

The Oologah Informer

Nov 26th, 2017

Thoughts from the Preacher
“Counting Blessings”

“When Counting Blessings the Christian Should be Humbled”

Weekly Article

Jehovah’s Righteous Branch
By Wayne Jackson

The prophet Jeremiah was a prisoner of his own people, confined to “the court of the guard” in the city of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 33:1). He had agitated the Hebrews by his prophecies of the coming Babylonian invasion, and the ravaging of the city of Jerusalem.

The day would come, he declared, when the city will be filled with the dead bodies of the people of Israel on account of their wickedness. The Chaldeans would be the instruments of administering divine wrath. The Israelites would be the victims, because Jehovah had turned his back on this evil place (vv. 4-5).

But at a distant time, a glorious day would dawn. There would be an opportunity to return from the “captivity” for both Judah and Israel (note the dual reference). At that time, health, cure, and cleansing would be available; in fact, there would be praise and glory before all the nations of the earth.

While this prophecy contains an initial reference to the physical return of many of the Jews from captivity, that event by no means exhausts the prophetic emphasis; it reaches far beyond that — to the Messianic age and the blessings that would be available to “all the nations of the earth” (v. 9). As Laetsch observes: “[A]ll nations shall hear of His goodness and stand in reverent awe and astonishment at this marvelous manifestation of the omnipotent grace of Jehovah” (p. 268).

It is out of this background that a marvelous prophecy takes its rise. Jeremiah 33:14-18 reads as follows.

“Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will perform that good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby she shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. For thus says Jehovah: David shall never lack a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites lack a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.”

There are several components within this segment of the prophet’s message that are particularly noteworthy. Compare with this text Jeremiah 23:5-6; there are many similarities, yet some significant, complementary differences.

Address
13800 S. 4080 Rd on Hwy
169 South of Oologah
P.O. Box 527 Oologah, OK
74053 (918) 443-2025

www.oologahcofc.org
oologahcofc@oologahcofc.org

facebook.com/oologahchurchofchrist
facebook.com/biblewaymedia.org
Instagram.com/biblewaymedia

On iTunes, search “oologah church of Christ” in the podcast section

Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

Old Testament Characters – Abigail
(1 Sam 25:1-3)

PM Sermon

Guest Speaker: Chuck Northrop

Sunday AM Bible Class:

Old Testament characters – D. Jackson

Wednesday Bible Class:

5th Wednesday Singing

In SEARCH of the Lord’s Way

On Channel 6-2 Sundays @ 7:30 am

The Truth in Love

on Channel 19 Sundays @ 8am

The Gospel of Christ TV Program

on Saturday @ 7:30am on Channel 53

Media & Podcast network

Visit www.biblewaymedia.org for more info.

The Oologah church of Christ only uses the **KJV, NKJV or ASV** translation of the Bible in classes & sermons.

That good word

The Lord promises that he will “perform that good word” which he spoke regarding Israel and Judah. While “that good word” could refer to several texts regarding “Israel and Judah,” one should especially consider Jeremiah 31:31-34, and its application in the New Testament to the Christian regime (Hebrews 8:8ff).

Further, the expression “the days [to] come” (14a), employed 16 times in this book, is the equivalent of “in those days” (15a), which are the days of the “Branch,” i.e., Christ. The prophecy thus looks far beyond a return from Babylon to the Messianic age.

The Branch is Jesus

The “Branch” clearly is a prophetic reference to Jesus (cf. Isaiah 4:2; 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12). The traits of the “Branch” in the foregoing passages find their fulfillment only in the Messiah. For instance, this illustrious one is to come “out of the stock of Jesse” (Isaiah 11:1; i.e., he will be a descendant of David; cf. 2 Samuel 7:12-13).

He will be endowed with the Holy Spirit; he is to possess wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and reverence for Jehovah. He will not judge impartially but in righteousness. He will decide fairly, but ultimately he will deal with the wicked (Isaiah 11:1-5). The other texts enumerated above add to this list of marvelous attributes.

Jehovah our righteousness

He brings salvation to spiritual “Judah and Jerusalem” (33:16; cf. 23:6). It is most interesting that this holy Person is called “Jehovah our righteousness” in Jeremiah’s previous text (23:6b), whereas in the current passage the new “Jerusalem” is referred to as “Jehovah our righteousness” (33:16b). Note the different pronouns, “he,” the Branch (in the former text), “she,” Jerusalem, (in the latter).

There is no conflict. The “Branch” himself is so designated due to his nature as “God,” and because of his intrinsic “righteousness” (cf. John 1:1; Hebrews 1:8; Acts 7:52; 22:14).

In another sense, however, the people of God are to be called “Jehovah our righteousness.” How is that? In the sense that the Lord’s “name” becomes associated with his people (Isaiah 43:7; Revelation 3:12; 22:4). And through his “gospel” of “righteousness” (Romans 1:16), the plan for man’s justification has been provided by means of the “Branch’s” atoning death (Romans 3:25-26). Christians, therefore, are accounted as righteous, hence in this accommodative sense, they become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:3-4).

Branch shall occupy the throne

Jeremiah’s prophetic “Branch” shall occupy the “throne of David” permanently, never to be replaced by another man (33:17). Jesus fulfilled this prophecy (2 Samuel 7:13; Daniel 7:13-14; Luke 1:32-33) in the administration he assumed when he ascended to the right hand of his Father (Acts 2:30ff; Ephesians 1:20-23).

Incidentally, this cannot refer to an alleged “millennial” reign of Christ, as some theologians contend (Dyer, p. 1176), for according to that theory, the duration of the Lord’s reign is limited to 1,000 years.

No lack of priests

Finally, the prophet declares that under the new regime of the Messianic dispensation there will be no lack of priests to offer sacrifices before the Lord. This obviously cannot refer to the literal Levitical system of animal sacrifices, which came to an end at the cross (Ephesians 2:14-18).

The termination of that sacrificial system was forever abolished by the death of Christ, as reflected in the perfect tense form of the verb “hath taken away” in Colossians 2:14 (see Robertson, p. 494). The temporary nature of the Levitical priesthood could not be made plainer than that set forth by the author of Hebrews (see chapters 7-10). As one scholar noted:

“The Levitical priesthood passed away (Heb. 7:11), but Christ was made a Priest after the order of Melchizedek; and by virtue of their union with Him, His people become a holy priesthood (Heb. 10:19-22), offering, not the burnt-offerings and meat offerings which were figures of the true, but the spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving (1 Pet. 2:5), the sacrifices of body, soul, and spirit, which alone was acceptable to God (Rom. 12:1)” (Plumptre, p. 117).

Conclusion

This prophecy that issued from Jeremiah centuries before the birth of Christ is one of the truly beautiful Messianic previews adorning the literature of the Old Testament.