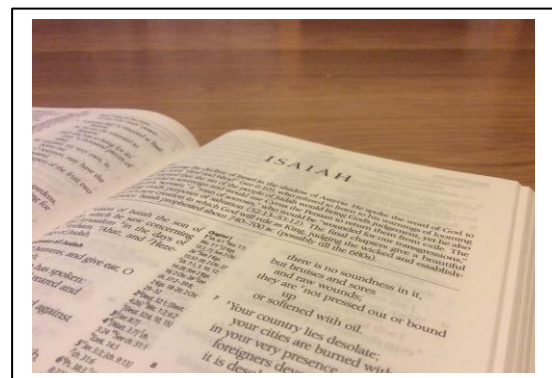


'RECEIVING HIS PROMISE IN THE MESSIAH' # 3**Read Isaiah 11:1-10**

This is a familiar passage, often read during Advent. In it, God begins, through Isaiah, to introduce His plan to repair and restore His relationship with humanity, through 'the stump of Jesse'. It was a difficult and troubled time for both Israel and Judah when Isaiah was writing, some 700 years before the birth of Jesus the Messiah, troubles that ended with Israel destroyed and the people of Judah taken into captivity in Babylon. God speaks into their troubles to encourage and give hope. There will be eventual restoration, and He promises delivery of a very different future through the Davidic line, a future beyond their current imaginings. Subsequently, God discloses more detail of what is to be expected (Isaiah 53).

- ❖ *What do you understand 'Messiah' to mean? What does the title encapsulate?*
- ❖ *What characteristics are identified in the passage?*
- ❖ *The passage begins with horticultural illustrations, but that theme (which could easily be extended) is immediately dropped and another theme (v.2) is introduced. What is this, and why is this important?*



The history of the Jewish nation, recorded in both Old and New Testaments, shows their misunderstanding of what to expect God's 'messiah' to be like, and by what sort of campaign the Messiah would achieve his objective. They did not recognise Jesus as the Messiah; they failed to **'RECEIVE HIS (GOD'S) PROMISE IN THE MESSIAH'**.

- ❖ *What does the above have to say to us and everyone today?*
- ❖ *How would you now paraphrase 'receive his promise in the Messiah'?*

When someone truly commits to Jesus as their Messiah, Jesus promises to enter into them by His Spirit. Using an illustration from the Alpha Course, Nicky Gumbel likens this to the pilot light being lit in a gas boiler or fire. Once lit it always stays lit (assuming a steady flow of gas) at a constant low flame. The pilot light is but a small (but important) part of the boiler/fire; its purpose is to ignite (bring into life) something much bigger. Turn the switch and WHOOSH! The boiler/fire bursts into life to meet the purpose for which it was made.

- ❖ *The challenge for all Christians is whether they feel remaining as a pilot light Christian satisfies receiving the promise in the Messiah.*
- ❖ *What would you say a Christian needs to do to move from being a pilot light to a fire?*

Prayer: Jesus, you are my treasure, my portion and my reward. As I wait for the fullness of all that you have promised, I savour the rich reality of your presence in my life in the here and now. Fill my lamp with the oil of your Spirit. I pray. (Lectio 365)