

<sup>1</sup>A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. <sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord— <sup>3</sup>and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; <sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. <sup>6</sup>The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The infant will play near the cobra's den, the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. <sup>9</sup>They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. <sup>10</sup>In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious. — Isa. 11:1-10

As we continue our survey of the Fruit of the Spirit, this seemed a fitting passage for today. It combines a lot of themes relevant to us at LCC right now – Fruit (v.1), the Holy Spirit of Pentecost (v.2), the OT version of the Armor of God (v.5), and a discussion about peace (v.6). It is perhaps one of the most famous passages in the OT when it comes to peace, so let's look at it today.

This passage begins not with peace, but with the Messiah, the bringer of peace. “A shoot (Messiah) will come from the stump of Jesse (King David's lineage) and from his roots (the Jewish people) a Branch (Messiah again) will bear fruit (leadership, good deeds, authority).” And He will be able to do this because He has the Spirit of the Lord upon Him giving Him wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, fear of the Lord. This is an interesting list when it comes to political leaders. How many do we truly look for in our leaders? Don't we more look for experience, consistency, moral stands, personality?

But it is these things that allow Messiah to judge rightly (make good decisions), give justice to the poor, speak powerfully, and bring peace. In fact, because of these Spirit-given and heavenly traits, Messiah will bring a peace beyond any we have ever known since Eden. The description here is of a world with no economic strata or class distinctions, with no more death whether natural or intentional. Even the natural food chain is disrupted, and all animals become vegetarians!

This description is beyond peace. It is Shalom. While peace is usually thought to be life without conflict, Shalom is life as it was created to be. It is not just an end to war but the advent of complete justice, love, and selflessness. It is everyone living for the betterment of everyone else. And when I have a whole community looking out for my needs, I don't have to look out for myself (they're already doing that) and I can look out for everyone else. This is Shalom; this is true peace.

And the symbol of that Shalom will be Messiah Himself. Jesus is not only the bringer of peace, He is the symbol of it. So while we use doves, or olive branches, or circular symbols to represent peace in our culture, what we should be using is Jesus Himself, the banner for the people.

Questions to ponder:

Where have you seen Shalom in your life in the last week?

How might you foster Shalom in this world this week?

What creative ways could you use this week to “pass the peace” to others in Jesus' name?