Isaiah The Fifth Gospel: Study #3 Notes and Personal Focus 11:1-14

PERSONAL FOCUS

**The Rod Out of the Root of Jesse**

1And there shall come forth a ***rod out of the root of Jesse,*** and a blossom shall come up from his root: 2 and the Spirit of God shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness shall fill him; 3 the spirit of the fear of God. He shall not judge according to appearance, nor reprove according to report: 4 but he shall judge the cause of the lowly, and shall reprove the lowly of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he destroy the ungodly one**. 5And he shall have his loins girt with righteousness, and his sides clothed with truth**. 6And the wolf shall feed with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the young calf and bull and lion shall feed together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 And the ox and bear shall feed together; and their young shall be together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And an infant shall put his hand on the holes of asps, and on the nest of young asps. 9 And they shall not hurt, nor shall they at all be able to destroy any one on my holy mountain: for the whole world is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as much water covers the seas. 10 And the Lord again spoke to Ahaz, saying, 11 Ask for thyself a sign of the Lord thy God, in the depth or in the height. 12 And Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. 13 And he said, Hear now, O house of David; is it a little thing for you to contend with men and how do you contend against the Lord? 14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive in the womb, and shall bring forth a son, and You shall call his name Emmanuel.

Isaiah 11:1-9 is a messianic poem that closely defines the features of the Messiah.

* The Messiah’s Davidic origin mentions Jesse who was the father of King David (1 Sam 16:1, Ruth 4:22). The David dynasty was in peril and Isaiah is assuring him even though the house of David was failing the “root” the “stump” can still put forth new life and fruit. King Ahaz was about to make an alliance with the Assyrian King and Isaiah asks him to trust in the Lord and reveals the coming Messiah coming forth from the Virgin. The ancient Jewish interpreters saw this as a messianic prophecy and even declared that the “root” would be executed: “Nezer (the root) shall be executed” – Jesus the Messiah in the Hebrew Bible, Eugen Pentiuc)

1. Yahweh gave the name “Israel” to Jacob after he ***wrestled*** with God. Jacob was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph, Judah, Reuben, Simeon, Isaachar, Zebulun, Asher, Gad, Dan, Benjamin, Levi, and Nephtali.

Reflection: Wrestling, struggling and fighting between us and God is language of two who are at odds with each one another or even at war with one another. Inside each of us is a “struggle of the wills” that lasts perhaps a lifetime. The imagery of a “wolf eating alongside the lamb” is a description of peace between the hunter and the hunted. God is the hunter and we are the hunted.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Q. At what times have I experienced being at peace with God in my life?

Q. What was happening that made that peace possible?

Q. When I find myself struggling with God, what is it that is making us unsettled, angry and despairing?

Q. Meditating on Isaiah 11:1-9, what can it teach us about trusting in the Lord especially when things are not going well?

## Isaiah -The Fifth Gospel: Study #3 Notes

ROYAL MESSIANISM

* This section (Isaiah 6:1-12:6) of his prophecies is known as the book of Immanuel, he starts by saying to King Ahaz that God will not abandon him, he will protect him from Israel coming to usurp him. He does not need to form an alliance with the Assyrians and Yahweh will protect him – God is with him -emphasizing this with the name Immanuel, meaning “God is with us.”
* Isaiah enumerates the blessings coming from this child – These prophecies are known as “Royal Messianism” which believed in a permanent Davidic dynasty.

Isaiah 9:1-6: “…people walking in darkness, behold a great light: you that dwell in the region and shadow of death, a light shall shine upon you….6 For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, whose government is upon his shoulder: and his name is called the Messenger of great counsel: for I will bring peace upon the princes, and health to him.”

Isaiah 11:1-9: “…the Spirit of God shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness shall fill him… and with the breath of his lips shall he destroy the ungodly one…5And he shall have his loins girt with righteousness, and his sides clothed with truth… for the whole world is filled with the knowledge of the Lord…”

# See the development of a living charismatic Tradition of the interpretation of scriptures

"Thereby the prophet says that it is of her, who is descended from David and from Abraham, that He is born. For Jesse was a descendant of Abraham, the father of David; the descendant who conceived Christ, the Virgin, is thus become the 'rod'. Moses too worked his miracles before Pharaoh with a rod; and among others too of mankind, the rod is a sign of empire. And the 'Flower' refers to His body, for it was made to bud forth by the Spirit." St. Irenaeus (c.193)

"The root is the household of the Jews, the rod is Mary, the Flower of Mary is Christ. She is rightly called a rod, for she is of the royal lineage, of the house and family of David. Her Flower is Christ, Who destroyed the stench of worldly pollution and poured out the fragrance of eternal life. As He Himself said, 'I am a flower of the plain, a lily of the valleys'" [Songs 2:1]. St. Ambrose 4 C.E.

