to keep all of God’s commandments by having a continual regard for them. Psalm 119: 14-16 – “I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches.” “I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways.” “I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.” In order to do this, He did this He made Himself of no reputation in the sight of men. He did not try to win their approval, but always pleased His Father, in everything. He prophetically says of Himself in Psalm 16, verse 8 – “I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at My right hand, I shall not be moved.” “Therefore my heart is glad and My glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.” “For You will not leave My soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”

In other words, even though wicked men would lead Him to the cross, yet He would not deny His eternal relationship with the Father, or cease loving those whom He had come to die for. “For the Son of Man did come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20: 28) When He had conversations with people, He did not judge them according to their outward appearance or even their profession of knowing God. He did not judge according to the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears, in respect to what men would say to

Him, about themselves, or Him. He would judge them with righteous judgment. He would speak to them about their sins when He needed to. And He would show mercy to those poor sinners who came to Him needed His teaching, needing His grace; those who needed His help, or who needed His healing touch. He went about doing good, and healing those who were oppressed by the devil.

On the other hand, while He walked upon the earth, the Lord Jesus said to the self-righteous Pharisees – I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And in John chapter 8, verses 23-27, he said to them – “You are from beneath; I am from above.” “You are of this world; I am not of this world.” “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am he, you will die in your sins.” “Then they said to Him, ‘Who are You?’ “And Jesus said to them, ‘Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning.’ “I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him.”

In this righteous way, our Lord was striking the earth with the rod of His mouth. In speaking to these men in this way, He was showing all men that with righteousness He would judge the poor, and He would decide with equity for the meek of the earth. The sword that proceeds from Christ’s mouth is a double edged sword. It can save, and it can wound and kill. When sinners receive the words of His mouth, they will praise Him for the grace that He gives them. Psalm 138, verse 4 – “All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O Lord, when they hear the words of Your mouth.” “Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.” “Thought the Lord is on high, yet He regards the lowly; but the proud He knows from afar.”

This is what Christ proclaimed in His Sermon on the Mount. He said – Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Christ calls those blessed who do not trust in their own righteousness to save them. Christ calls those blessed who do not believe that they have the strength to do and keep God’s commandments perfectly. He knows that they will be blessed if they will look outside of themselves to Him. And so, He pronounces a blessing on such people who do not strongly assert that they shall prevail by their own thoughts or their own righteousness or their own strength. But they will trust in Him. They shall inherit the earth; that is the New Heavens and the New Earth in the Eternal Kingdom which Christ would die to bring us into.

Still, according to these verses there are many great things that Christ will do as the Age progresses. And these are things which we need to be faithful to proclaim; to hold Christ’s banner up. The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. In this regard we must declare that righteousness is the belt of His loins; that which He girds Himself with. He will righteously bring to complete fulfillment every purpose of His Father’s plan, to have a people for His own possession. He will build His Church and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it.

In Isaiah 42: 1-4, the Father speaks of His Son in this wonderful way! “Behold!” “My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights!” “I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth Justice to the Gentiles.” “He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, or cause His voice to be heard in the street.” “A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth.” “He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law.”

Brethren, we should always glory in the fact that righteousness is the belt of Christ’s loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist. He knows how to reward every man according to their works. He knows how to repair every bruised reed in His Church. The government of the world is in His strong hands. The government of His Church’s path to her final victory over all the schemes of the Devil and all the forces of Antichrist, is on His shoulders. Christ’s kingdom began very small, but now it has been come to be noticed among many peoples and nations. The gospel is spreading to more and more people. The word can now run swiftly and be glorified in many people’s lives because Christ’s power is always in it and with it.

So, let us pray for His kingdom to come in our day. Pray that God's will to be done, on earth as it is in heaven. And we will see, in accordance with the fervency of our prayers, and great purposes of God the Father which are demonstrated in every generation to His people and a watching world. So that even now, let us remember how Christ is pictured in Psalm 45; as a King going forth to battle – "Gird Your sword on Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty." "And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; and Your right hand shall teach You awesome things." "Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; the people fall under You."

2nd – He shall stand as a Banner for the peoples means that all of Christ's people will learn to get along, and be at peace with each other.

Verses 6-9 – "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." "The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox." "The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the vipers den." "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." If we consider that these words that I have just read to you, flow out of verses 3-5 about Christ's righteous rule and reign over all the earth, you should be able to see that what is being talked about here is the great peace that Christ will someday establish to His Church, His holy mountain, His Kingdom, in a future day.

In that day, it says, the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day, there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people." This is not speaking of Christ's Second Coming and the Eternal State, or the New Heavens and New Earth. This is speaking of a time when Christ's Church shall spiritually reign upon the earth. In the eternal state there will not be any occasion for the wolf dwelling with the lamb, the leopard lying down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion together. But my brethren, there is this possibility of this taking place any time during this Church age for those who are walking in the Spirit and walking in love with their brethren, and showing love to all men.

