

Jer. 23:5-8 (BCF 22-23) "Done for Us"

For the Children: Sadly, students sometimes cheat. For example, one might get a parent to do a maths problem for them, part of their homework that they find difficult. Then they come along to school the next day and pretend that they did it themselves. A humble student will admit that he needs help, that he is having trouble with some of his work. When it comes to the obedience and the good works God sets us to do, we should be humble in admitting that we are having trouble. That trouble is called "sin." We need help. The Lord Jesus does help us, He covers our sins, and does the good works for us. But if we start to think we are doing part of that ourselves, we are cheating. **Questions:** When does God declare us to be forgiven and righteous? How can He call sinful people "perfect"? How should we respond to being called "perfect"?

Introduction:

First Point: Who's Coming?

- 1) Behold, Days are Coming: The repeated expression, "Behold, days are coming" (vss. 5,7) call on us to pay careful attention to the coming of Christ. For He is the One who satisfies God's justice and holiness, by paying our debts to God. Here, we focus on how His work is also the basis of God's declaration that we are now debt-free.
- 2) The Righteous Branch: David's "family tree," his royal line, appeared to have been cut back to a weak and ungodly "stump" in Jeremiah's time. But a shoot was still to spring up from this stump, and grow into a branching tree. See Is. 4:2, 11:1, Zech. 3:8, 6:12. The Lord Jesus, that Branch, would be completely righteous – unlike the kings of Judah. His righteousness is also emphasized in vss. 5b and 6.
- 3) The Wise King: The Messiah would be filled with Wisdom – He is the Wisdom of God. He always showed the fear of the Lord that is the beginning of Wisdom, always discerned His Father's will and acted on it.
- 4) The Lord Our Righteousness: The Messiah would be called, "The Lord our righteousness" – the meaning of King Zedekiah's name, but with the words in reverse order. The truly righteous Messianic King would be righteous in our place – a Substitute Righteous Man.

Second Point: What Will He Bring?

- 1) Doing Justice and Righteousness: Christ's doing of justice and righteousness meant more than making sure His subjects treated each other justly and behaved well; it means more than that He simply provided a good example of justice and righteousness. It involved Him paying the just penalty of the law, which our sins deserved; and doing perfectly all the righteous deeds His Father required of us, All His merits in these works are "imputed" to sinners when we have faith in Him (i.e., His merits are counted as ours).
- 2) Bringing Salvation: The result of this work is the salvation of "Judah" – the New Israel. "Salvation" includes the declaration by God that our sins are covered and we are regarded as righteous in His sight (justification); that we are regarded as sons of God (adoption); along with the guarantee that our sins will not be held against us on the last day, but we will enjoy eternal blessedness in His Presence..
- 3) Return from Exile: In vss. 7-8, Jeremiah describes a New Exodus that Christ will bring. Formerly, God brought His people up from Egypt to Canaan. But eventually He will bring them all in to the New Heavens and New Earth, from wherever they have been scattered throughout the world. We do not do this ourselves. God does it through His Son. The same is true with justification! This humbles us, so that we give all the glory to Him, and take no credit for ourselves.

Conclusion: