

Root, as well as Shoot

"And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall be fruitful.... And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse." (Isa. 11: 1, 10. N. Trans.)

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The raising up of David to be King marked a distinct epoch in God's dealings with Israel. It was an extraordinary manifestation of His grace when everything had been forfeited and lost through national apostasy. Let Psalm 78: 56-72 be read attentively and this will become very plain. The divine action is likened to a giant waking from sleep and mightily roused. The ark had been carried captive by the Philistines but, "He chose David also, His servant," and through him He rolled back the tide of disaster, and there was safety, food, and guidance for His people. Now that intervention of about three thousand years ago is typical of the far greater intervention of God, through Christ, which is yet to come.

David was of course a "rod" or "shoot" out of the stem of Jesse, the last and least of the eight shoots that appeared in Jesse's lifetime. He soon however, became the pre-eminent shoot of his day and generation. He is wholly eclipsed by the Shoot of whom Isaiah prophesies.

As "the seed of David according to the flesh," our Lord Jesus is "a Shoot out of the stock of Jesse." He is the supreme "Branch out of his roots," that has been fruitful to the glory of God. He is *the* Man of the Divine purpose, in whom the whole will of God will be accomplished. If Isaiah 11: 2 to 9 be read there unfolds before our view the delightful picture of the earth as it shall be beneath His righteous yet beneficent sway in the coming millennial age.

It is clear that as the "Shoot" He is contemplated in His Manhood. Hence in verses, 2 and 3 He is seen in the strength of the anointing of the Spirit of the Lord; but here not so much "doing good and healing" (Acts 10: 38) for that was connected with His first advent. Here it is, "judging," "reproving," and even "smiting," and "slaying" evil and evil men, in righteousness.

As the supreme Judge, He is to be invested with the Spirit in His sevenfold character and might. The golden candlestick in the Tabernacle typified the Spirit from this point of view. There was the main shaft of the candlestick — the Spirit of the Lord. There were the three pairs of arms — (1) "the spirit of wisdom and understanding," (2) "the spirit of counsel and might," (3) "the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." It is in keeping with this that when we open the book of Revelation, which is the book of judgment, we at once encounter a similar presentation of the Spirit of God: — "the seven Spirits which are before His throne" (Rev. 1: 4). And again the Son of man, taking the judicial place in the midst of the seven churches, speaks of Himself as "He that hath the seven Spirits of God" (Rev. 3: 1); and taking His place as Judge of all the earth, He, though standing "a Lamb as it had been slain" has "seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." (Rev. 5: 6) This consideration alone — that He is the "Shoot" out of the stock of Jesse, invested with the sevenfold Spirit of God — assures us of the Divine impartiality and rightness of every act and every edict; as the result of righteousness, peace will ensue.

In Isaiah, as generally in the Old Testament, the earth as the scene of God's righteous dealings is in view. Hence the prominent thought as to the coming Messiah is this which we have just indicated, and which is so marvellously portrayed in the first nine verses of Isaiah 11.

Yet we are not permitted, even in the Old Testament, to be in ignorance of the fact that still larger purposes of God lay in the background, and that there were still richer aspects of, still profounder

depths in, the wondrous Being, who should in due time appear as the Messiah. Hence verse 10 of our chapter. As the Shoot out of Jesse He is the true King of Israel. As the Root of Jesse, He is an ensign for the rallying of the peoples, even Gentiles, and His rest shall be glory.

As the Root of Jesse He is the One from whom David originated. He is not the product, but the Producer. And this He is not by reason of His Manhood, but by reason of His Deity.

It could indeed be said of Him "come of David's seed according to flesh" (Rom. 1: 3. N. Trans). But of whom was this affirmed?" concerning His Son," as the same verse states. Inasmuch as it was God's Son who thus came, He was "the Root."

We beg our readers to let this truth sink well into their minds and hearts. It cannot be stressed too strongly in view of the erroneous philosophic notions, which are revived in our day as though they were deep truth to be the glory of the select and spiritual few. It may be urged — with much philosophic reasoning to back it up — that the correct presentation of the matter is to say that a Divine Person, unnamed, and unidentifiable save by a number, became the Son in the act of coming of David's seed. The Scripture simply states that the Gospel is concerning God's "Son, come of David's seed according to flesh." We have not a moment's hesitation in making our decision. He did not become the Son in becoming flesh: the Son became David's seed in becoming flesh. Scripture is right, and the philosophic reasoning is wrong.

When we turn to the closing chapter of Revelation, we pick up the thread from Isaiah 11: 16 "I Jesus . . . am the Root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." The thought enshrined in "offspring," is so close to that of "shoot" as to be practically identical. Only notice that the order of the two thoughts is reversed. In the Old Testament "shoot" comes first. The main theme is the coming King of David's line, in whom all God's purposes for Israel and the earth will be made good. The fact that He is also the Root whence proceeded all David's power, success and glory, is mentioned but not developed.

In the New Testament we have a far wider range of vision. We are not allowed to forget that Jesus is the offspring of David, and consequently holds, even in His Manhood, all kingly rights on the earth; yet the fact that He is the Root of David becomes of surpassing importance. From Him David sprang. All that David was he owed to Him. He brought to pass David and all that David represented for Israel. He who did this can originate and bring to pass all blessing for both the heavens and the earth. Not *only* earth, be it noted, but *heaven also*.

And, so, He is the bright morning Star. We look up to the heavens to see Him. In the heavens is He set, and from the heavens we await Him, before He shines forth as Sun of Righteousness. There have been luminaries on earth. A Moses, an Elijah, a Paul, shone each in their day, as a lighthouse casts its beams into the darkness. Jesus, and Jesus alone, is the bright morning star.

And the morning star is the coming King as offspring of David, the Shoot out of the stock of Jesse. He is also the Root of both David and Jesse — the Originator of their power and glory, and of all glory and blessing for heaven and for earth. So,

"Let him that heareth say, Come!"