

The Righteous Branch

Jeremiah 23: 5-6

Our text today must be considered within the context of the opening verses. Jeremiah was called as a prophet to the nation of Judah. He preached and prophesied prior to and during their fall to the Babylonians. Clearly, Jeremiah was called to serve the Lord at a volatile and apathetic time in Judah's history.

He opened the chapter with a stern warning from the Lord in regard to the neglect of the leadership in Judah – the kings, prophets, and priests. There were few who sought the Lord and cared for God's people. Rather than bringing a word from the Lord, they were responsible for scattering the sheep and providing a false narrative. Although the sheep had been neglected and scattered, God promised He would regather His sheep and provide for them in abundance.

The passage we are focused today is prophetic regarding the coming Messiah. Jeremiah lived several hundred years prior to the birth of Christ and yet he promised Messiah would come. Verses three and four refer to Christ as well, but they also had application for true men of God who would seek the Lord and lead His people in righteousness following the captivity.

We live in a day much like the days of Jeremiah. The Truth has been twisted and distorted to fit specific agendas. Few today are willing to proclaim the Word of God without apology or compromise. Judgment looms on the horizon for the depravity and apathy within our land. While few are willing to proclaim truth and confront the sin of our day, hope is not lost. The days are dark, but the Promised One came as the Lord had said. He fulfilled the work of redemption and left with the promise to come again. The redeemed have hope and assurance in Christ. As we examine the [characteristics](#) of our Lord within the text, I want to consider: [The Righteous Branch](#).

I. The Prophecy Disclosed (5a) – [Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch](#). Jeremiah offered a sure word of prophecy. Consider:

A. The Clarity – Unfortunately in Jeremiah's day, there were few who genuinely spoke truth. The people refused to admit their sin and need for the Lord. They sought those who shared their point of view and encouraged their behavior and way of life. The vast majority were false prophets, seeking only their own gain and acceptance. Jeremiah did not share the words of deceitful men; he had a word from the Lord. He boldly declared – Thus saith the LORD! God had promised to raise up a righteous Branch within the line of David and He could be trusted to keep His word.

- There are many voices clamoring for our attention today. Many seek to paint a picture of peace and prosperity in the midst of violence and devastation. The world would have us believe our faith is in vain, that the Bible is merely a book of myths and legends. Let them say what they will, we too have a sure word from the Lord. We can rest in His provision and His promises. God's Word is truth and it will stand when all else is gone. Build your life upon the Word.

B. The Certainty – Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous

Branch. These were uncertain times for Judah. Many shared false prophecies, seeking to lull them to sleep in their dreadful situation. Honestly, the people did not know who to trust. Jeremiah wanted the people to know there was one in whom they could trust. The Lord had spoken and His word would stand. The days would come when the Lord would raise a righteous Branch to deliver them from bondage and redeem them unto Himself. When all else failed, the Word of God would remain. They could rest in His promises.

- The majority today reject the Truth of God's Word. They deny that Jesus was the Christ. They refuse to submit to the Lord in salvation. They deny the end is coming as the Lord declared. Men will continue to reject truth as long as time exists, but their rejection does not detract from the truth. We can rest in the promises of God. He has gone away with the promise to come again. The saved by grace are heirs of the promise. The Lord will come again triumphant, as the righteous Judge, calling us unto Himself for eternity. He will judge sin and Satan, casting him into the lake of fire forever. We have nothing to fear. God's promises are sure and certain!

II. The Preeminence Displayed (5-6) – As Jeremiah prophesied of the coming Messiah, he revealed the preeminence He would possess. Consider:

A. His Description (5a) – I will raise unto David a righteous Branch. Bear in mind, there was much corruption and deceit in Jeremiah's day. Few sought after truth and righteousness. Judah was corrupt with sin, soon to face the judgment of God. While their situation was desperate, hope remained. God would not forsake His people. A righteous Branch would come, totally unlike any who had come before Him. He would live a perfect, sinless life, one of complete righteousness. Where men had failed, Jesus Christ the promised Messiah would prevail.

- I rejoice for the righteous Branch who came to earth in the form of a man. God wrapped Himself in human flesh, walked among men in absolute righteousness, bore our sin on the cross, dying in our place, and rose again for our justification. We live in a sin cursed world, where most seek the pleasures of the flesh, but the righteous Branch came, securing righteousness for all who come to Him by faith unto salvation.

