

YHWH Tsid'Ke-nu / Tsidkenu

יְהוָה צְדָק

YHWH Our Righteousness

Pronounced Yä-wá' T-sid'-kay'-noo, the compound name appears only twice in the Old Testament, both times in Jeremiah:

- ⁵ "The days are coming," declares the LORD (YHWH), "when I will raise up for David a righteous (tsaddiyq) Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right (tsadaq) in the land.
- ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD (YHWH) Our Righteous Savior. (Tsid'Ke-nu)."
(Jeremiah 23:5-6 *parenthetical text added*)
- ¹⁵ "In those days and at that time I will make a righteous (tsaddiyq) Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right (tsadaq) in the land.
- ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD (YHWH) Our Righteous Savior (Tsid'Ke-nu)."
(Jeremiah 33:15-16 *parenthetical text added*)

Etymology

There are three Hebrew words that derive from the same root "tsadaq" (tsâdaq) ("צְדָק") that are transliterated "**righteous**" or "**righteousness**", depending on the situation or object of the descriptor. "Tsâdaq" means to "**be/make right**" or "**cleanse**" morally and is often used as a verb or adverb in a **causative** sense, as in...

And Absalom would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land!
Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me
and I would see that they **receive** justice (tsadaq)."
(2 Samuel 15:4 *emphasis and parenthetical text added*)

In order to fully discern all that YHWH wants us to know about the use of this word with His name, it is helpful to look at all of the Hebrew words that derive from this one root word. They are:

- "Tsid'ke-nu", which derives from "tsedeq" ("צְדִיק"), meaning the "**right**", "**moral**", or "**just**". It refers primarily to moral or legal integrity and honesty and is the one that is represented as "**righteousness**" in the compound name in most Bibles and "**righteous Savior**" in the NIV. It is also transliterated as "**fair**", "**accurate**", and "**honest**" in some Bible translations, as in...

"Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality
to the poor or favoritism to the great,
but judge your neighbor **fairly** (tsedeq).
(Leviticus 19:15 *emphasis and parenthetical text added*)



- "*Tsedaqah*" (tsedâqâh) ("צֶדֶקָה"), which means "**rightness**", "**uprightness**", "**justice**", or "**virtue**", is often transliterated "**righteousness**" as it refers to an internal subjective work on the human level, as in...

Sow righteousness (tsedaqah) for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD (YHWH), until he comes and showers his righteousness (tsedeq) on you.
(Hosea 10:12 *parenthetical text added*)

- "*Tsaddiyq*" (tsaddîyq) ("צַדִּיק"), which means "**just**", "**lawful**", or "**righteous**", refers to righteousness from YHWH's perspective, either in defining Himself or in His opinions of us, as in...

For the LORD (YHWH) is righteous (tsaddiyq), he loves justice (tsedek); the upright will see his face.
(Psalm 11:7 *parenthetical text added*)

Regardless of how hard we try or what words we use, mere human language is totally insufficient to enable a complete understanding of the ideas of righteousness and justification contained in the word "tsid'ke-nu". Only when we study it and all its roots in the context of YHWH's character as the "**Perfectly Righteous One**" can we begin to see it clearly.

What is the significance of Jeremiah's use of the compound name?

Following the death of Solomon, GOD divided the 12 tribes of Israel into two kingdoms: the ten northern tribes under one rule as Israel and the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and most of Levi under Davidic rule as Judah. This was YHWH's judgment against the house of David for Solomon's grievous sin of idolatry.

Rather than turning back to the one true GOD, Judah continued to reject Him and instead trusted in their idols. In sharp contrast to YHWH's laws (Deuteronomy 16:18), the people of Judah further added to their sin by perverting righteous judgment and ordaining unrighteous decrees, as in...

who **acquit** the guilty for a bribe,
but **deny justice** (tsedaqah) to the innocent (tsaddiyq).
(Isaiah 5:23 *emphasis and parenthetical text added*)

- ¹ Woe to those who make **unjust** laws, to those who issue **oppressive** decrees,
- ² to **deprive** the poor of their rights and **withhold justice** from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and **robbing** the fatherless.

