

A Righteous Branch

Anticipating the Messiah at Christmas

Hope amid Desolation

The First Week of Advent | December 1, 2024
Jeremiah 33:10-18 | Pastor Tyler Williams

Hope amid Desolation

Desolation during the ministry of the prophet Jeremiah (627-582 BCE)



- Judah occupied and ultimately defeated.
- Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians (587 BCE).

Hope amid Desolation

In such a time of desolation... God gave Jeremiah a message of hope.

“See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant” (1:10).

Hope amid Desolation

The "Book of Hope" (Jeremiah 30-33)

Oracles of hope about future restoration (30)

The promise of the New Covenant (31)



Jeremiah's symbolic purchase of land (32)

Promises of a coming Messiah (33)

Hope amid Desolation

"The days are surely coming, says Yahweh, when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In 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. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'Yahweh is our righteousness'" (Jer 33:14-16, NRSVue).

The Good Promise

"I will fulfill the good promise..." (33:14).

- "Good word" (הדבר הטוב) – looks back to Yahweh's promise concerning David to "establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2Sam 7:13).
- The hope for the promised Messiah was built upon the failure of the Davidic dynasty.

A Righteous Branch

"... I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David..." (33:15a).

- "Branch" (צמח tsemach) – allusion to the Davidic Messiah (roots in Isa 11:1; Zech 3:8; 6:12).
- "Righteous" (צדקה ts^edakah) – right, or even "legitimate" (indirect criticism of Zedekiah).

Righteousness & Justice

"...he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land" (33:15b).

- Justice (משפט mishpat) & righteousness (צדקה ts^edakah) – the qualities of God's ideal king (2Sam 8:15; 1Kings 10:9; Ezek 45:9; Amos 5:24).

Yahweh is our Righteousness

"And this is the name by which it will be called: 'Yahweh is our righteousness'" (33:16).

- "Yahweh is our righteousness" (יהוה צדקנו YHWH tsid^ekenu) – Jerusalem named after the source of its righteousness.
- Jesus is our righteousness (Rom 3:22; 2Cor 5:21).

What is Hope?

Not bought in a store (or from Amazon).

Not wishful thinking or mere optimism.

But **hope** that transcends one's circumstances...

and grounded in the purposes and promises of a faithful God.

What is Hope?

"Advent is a season of hope, but hope is not to be confused with privilege, peppiness, or a denial of just how broken things really are. We cannot embrace true hope without also acknowledging the pain and sinfulness of the world and of our own lives. Hope... is not a trite bliss formed through our own effort, wealth, or success" (Tish Harrison Warren, Advent: The Season of Hope, 30).

A Promise-Grounded Hope

A conviction about the ultimate outcome of history, which is not in jeopardy:

Christ has died. Christ has risen.

Christ will come again.

A Promise-Grounded Hope

"Holy Spirit, Grant me the **faith** that saves me from despair and vice. Grant me the **love** for God and others that purges all hate and bitterness. Grant me the **hope** that frees me from fear and despondency."