"Rod of the root of Jesse, and flower that blossomed from his stem, O Christ, You have sprung from the Virgin. From the mountain overshadowed by the forest You have come [Hab. 3:3], made flesh from her that knew not wedlock, O God, Who are not formed from matter." (St. Cosmas 8 C.E.)

"Let Jesse rejoice and let David dance, for behold, the Virgin, the rod planted by God, has blossomed forth the Flower, even the everlasting Christ." (St. Andrew of Crete 8 C.E.)

"Rejoice, O mystical rod which blossomed the unfading Flower. And, Rejoice, O Bride of God; you are the mystical rod from whom the unfading Rose blossomed and budded forth." (Akathist Hymn)

Great Compline of the Orthodox Church refrain – “For God is with us”

**Focus: The Mother of the Messiah and the Virgin Birth (Isaiah 7:14)**

# The “Veiled One” The Mother/Virgin of the Messiah (Fr. Eugen Pentiuc, Jesus the Messiah in the Hebrew Bible)

**“Therefore *my Lord* (adonay) Himself will give you a sign, *Look* (Behold), the “veiled one” shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14)**

In Hebrew the word ***alma*** is a “marriageable girl” or a “girl who is able to be married” and a “young women” (until the birth of her first child).

The word can also be understood as meaning “the concealed one” or “veiled one” because during the engagement period she would be veiled as a sign if their seclusion and concealment during the betrothal. During betrothal, a couple would live within the home of their parents and not see one another until the day of the wedding. According to the ancient ethical standards, the idea of virginity was implied by the term, “veiled one.”

The use in Isaiah of the word “Behold” (Look) draws our attention to the “Veiled One” and this signals a miracle or an uncommon event. Symbolically, with the birth of Immanuel, a covenant ws broken so that a new covenant (between God and His people) could be initiated. (Pentiuc)

There existed a Hebrew and a Greek translation of the Scriptures at the time of the evangelists.

Matthew used the Greek (Septuagint – before Christ was born) translation (at other times he used the Hebrew) with *Parthenos* or “Virgin” for the word “veiled one” in Hebrew

18Now the birth of Jesus Christ was thus: For His Mother, Mary, having been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, was found to be with child of *the* Holy Spirit…22“Now all this came to pass, in order that it might be fulfilled that which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, 23“‘Behold, **the virgin** shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel,’” which is, being interpreted, “God with us.” [Mt. 1:18-23]

### Luke

26And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent forth by God to a city of Galilee, the name of which was Nazareth, 27to a virgin who was espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the name of the virgin was Mariam…30And the angel said to her, “Cease being afraid, Mariam; for thou didst find grace with God. 31“And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus. [Lk. 1:26-31]

\*Both Matthew and Luke are emphasizing the conception taking place during the betrothal period.

The name **Immanuel** points to a one-to-one personal relationship between God and His people. It shows God’s willingness to descend among us, to share in our human destiny, to be one with us. The name is a step forward towards the Incarnation. (Pentiuc)

The Greek translation of the “Veiled One” in the Hebrew text to “Virgin” (Parthenos) is an interpretation of the Hebrew but does not conflict with the meaning of the “Veiled One” being a virgin who is betrothed. This is an example of early Jewish interpretation, the Greek offers new readings and nuances of Hebrew words unknown to readers of the Hebrew today but known to Hebrew speakers in the pre-Christian era…The Septuagint was seen by Christians as an almost inspired version of the Scripture within this pious context Isaiah 7:14 has always been read as a reference to the virginal conception and birth of Christ. (Pentiuc)

*34But Mariam said to the angel, “How shall this be, since I know not a man?” 35And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you; wherefore also that Holy One Who is born of you shall be called Son of God (Lk. 1:34,35)*

\*The conception of Jesus is described in terms of a new creation (a new human race - Fr. Harry Pappas) – hence the imagery of the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary parallels the Spirit hovering over the primordial watery deep... (Pentiuc)