(Isaiah 10:1-2 *emphasis added*)

The time for Judah's punishment by exile was drawing near. Since their actions indicated that they despised YHWH's provision of redemption as **YHWH Jireh**, He could not continue to be **YHWH Rapha**, their Healer (Isaiah 1:6); and without the protection of **YHWH Nissi**, their Banner, they were defeated at every turn. Nevertheless, they stubbornly refused to repent and return to **YHWH M'Kaddesh**, their Sanctifier, and they became more corrupt and degenerate. And having forsaken **YHWH Shalom**, their Peace, they were torn by internal dissension and violence, and subjected by outward aggression and conquest.

It is in these contexts, therefore, that YHWH pronounced judgment against Judah and Israel. At the same time, however, through the Prophet Jeremiah, He promised that a time was coming when He would save Judah once again and execute justice and righteousness in the land through the "**Righteous Branch**". Of course, we know this "Righteous Branch" to be none other than Y'shua haMashiach (Jesus the Christ).

Where else are the root words used in Scripture?

The words "tsedek", "tsadaq", "tsedaqah", and "tsaddiyq" appear more than 500 times in Scripture in reference to obligations and relationships with one another and with YHWH.

This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous (tsaddiyq) man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God (Elohim).
(Genesis 6:9 *parenthetical text added*)

Abram believed the LORD (YHWH),
and he credited it to him as righteousness (tsedaqah).
(Genesis 15:6 *parenthetical text added*)

The LORD (YHWH) said, "If I find fifty righteous (tsaddiyq) people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake."
(Genesis 18:26 *parenthetical text added*)

Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. "This time I have sinned," he said to them. "The LORD (YHWH) is in the right (tsaddiyq), and I and my people are in the wrong."
(Exodus 9:27 *parenthetical text added*)

³⁵ "Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity.

³⁶ Use honest (tsedek) scales and honest (tsedek) weights, an honest (tsedek) ephah and an honest (tsedek) hin." I am the LORD (YHWH) your God (Elohim), who brought you out of Egypt.
(Leviticus 19:35-36 *parenthetical text added*)

And I charged your judges at that time, "Hear the disputes between your people and judge fairly (tsedek), whether the case is between two Israelites or between an Israelite and a foreigner residing among you.
(Deuteronomy 1:16 *parenthetical text added*)

When people have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting (tsadaq) the innocent (tsaddiyq) and condemning the guilty.
(Deuteronomy 25:1 *parenthetical text added*)

"The LORD (YHWH) has dealt with me according to my righteousness (tsedaqah); according to the cleanness of my hands he has rewarded me.
(2 Samuel 22:21 *parenthetical text added*)

I will give thanks to the LORD (YHWH) because of his righteousness (tsedek); I will sing the praises of the name of the LORD (YHWH) Most High (Elyon).
(Psalm 7:17 *parenthetical text added*)



The LORD (YHWH) is righteous (tsaddiyq) in all his ways, and holy in all his works.
(Psalm 145:17 KJV *parenthetical text added*)

Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do
what he commands. Seek righteousness (tsedek), seek humility;
perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger.
(Zephaniah 2:3 *parenthetical text added*)

YHWH is consummate righteousness.

As the eternally self-existent "**I AM**", morally excellent Master and Sovereign Ruler **Adonai**,
and covenant-keeping Almighty **El Shaddai**, YHWH is Himself **perfectly righteous**. That is,
He doesn't "possess" righteousness. Rather, He **is consummate righteousness**.

For the LORD (YHWH) is righteous (tsaddiyq),
he loves justice (tsedaqah); the upright will see his face.
(Psalm 11:7 *parenthetical text added*)

¹⁴² Your righteousness (tsedaqah) is everlasting and your law is true.

¹⁴⁴ Your statutes are always righteous (tsedeq); give me understanding
that I may live.
(Psalm 119:142, 144 *parenthetical text added*)

But the LORD (YHWH) is righteous (tsaddiyq);
he has cut me free from the cords of the wicked.
(Psalm 129:4 *parenthetical text added*)

Declare what is to be, present it—let them take counsel together.
Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past?
Was it not I, the LORD (YHWH)? And there is no God (Elohim) apart
from me, a righteous (tsaddiyq) God (El) and a Savior; there is none but me.
(Isaiah 45:21 *parenthetical text added*)

He always does what is right.

