

# 06 A RIGHTEOUS BRANCH

**KEY TEXT: JEREMIAH 23:1-12**

## CENTRAL truth

We need good and righteous leaders, but live in a world of imperfect people. There are some wonderful examples of leadership in the Bible, throughout history, and even today—but ultimately, our world needs a perfect leader to lead us into what God says is right and good. In today’s session, Jeremiah promised that a leader over Israel and Judah would be the perfect leader and shepherd they needed. That prophecy has been fulfilled in the coming of the Son of David: **Jesus is the perfect King we need.**

## key question

**How do verses 5-6 describe the kind of leader Judah needed? How does Jesus match this description?**

Jeremiah prophesied a king who would be known as “The LORD Is Our Righteousness” (v. 6). Jesus is righteous, which means He only thinks, speaks, and does what is right. Even more amazing, He can teach us—imperfect, sinful people—to live for what’s right. His Holy Spirit comes to live within us and teaches us to think, speak, and do what is right like Jesus. No other ruler can lead us from within.

## keep in mind

- Shepherds are a master metaphor for leadership in the Bible. Not only does the Bible compare Old and New Testament leaders to shepherds, God calls Himself a shepherd. Students may not have a lot of in-person experience with sheep or shepherds, so make sure to spend time to help them visualize the comparison between a good leader and a good shepherd.
- Emphasize that Judah was trying to worship idols and God as well. The surrounding peoples offered an all-you-can-eat buffet approach to religion that isn’t very different from our culture today. Help students to understand the radical and exclusive nature of our commitment to serve Jesus.

## application

**What are some examples of idols that students today might be tempted to follow? How can we avoid that temptation?**

## the win

**FOR THE STUDENT:** It’s important for students to understand that we don’t become righteous in order to follow Jesus. It’s actually the opposite: we come to Jesus as unrighteous people, and the Father gives us Christ’s righteousness. From within, the Holy Spirit empowers and guides us to think, say, and do what God says is right. We learn to live rightly from the inside out.

**FOR THE LEADER:** Talk about the ways Jesus changed your perspective on what is right and worth living for. How has His Spirit within you changed your life?

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