

**Jeremiah 33:14-16**

14 The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

Jeremiah is one of my favorite Old Testament books because of both, the person and the text. Jeremiah was devoted to the Lord and was called as a prophet at a very young age. He protested to God that he was only a boy but God pronounced "I have put my words into your mouth."

As a nation, Israel's problems started after the period of the judges when God selected different leaders for the people. The judges were not perfect people but they were God's chosen. After the Promised Land was conquered and settled, Israel was in a politically unique position. While some nations treated their kings like as if they were gods, the king of Israel was God. This all changed when Israel wanted to be like their neighbors and have a human king to rule over them. Saul was anointed as the 1<sup>st</sup> king and started off good but ended up bad. David was their 2<sup>nd</sup> king, though he had some flaws, he was their greatest king. Solomon, one of David's many children, became king after David. After Solomon, the nation divided in two. The ten tribes to the north were known as Israel and all of their kings were bad. The two tribes to the south were known as Judah and only six out of twenty of their kings were good. Josiah was the last of the good kings of Judah. He tore down altars that were erected for idols, restored worship in the temple, and began the Passover celebrations which had been absent for about 500 years. It is during the reign of Josiah that Jeremiah began his prophesy. But Josiah died in battle with Egypt and his son Jehoiakim began to worship Egyptian idols. Jeremiah protested this and his life was threatened. Jeremiah became famous as some of his prophecies came true during his lifetime. The nation was in political danger due to spiritual demise. This is a very important biblical lesson for contemporary society. The nation was in danger due to its spiritual demise.

The Scripture is repeated from Jeremiah 23:5-6 which indicates how important the Scripture is. The Scripture provided encouragement to the Jewish nation that was discouraged because they thought that God had rejected them. The Scripture has been very popular prophecy throughout history. The Lord will fulfill a promise to Israel and Judah that they will be able to continue as a Jewish state with a king in the line of David and a priesthood of the tribe of Levi. The Lord will raise up a righteous branch, will execute justice and righteousness, save Judah and Jerusalem, and restore the monarchy. That is a prophecy that the people liked and remembered. However, it was misinterpreted because humans prefer to interpret God's will according to their own will. The popular misinterpretation was that God was going to send to them a mighty warrior king like King David.

I think the main thing is to see how God responds to wide spread apostasy and realize how the patterns repeat due to our fallen human nature. Empires rise and fall with no empire, in all of history, holding onto top status forever. When Assyria was the dominant and controlling empire, they destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel. They

fared worse than Judah and fell first because all of their kings were bad and rejected God. Judah fared better than Israel because some of the kings honored God. But throughout their history people ignored the prophets, failed to obey God, and continued in apostasy. As Assyria declined in power Babylon gained in power, conquered Judah, and laid siege on Jerusalem.

Prophecy has a distinctive pattern. Pronouncement is a matter of making sure people are aware of their sins. A call to repent provides people an opportunity to get right with God. There is a warning of caution against the consequences of transgression. When the various forms of punishment occur, there is a promise of redemption. This part of Jeremiah is good news for the people. There is a promise of redemption, a promise of a continued Jewish state, a Davidic king, and Levitical priesthood. The new covenant is anticipated as it is God's intent and God does not break covenant. Times of darkness are a time of understanding ourselves and getting right with God. It is God's plan all along to do whatever is necessary for the people to get right with God. We should all come to know the righteousness of the Lord and strive to live our lives according to God's righteousness and live a life of loyalty in love.

It is the failure of leadership to render justice and righteousness. It is God's intention to provide leaders that will be advocates for the Lord's righteousness. The prophecy of healing and restoration comes from God. The prophets reveal the Lord's purpose by calling people to live by the instructions that they have received. We should study the word of God carefully. God's blessing is in store for God's people. History is a movement of deliverance from exile to the divine promises of God through Jeremiah. A world of restoration is a world of righteousness, love, and justice, in proper character with God's creation.