It is His inherent character to **always** do right: His word is true; He fulfills all His promises;
and He always does that which ought to be done. This does not necessarily mean that He
always punishes the guilty, but that He is totally impartial in all His judgments.

He is the Rock, his works are perfect,
and all his ways are just. A faithful God (El)
who does no wrong, upright and just (tsaddiyq) is he.
(Deuteronomy 32:4 *parenthetical text added*)

LORD (YHWH), the God (Elohim) of Israel, you are righteous (tsaddiyq)!
We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt,
though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence.
(Ezra 9:15 *parenthetical text added*)

The LORD (YHWH) is gracious and righteous (tsaddiyq);
our God (Elohim) is full of compassion.
(Psalm 116:5 *parenthetical text added*)



The LORD (YHWH) did not hesitate to bring the disaster on us,
 for the LORD (YHWH) our God (Elohim) is righteous (tsaddiyq)
 in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.
 (Daniel 9:14 *parenthetical text added*)

What is the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy?

Jeremiah's prophecy speaks about a time when "Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell in safety." Of course, history tells us that no such state of prosperity and peace has existed since the time of the Babylonian captivity up to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Thus, like Ezekiel's prophecy about "YHWH Shammah"—and certainly all Biblical prophecy yet to be fulfilled—there are conflicting beliefs concerning the fulfillment of this prophecy:

- Orthodox Judaism believes this will be literally fulfilled when the Messiah comes to reign in Jerusalem as the Son of David.
- Other Bible scholars believe this prophecy has a spiritual fulfillment only and has already been fulfilled by Christ's atoning death through which both judgment and righteousness have come to all humankind.
- A third group combines the two interpretations and believes it has both a literal and a spiritual fulfillment — the spiritual already being fulfilled by Jesus Christ, the Righteous Branch, and the literal yet to be fulfilled during the Millennial rule of Christ.

Jesus Christ is the "King and Righteous Branch".

Again, as in the discussion of Ezekiel's prophecy, it's important to consider the whole of Scripture when interpreting prophetic fulfillment. Since Jeremiah's prophecy has not been literally fulfilled since the Babylonian exile around 598 BCE, we must consider whether a **spiritual** aspect has been fulfilled and if there's a literal one yet to come.

As we consider Jesus as the "King and Righteous Branch" spoken of in Jeremiah's prophecy, we look to GOD's Word for confirmation of whether He meets the requirements. In order to see Jesus as the fulfillment of these roles, we must compare the New Testament testimonies with various Messianic prophecies. As the list is rather extensive, the following provides only about one-fourth of all fulfilled prophecies and contains only references without quoted Scripture.

Old Testament Prophecy	Subject	Fulfillment
Genesis 49:10	From the Tribe of Judah	Luke 3:33
Isaiah 9:7	Heir to the Throne of David	Luke 1:32,33
Micah 5:2	Born in Bethlehem	Luke 2:4,5,7
Isaiah 7:14	Born of a Virgin	Matthew 1:22,23 Luke 1, 26,27, 30,31
Psalms 2:7	Declared to be the Son of GOD	Matthew 3:17
Zechariah 9:9	Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem	Mark 11:7,9,11
Isaiah 50:6	Spat on and Struck	Matthew 26:67
Isaiah 53:5	Vicarious Sacrifice	Romans 5:6,8
Psalms 22:17,18	Sneered at and Mocked	Matthew 27:35,36
Psalms 34:20	No Bones Broken	John 19:32,33,36



Zechariah 12:10	His Side Pierced	John 19:34
Psalms 16:10	The Resurrection	Mark 16:6,7
Psalms 45:6,7 Psalms 102:25-27	Anointed and Eternal	Hebrews 1:8-12

A complete list of fulfilled Messianic prophecies and Messianic psalms is available at www.myredeemerlives.com/namesofgod/messianicprophecies.pdf.

Jesus Christ is the only Person who's ever lived who could answer to the character specified in Jeremiah's prophecy. He is a branch through David's seed; He is a totally righteous King; and through His atoning death, both justification and righteousness have come to all human-kind.

Christ makes us righteous.

