

## Jeremiah 23:5-6

### The Righteous Branch

**Text:** Jeremiah 23:5-6; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12-13

#### Introduction:

1. God had promised that the seed of woman would crush the head of the serpent and the enemy of man would be defeated (Genesis 3:15).
2. He showed that this victory would include blessedness for all through the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3).
3. This Victor would be a mediator (Job 19:23-27), a ruler (Genesis 49:10), a star (Numbers 24:17), a prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-19), a priest (1 Samuel 2:35), and a king (1 Samuel 2:10) - ruling from the throne of David (1 Chronicles 17:11-14).
4. During the time of David, the "sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1) recorded many prophecies of Jesus in the Psalms.
5. In the writings of the prophets, much more detail about the coming Messiah was given.
6. Jeremiah declared that the Messiah would be a righteous Branch from the line of David...

#### I. THE BACKGROUND

- A. Jeremiah prophesied during the captivity of Judah in the land of Babylon.
- B. He remained in the area around Jerusalem until its fall, along with the destruction of the Temple, in 586 BC.
- C. Following this he was taken as a prisoner into the land of Egypt where he died.
- D. While in Jerusalem he prophesied about the captivity and the judgment of God upon His sinful people.
- E. Yet he also held out hope in several prophecies about the coming Messiah and His kingdom.

#### II. PROPHECY OF THE BRANCH (ISAIAH 4:2)

- A. The word for 'branch' refers to a "sprout, shoot, bud, or growth; the process of growth."
- B. The first time this word is found in Scripture is in Genesis 19:25, referring to "that which grew upon the ground" - the new growth (cf. Psalm 65:9-10).
- C. The first time it is used prophetically is in Isaiah 4:2 - referring to the blessings of the faithful remnant in the time of the Messiah.
- D. This idea is developed further in Isaiah 11:1-5.
  1. The word for "branch" here is *netser* - referring to a sprout or shoot but always in a figurative sense.
  2. Israel was told that a rod, a branch, would come out of the stem and roots of Jesse.
    - a. "Rod" means, "twig, branch, or shoot."
    - b. "Stem" is the word for "stump, stock, or the remaining trunk of a tree that has been cut down."
    - c. The verb "shall grow" means, "to bear fruit, to be fruitful."
    - d. ASV - "And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit."
  3. When the Assyrians were punished by God, they became like a forest completely destroyed and devastated by fire (10:16-19).

## Prophecy of Jesus

4. After Israel was punished, she also appeared like a fallen and decaying tree – with only the stump remaining. {Note that the reference is to Jesse instead of David, indicating how low the house of David fell (Amos 9:11).}
  5. However, in contrast with Assyria, there was still life in Israel.
  6. From the stump (the faithful remnant) would come forth a twig that would become the Branch (cf. 53:2)
  7. The Messiah will bear fruit for God because He will save souls from sin.
  8. The Messiah would possess godly characteristics because the Spirit of the Lord would rest upon Him (cf. Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32).
  9. The Messiah will delight in reverence toward God – He freely will give Himself to the service of God, no matter the sacrifice.
  10. The Messiah will practice righteous judgment (cf. 1 Samuel 16:7; Matthew 7:1-5; John 7:24; 12:48; Acts 17:31).
  11. The Messiah will judge and rule by the standard of God’s Word (Revelation 1:16; 2:16; 19:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:8).
  12. The Messiah will be clothed in righteousness and faithfulness.
- E. Jeremiah develops this idea further by focusing on the Messiah as King.
1. Josiah was the last good king of Judah.
  2. Upon his death, Jeremiah commanded the people not to weep for Josiah, but for his successor, Jehoahaz (Jeremiah 22:10-12).
  3. This was the beginning of the end of the line of kings in Judah – Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah would all serve under the authority of Babylon.
- F. Yet, in the future, a new King would be crowned – Jesus the Messiah.
1. He would be a descendant of David (Matthew 1; Luke 3).
  2. He would both reign and prosper.
  3. He would execute both judgment and justice.
  4. He would be called “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”
- G. This idea is emphasized again in Jeremiah 33:15.
- H. Through the prophet Zechariah, God promised to bring forth His servant, the BRANCH (3:8).
1. The emphasis here is on the priesthood of the Messiah.
  2. Jesus would not only be King, but also High Priest.
- I. Finally, Zechariah revealed that this Priestly King would build the true Temple of God (6:12).
1. He would “grow up out of his place” – of lowly origin, rejected of men.
  2. He would “build the temple of the Lord” – the spiritual temple, the church (cf. Eph. 2:21; Heb. 3:6).
  3. He would “bear the glory” – sitting and ruling upon His throne, the throne of David (2 Sam. 7:11-14; Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2).
  4. He would “be a priest upon his throne” – combining the priestly and kingly offices of God (cf. Melchizedek [Gen. 14:18; Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:9; 7:1-3]).
  5. He would have the “counsel of peace” – ruling a kingdom of peace as the great peacemaker between God and man.
- J. All nations – both Jew and Gentile – are invited to build in God’s spiritual temple!

Conclusion: **These prophecies clearly refer to Jesus (cf. Matthew 2:23 – “Nazarene” from the same root word for “sprout” or “shoot”).**