Yes, there is a day coming when many people who could be described as wolves, leopards, young lions, shall cease to make a prey of God's people and truly live in harmony and peace with them. There is coming a day when men shall beat their swords into plowshares and learn war no more. There is a day coming when Satan shall be bound for a thousand years. But let us think about our life here and now. It is the nature of God's grace in Christ to do these great things for any wild sinner even now, if He wills to do so. This is why we should pray for revival. What we have here, are pictures of animals who by nature are predators, but they are changed in their nature. They are subdued by Christ's grace to become loving and thoughtful towards those who are weak and helpless. They are convinced by the Spirit's teaching them, not to take advantage of others; not to eat them up. They learn to help those who are weak, and have pity on those in need.

The proud man by grace, becomes as a little child, and learns how to truly lead, by demonstrating a Christ-like example. These words tell us that King Jesus' reign does have powerful and good effects upon all Christians in all generations, to this end. Think of the apostle Paul. We sing in Hymn 404 in the Trinity Hymnal – "The ravening wolf rushed forward, full early to the prey; but lo!" "The Shepherd met him, and bound him fast today." "O glory most excelling that smote across his path!" "O light that pierced and blinded the zealot in his wrath!" "O voice that spake unto him the calm, reproving word!" "O love that sought and held him the bondman of his Lord." "Lord, teach Thy Church the lesson, still in her darkest hour of weakness and of danger, to trust Thy hidden power: Thy grace by ways mysterious the wrath of man can bind, and in Thy boldest foe-man Thy chosen saint can find."

Beloved brethren, let us believe that God can change the vilest, most violent and insolent person, and turn him into a man who loves all of the saints. The power and the purpose to do so are with our God, who will exalt His Son, and who will someday exalt the Kingdom of His Son in all

the earth, in a coming day. But there is no lack of power to accomplish these great things now, at this time, either in regard to one person, or to many nations, as God someday will prove. At any time, the Spirit can be poured out from on high, and the wilderness can be turned into a fruitful field. If He is poured out in our day, Christian people and ministers of the gospel in many denominations can come to better understanding of the doctrinal truth of the Bible. If this happened at the Reformation, it can also happen today.

Those who now know little of the Bible can learn to graze the pastures of the truth for more light, and find more nourishment for their souls. When they do, they will not go about to fight with each other, or hurt each other's feelings. They will love one another with a 1st Corinthians 13 love. They will volunteer freely in the day of Christ's power to do many good things in their local church, and they will join with many other churches and people to pray for world-wide revival.

Those who are feeding upon the milk of the word shall be given light from God to know how to graduate up to feeding on the meat of the word and even to become teachers of the word to others. The weaned child shall put his hand on the viper's den. Young believers can be weaned from the false doctrines of churches that teach sacramental salvation. All of these things can happen in our day, but they will most certainly happen in a coming day in a much greater way. For –

3rd – Christ standing as a Banner to the people will mean that for Him and for all of His people, His resting place is glorious.

“And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious.” The Church of Jesus Christ is Christ's resting place. If we are faithful to Him as individual believers, if we are faithful to Him in our love, our service, our worship, and our obedience to Him, He finds His place to rest with us. Psalm 132 pictures this so very well. Verse 3 says – “I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob.” “Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of the woods.” “Let us go into His tabernacle; let us worship at His footstool.” “Arise, O Lord to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength.”

This resting place being spoken of here was the place where the future temple was to be built. David could not give sleep to his eyes until He had found a place for the Lord to rest in. He wanted to build the temple in those days. He collected the materials, but God told him that it was to be given to Solomon to actually build it, for He was a man of peace. David was an eminent type of Christ as man after God's own heart. But Solomon is an eminent type of Christ as the Prince of peace. There will be times of spiritual warfare and times of spiritual peace in relation to the building of Christ's Church. Eventually there will be complete victory in this regard. This Old Testament temple was type of the New Testament Church composed of the living stones of believers in Christ.

The more that this New Testament Church, His temple, is built, and the more that it is completed, the more glorious it is in Christ's eyes. He finds pleasure in His people, all of them, as they are added to the building. Here He dwells, for He has desired it. He has desired it for His dwelling place. He will abundantly bless the Church's provision. He will satisfy her poor with spiritual bread. He will cloth His people with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy in their worship of God and Christ. This New Testament Church is a most glorious rest for Christ, since He spent all of His strength in His labors in His earthly ministry to obtain it, to build it, and to bring it into a place of everlasting joy and peace. But He has seen the travail of His soul, and He is satisfied.