

## CONNECT THE DOTS

-Ryan Parsons-

I can remember the old tablets you could buy at the drugstore that had the connect-the-dots puzzles in them. It was always fascinating how, if you followed the directions, a page of dots could be transformed into the coolest picture. Reading the Bible can sometimes feel like a connect-the-dots puzzle. The more we read the words, opening our hearts to the message, the dots begin to connect. Studying and meditating on those words further bring what was at first jumbled into sharp focus. The result is something beyond cool. It is awesome!

Back in Jeremiah's day, the people were making some very poor choices. As a result, God's judgement and punishment were going to fall upon them. Despite all of this, he left them with a promise; something to put their hope in. However, it wouldn't come to fulfillment for hundreds of years. These were the dots that God's people needed to begin connecting. Like many other prophecies, they weren't the entire picture. Instead, they directed the people to "Start Here."

### **Jeremiah 23:5-6**

5 "Behold, the days are coming, declares 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. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

Sounds like a good promise, doesn't it? These are not fluff or empty words. If you turn to your New Testament and begin reading, you will discover how God connects the dots. The picture begins to come into focus, and we realize that the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy and promise are in Jesus Christ.

### **2 Corinthians 5:21**

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### **Romans 3:21-26**

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Do you see it? Jeremiah's words, written hundreds of years before, are coming to life. As we connect the last dots and step back to look at the picture, we can see a wise, just, and righteous King who secures and saves his people. The picture title is "The Lord is our Righteousness," and it is awesome! Keep studying.