Jeremiah's prophecy says, "this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD (YHWH) OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Tsid'Ke-nu)." This means that, by implication, Christ is both the author **and** the instrumentation by which we are justified.

- 25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—
- 26 he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be **just** and the **one who justifies** those who have faith in Jesus.
(Romans 3:25-26 *emphasis added*)

In saying that Jesus "justifies" us, it does not mean we're not guilty; rather, it means we are **relieved** from blame or obligation for our sins. Through Christ's atoning sacrifice, we now possess a righteousness—namely, Christ's righteousness—which perfectly and forever **satisfies the law**, thereby making us righteous and acceptable to GOD.

God made him who **had no sin to be sin** for us,
so that **in him** we might **become the righteousness of God**.
(2 Corinthians 5:21 *emphasis added*)

The sole condition on which this righteousness is imputed or credited to the believer is **faith** in or on the Lord Jesus Christ.

For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a **righteousness** that is **by faith** from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."
(Romans 1:17 *emphasis added*)

Oh, the weight of pardoning love!

Most of us think when bad things happen or when we're particularly tested by a difficult trial that GOD is using that to humble us. And certainly, He can and does. But His love goes so much beyond that.

One of the main reasons—if not **the** reason—so many resist the Gospel message is human pride. We tend to glory in our own virtues, even to the point of flaunting them before one another. And if we could, I dare say we would even flaunt them before Almighty GOD. But the Bible reminds us that, when compared to YHWH Tsid'ke-nu's righteousness...



All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like **filthy rags**.
(Isaiah 64:6a *emphasis added*)

The original Hebrew represented by "filthy" is "menstrual". Imagine us flaunting menstrual cloths in GOD's face! And yet, we would if we could . . .

William Nicoll wrote in his *Commentary on Ephesians* in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*:

"We sinners are a proud race, and our pride is oftentimes the worst of our sins. Therefore God humbles us by His compassion. He makes to us a free gift of His righteousness, and excludes every contribution from our store of merit; for if we could supply anything, we should inevitably boast as though all were our own. We must be content to receive mercy, love, grace, kindness—everything, without deserving the least fraction of the immense sum. How it strips our vanity; how it crushes us to the dust—'**the weight of pardoning love!**'"¹ (*emphasis added*)

Meditation

Jesus Christ is YHWH M'Kaddesh, "The GOD Who Makes Us Holy", **and** YHWH Tsid'Ke-nu, "The God Who Makes us Righteous". On the surface, these works of grace might seem like one-and-the-same. They are not. However, they **do** go hand-in-hand—or at least, they should.

As we learned in the study of YHWH M'Kaddesh, GOD's work of sanctification is a lifelong process that requires our participation and releases us from the **power** of sin.

As our YHWH Tsid'Ke-nu, on the other hand, Jesus Christ liberates us from the **guilt** and **penalty** of sin. We are at once and forever justified and made righteous based on faith alone in Christ's work alone.

The most wonderfully exciting part of both titles is that they remind us of our GOD's extravagant love. The Creator and King of the Universe loves us so much that He isn't willing to leave us struggling in our own strength, trying to earn our own righteousness or achieve a state of perfect holiness, both of which are impossible for us to attain. GOD is not only willing, but it "**pleased**" Him to offer the Sacrifice that would set us free.

Oh! Worship Him, Church! See Him as He truly is! Stand in awe of Him. Bow in reverence of Him. YHWH, our Elohim, is **holy** . . . YHWH, our Elohim, is **righteous** . . . YHWH, our Elohim, is **just** . . . YHWH, our Elohim, is **the** GOD, fully deserving of all our praise, adoration, worship, and obedience! When we finally begin to comprehend and acknowledge our holy GOD's perfect holiness and righteousness, we cannot help but acknowledge our own guilt before YHWH Tsid'Ke-nu, the Righteous GOD, as the Prophet Jeremiah did.

²⁰ We acknowledge our wickedness, LORD, and the guilt of our ancestors; we have indeed sinned against you.



²¹ For the sake of your name do not despise us; do not dishonor your glorious throne. Remember your covenant with us and do not break it.
(Jeremiah 14:20-21)

¹ Nicoll, William R. "Commentary on Ephesians 2:7-10". *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/teb/ephesians-2.html> #7, np., 01/2019.