B. His Dominion (5b) – Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. The national history of Judah was filled with violence and despair. Kings had come and kings had gone. There were seasons of prosperity and they also faced seasons of suffering. At this moment, they were facing being overtaken by Babylon. Judgment and bondage lay ahead for Judah. Although their history, and even their immediate future faced much difficulty, the Lord promised a King who would reign and prosper. Christ would come; He would defeat sin and death. He will come again to rule and reign in absolute power, setting things right on the earth.

- Judah would return from Bondage, but their prosperity would be short-lived. This prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, but one day in God's time, it will come to pass. We live in a world that brings suffering and despair to many. Such an environment will continue, but one day the King will come to establish His kingdom. He will reign in power and glory, bringing peace to the earth. Our Lord will come as the reigning King.

C. His Deity (6b) – he shall be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. The kingdom was divided following the reign of king Solomon. The Northern Kingdom, Israel, did not have a single king who sought the Lord or His righteousness. Judah had a few godly kings and many wicked kings. Even those who sought the Lord were sinful and in need of God's righteousness. Jeremiah revealed the Lord would send the righteous Branch, His only begotten Son, the Lord our Righteousness.

- Scripture declares in regard to men – there is none righteous, no not one. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The wages of our sin is death. We stood in need of one to provide the righteousness necessary to be accepted by the Father. Christ, the Lord our Righteousness, offered Himself the atonement for sin. Sin's debt was paid in His gracious sacrifice. All who come to Christ in salvation are justified in the eyes of God; we are declared righteous as the righteousness of Christ is imputed to our account. The saved are now acceptable to the righteous Father. Had our Lord not been righteous, providing a way for us to obtain righteousness through Him, we would yet be in our sin and without hope.

III. The Providence Declared (5-6) – Finally we discover the providential nature of the coming Messiah. He will provide according to His divine will. Notice:

A. His Power (5b) – and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. Many of the kings of Judah failed to reign in judgment and justice. There was little, if any, concern for the good of the people – socially or spiritually. Many ruled with one agenda – sustaining their rule. Their reign was often threatened by others who sought power and prestige.

As the Lord comes to rule and reign, He will stand unopposed. He will execute righteous judgment and justice upon the earth. He will not be swayed by public opinion or lustful desires. He will reign in absolute power, ensuring His sovereign will is carried out as He pleases. The injustice of the world will come under His just rule. Chaos will be subdued by sovereign power.

B. His Provision (6a) – *In his days Judah shall be saved*. Although Judah would be taken captive into Babylon, they would not be utterly forsaken. God would preserve a remnant that would return to Jerusalem. There was certainly a social and material aspect to this prophecy, but the greater implication is spiritual. Messiah would come to deliver mankind from the bondage of sin. He would provide redemption and reconciliation to God. Through Christ, all who believe including Judah, would be saved. This salvation would not be granted merely because of their lineage, but through repentance and faith in the finished work of Christ.

- Many continue to rejoice in the provision of Christ. He purchased our redemption on the cross, providing forgiveness and reconciliation to God. Through Christ salvation was provided for all who receive the gracious gift by faith. He continues to save today. There is hope and assurance in Christ the Lord.

C. His Peace (6a) – *In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely*. This reveals a beautiful promise in Christ. His provision was not limited to Judah alone. Israel had already been defeated and scattered by the Assyrians. Here we discover the promise of peace to the nation as a whole. It appears to me a prophecy of the peace Christ would bring to humanity, Jew and Gentile alike. He would provide safety and security for all the redeemed.

- We live in a violent and ever-changing world. There are many gripped by fear and uncertainty. Chaos, violence, and death will remain as long as the curse of sin remains. Christ will come in the end, bringing peace and security. The redeemed will spend eternity within the peace and security of heaven. The curse will be removed and we will enjoy perfect peace in the presence of our Redeemer and Lord.

Conclusion: Although this is Old Testament prophecy, it beautifully portrays the character of the Righteous Branch. I am thankful to know Him in salvation, resting in the peace and provision He provides. He is sovereign and none will ever defeat our Lord. He already won the victory over sin, death and hell. The redeemed have much to rejoice about in Christ. Do you know Him as your personal Savior? Are you resting in His provision today? If not, I urge you to come to Him in repentance and faith. He will come to execute judgment. The unsaved will be judged and separated from Him for eternity. Come while the Spirit is leading.