

***God Will Judge Evil Leaders***  
***International Bible Lesson***  
***Jeremiah 23:1-6; 33:14-18***  
**Sunday, August 19, 2012**  
**L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.**

*“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” (Jeremiah 23:5—KJV).*

*“The LORD says, ‘The time is coming when I will choose as king a righteous descendant of David. That king will rule wisely and do what is right and just throughout the land” (Jeremiah 23:5—GNB).*

*“The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land” (Jeremiah 23:5—NRSV).*

God inspired Jeremiah to warn the false religious and political leaders of His people that He was going to bring deep distress upon them. By their evil doings and teachings, these spurious shepherds destroyed and scattered God's sheep. Therefore, God promised His people that He would deal justly with these corrupt leaders and then “raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king.”

As the prophets foretold, Jesus the Messiah came as a descendant of King David. Furthermore, Jesus dealt wisely, justly, and righteously as a shepherd and teacher of God's people. Jesus perfectly fulfilled the promises that God made through His prophets; therefore, the people of

God wanted to make Jesus their king. However, when false shepherds arranged for Jesus' crucifixion, God fulfilled some of His other promises. For example, God promised that the Messiah would give His life as a perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins: "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Jesus lived without sin and suffered a sacrificial death so God could uphold His just laws and mercifully forgive all who forsake their sins and come to faith in Jesus. Through the perfect life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah, God expressed His love for His sheep. Jesus sits at the right hand of God, and God's people await Jesus' return, when He will "execute justice and righteousness in the land."

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# **Thinking Further**

1. In what ways can failure or refusal to do your duty lead to harming others materially and spiritually.
  2. How can spending time in exile sometimes help God's people?
  3. Why was God's promise through Jeremiah, that their exile would not last forever, important for God to make to His people?

4. Read Jeremiah 23:4 again. What three results will God's people experience when they are led by good shepherds? How did Jesus fulfill this promise?

5. Why can we trust God to keep all of His promises and prophecies?

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