

## COMMENTARY - Believers Church Bible Commentary, Jeremiah

Elmer A. Martens. *Jeremiah* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986),

### **Jer. 33: 14-16**

<sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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.'

**JUSTICE** means honorable action which preserves well-being (shalom) all around, especially an action which sets right a disturbed situation. While it is linked with ruler's responsibilities and refers therefore to God and to king, its practice is required of God's people generally. God is one who proceeds in justice (Gen. 16:5; Jer. 11:20). He loves justice (Ps. 37:28). Justice, along with righteousness is the foundation of God's throne (Ps. 89:14). Kings are repeatedly called to rule justly, i.e., they care for those whose rights are overlooked and who are easily exploited (Jer 21:12). <sup>1</sup>

God's people are to do justice. This means they should show concern for the oppressed. Doing justice means coming to the defense of those who are helpless, victims of mistreatment; strangers, orphans, widows. It refers to fair dealings in everyday social life, including the proper protocol in all relationships: king/citizen, employer/employee, parent/child, and so on.

The noun "justice" (mishpat) occurs 422 times in the Old Testament, 32 of which are in Jeremiah (e.g., 4:2; 5:1; 7:5; 9:24; 33:15; <sup>2</sup>

Justice, a pivotal word in the Old Testament, especially for the prophets, means to act honorably, in accordance with the demands of the relationship. Righteousness, used frequently in parallel with justice and often as a synonym, differs in that it refers to both the action and the motive, and so means "uprightness," "integrity." God calls for rulers to govern with honor and sensitivity, with uprightness and integrity, is embedded in the law (Deut. 17:18-20), stressed in Israel's poetry (Ps. 72:1-3), and triumphed by the prophets (Micah 3:1-4). <sup>3</sup>

Justice goes beyond being fair in legal decisions. It deals with helping those who are victims of oppression, people cheated from their land or wages by large landowners or employers. It also means not taking advantage of people who are easily exploited or mistreated; aliens orphans, and widows (Jer. 22: 3; cf. Ex. 22:21-26; Lev. 19:33-34; Deut.10: 18-19). <sup>4</sup>

Our Jeremiah 33 text is talking about the reinstatement of leaders. The gracious promise is that justice-bringing leadership will be reinstated. The name The Lord Our Righteousness is assigned to the future king in 23:6. God's covenant with King David is reiterated here. <sup>5</sup>

### **Oppression**

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<sup>1</sup> Elmer A. Martens. *Jeremiah* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986), 299.

<sup>2</sup> Elmer A. Martens. *Jeremiah* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986), 299-300.

<sup>3</sup> Elmer A. Martens. *Jeremiah* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986), 145-146.

<sup>4</sup> Elmer A. Martens. *Jeremiah* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986), 146.

<sup>5</sup> Elmer A. Martens. *Jeremiah* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986), 206/

