

# Jehovah Tsidkenu – Jehovah Our Righteousness

Jer 23:6

1. It is important to understand the historical background for this name of God
2. The Southern Kingdom (Judah) was tottering near collapse
  - a. 100 yrs earlier the Northern Kingdom had been taken into captivity
  - b. Judah stood in the same predicament, because they too had become disobedient
  - c. Judah had learned little from watching the spiritual and physical collapse of the Northern Kingdom
  - d. It is a sad fact that few of us seem to take advantage of the lessons that history offers us
3. God's spokesman at this time was a prophet named Jeremiah
  - a. His ministry began during the reign of Josiah, one of the greatest kings in OT
  - b. The spiritual and moral level of the land was related to the spiritual level of the king
  - c. In the books of Kings and Chronicles, at the end of each king's reign one of two phrases is used to describe the reign of that king
    1. The king did that which was right in the sight of the Lord
    2. The king did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord
  - d. The moral climate and stability of a nation will be determined to some extent by that of its leader
  - e. It is a sad thing that our nation would debate whether character matters when it comes to leadership
  - f. Character should be a high priority because character ultimately determines action
4. Conditions in Judah had deteriorated to such an extent that God declared the end of the kingdom of Judah - [2Ki 23:26-27](#)

**26** Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal. **27** And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.

  - a. Couldn't the people of Judah see what would happen if they forsook God?
  - b. Couldn't they see what happened to Israel when it left God?"
  - c. Why are we failing to see the obvious moral decline in our country and the resulting corruption and lawlessness?
  - d. I must carefully guard against spiritual decline in my own life that will lead to disobedience

## I. King Zedekiah Inquired of Jeremiah

### A. The Question Asked – Jer 21:2

**2** Inquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us.

## **B. The Answer Given – vs 4-5**

**4** Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that *are* in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and *against* the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and I will assemble them into the midst of this city. **5** And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.

1. The news was not good
2. Babylon would be used of God as His instrument of judgment
3. Those who survive will be taken captive – Jer 21:6-7

**6** And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. **7** And afterward, saith the LORD, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

- a) *Those who survived the battle and the pestilence would be delivered to Nebuchadnezzar*
- b) *God, in his mercy, is compassionate and longsuffering and he called for the repentance of Judah*
- c) *If Zedekiah would repent and turn back to God then he would continue to sit on the throne of David*
- d) *If Zedekiah refused to repent then his house would become a desolation*
- e) *Zedekiah refused to obey the warning of the prophet*

## **C. Jeremiah Was Imprisoned – Jer 32:1-5**

**1** The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which *was* the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. **2** For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which *was* in the king of Judah's house. **3** For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; **4** And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes; **5** And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the LORD: though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper?

1. Jeremiah was imprisoned because the king did not want to hear the prophet's words of judgment
2. Jeremiah told Zedekiah that he would see Nebuchadnezzar face to face as a captive

## II. God's Message of Encouragement

### A. Judah Would Be Regathered – Jer 23:1-4

**1** Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. **2** Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. **3** And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. **4** And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

1. Jeremiah begins his message of encouragement with an indictment against the shepherds who destroyed and scattered the flock of Israel
2. God had promised to establish David's kingdom and his throne forever.
  - a) *Would not a captivity in Babylon mean the defeat of God's own purpose?*
  - b) *But God promised that Judah would return from captivity and be restored*
  - c) *God even promised that he would raise up from the line of David a righteous branch, a king who would reign and bring judgment and justice to the earth*

### B. God Would Raise Up a Good Shepherd – Jer 23:5-6

**5** 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. **6** In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

1. God would regather His people and bless them
2. The Lord then promised that he would gather the remnant and raise up good shepherds over them
3. Good news is announced that God would raise up a righteous branch to reign as king
4. He would be called "The Lord our righteousness" - Jehovah Tsidkenu

## III. The Implications of Jehovah Tsidkenu

### A. God Is Just and Righteous

1. **De 32:4** *He is* the Rock, his work *is* perfect: for all his ways *are* judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just [tsedek] and right *is* he.
2. **Ps 97:2** Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: righteousness [tsedek] and judgment *are* the habitation of his throne.
3. **Ps 119:142** Thy righteousness [tsedek] *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* the truth.
4. **Ps 119:144** The righteousness [tsedek] of thy testimonies *is* everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.
5. **Ps 129:4** The LORD *is* righteous [tsedek] : he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.
6. **Isa 45:21** Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from that time? *have* not I the LORD? and *there is* no God else beside me; a just [tsedek] God and a Saviour; *there is* none beside me.

## **B. God's People Were to Be Just**

1. Just Weights and Measures – Lev 19:35-36

**35** Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. **36** Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I *am* the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.

a) *God demanded that His people use just weights and measures*

b) *God is just -He wanted His people to reflect His character in all dealings*

2. The use of just weights and measures was one of the conditions of abiding in the promised land - Deut 25:15-16

**15** But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. **16** For all that do such things, *and* all that do unrighteously, *are* an abomination unto the LORD thy God.

3. As God's people we are to reflect righteousness

a) *As Christians, we bear the name of Christ*

b) *Our lives must reflect the nature of the One who is Lord*

c) *Many non-Christians make their assessment of Christianity by the evidence they see in our lives*

d) *We must live in light of the fact that God is Jehovah Tsidkenu*

## **C. God Sets the Standards of Righteousness**

1. Since God is Jehovah Tsidkenu - He determines what is right and wrong

2. Yes - there are absolutes – God sets the standards of righteousness

3. We often hear our politicians say, "I don't believe that a certain action is right, but who am I to say what is right or wrong?"

4. He is righteous and as Creator He established the world with moral standards which reflected His own nature

5. A man was witnessing on an airliner. In the course of the conversation the seatmate asked how anyone could determine what was right or wrong. The man who was witnessing said that there are only three options when it comes to deciding what is right and wrong

a) *First - we could allow everyone to decide individually what is right and wrong. Of course this would lead to chaos and it would be unworkable.*

b) *Second - We could vote democratically on moral values and follow the majority rule*

- (1) The man who asked the question about right and wrong said that this seemed fair. It could explain why some things that were once wrong are now considered ok

- (2) The witnessing man explained that this option was also flawed and he used this illustration. "Suppose you went to the restroom and while you were gone from your seat the captain announced that the plane was 160 pounds over weight. While you were in the bathroom everyone voted and decided to throw you out of the plane to solve the problem." The man responded that he thought that would be unfair. But everyone voted and they were just following the will of the majority. But it would not be fair or moral.

c) *Third - The reason we have words like "fair" and "moral" is because God is Jehovah Tsidkenu*

- (1) God is a righteous God and He is fair and moral

- (2) Our morals are derived from the God who is righteous and he created the universe to reflect his nature

## IV. Jehovah – Tsidkenu is Fulfilled in Christ

### A. God Cannot Overlook Man's Unrighteousness

1. When we realize the significance of the name Jehovah Tsidkenu we must ask "How can a sinful person stand in the presence of a righteous God?"
2. God cannot just overlook man's unrighteousness - He wouldn't be righteous if He did that
3. Isaiah's vision of a holy God – Isa 6
  - a) *The seraphims cried "Holy, holy, holy"*
  - b) *Not "Love, love, love"*
  - c) *God was high and lifted up*
  - d) *Then Isaiah saw himself – "Woe is me..."*
4. At one time Saul of Tarsus was trusting in his own accomplishments – Phil 3  
**5** Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; **6** Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.
5. He laid those accomplishments aside and treated them as rubbish  
**7** But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. **8** Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,
6. Paul had something better - Phil 3:9  
**9** And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:
7. Since God is the standard of righteousness - when we look at our own righteousness, it is like filthy rags
  - a) *"I'm better than most people in your church" someone may say.*
  - b) *"That might be true, but God is the standard not other people."*

### B. Imputed Righteousness

1. We are to be as righteous as God – Matt 5:48  
**48** Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.
2. We are to be as holy as God – 1Pet 1:15  
**15** But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; **16** Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.
  - a) *This standard is impossible*
  - b) *Jesus is the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy - he is the holy branch raised up from the root of David*
  - c) *We're not perfect, but our Savior is – He is our righteousness*
    - (1) **2Co 5:21** For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.
    - (2) **1Co 1:30** But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Conclusion:

1. Jehovah Tsidkenu - wonderful name!
  - a. It reveals to us the method and measure of our acceptance before God
  - b. We are cleansed in the blood of the Lamb
  - c. We are clothed with the white robe of righteousness from Him who is Jehovah Tsidkenu
2. Jehovah Tsidkenu song

I once was a stranger to grace and to God,  
I knew not my danger, and felt not my load;  
Though friends spoke in rapture of Christ on the tree  
Jehovah Tsidkenu was nothing to me

When free grace awoke me, but light from on high,  
Then legal fears shook me, I trembled to die:  
No refuge, no safety, in self I could see;  
Jehovah Tsidkenu my Savior must be.

My terrors all vanished before the sweet name;  
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came  
To drink of the fountain, life-giving and free:  
Jehovah Tsidkenu is all things to me.