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President Barack Obama, the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright, and the African American Jeremiadic Tradition

BECAUSE OF HIS COOL, CALM, ostensibly detached speech performances and persona, some folks, especially African Americans of his post-Civil Rights generation, call President Barack Obama “No drama Obama.” Many African Americans of the pre-Civil Rights generation even see him despite his background as representing the awesome fulfillment in their lifetime of the African American messianic tradition. Unlike the charismatic Rev. Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright, Jr., his former pastor and advisor, President Obama was not raised in the bosom of the black church or African American Baptist and Methodist jeremiadic tradition. The son of a black Kenyan father and white Kansan mother, he was raised in a different time, place, and culture by pre-Civil Rights white maternal grandparents in Hawaii. How, then, should we understand the historical and cultural contexts as well as the truth of President Obama’s angry claim that his former pastor’s comments do not accurately portray the perspectives of the black church?

In criticism of the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah’s defensive interview on the Bill Moyers show, didactic keynote address at the NAACP convention, and defiant, signifying speech at the National Press Club, a TV reviewer wrote that President Obama’s former pastor emerged as “a voluble, vain and erudite entertainer, a born televangelist who quotes Ralph Ellison as well as the Bible and mixes highfalutin academic trope with salty street talk” (Stanley A1, 14). Responding finally to the unrelenting criticism and political pressure of Senators Hillary Clinton and John McCain during the presidential campaign, as well as of media critics to denounce his retired pastor for righteously reminding his predominantly black congregation of the wrath and damnation of God to come to America for its alleged if not actual historical sins, President Obama angrily denounced the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah and severed his long, close relationship with him in an April 29, 2008, news conference. “His comments were not only divisive and destructive,” President Obama declared, “but I believe that they end up giving comfort to those who prey on hate,

and I believe that they do not portray accurately the perspective of the black church. . . . They certainly don't portray accurately my values and beliefs" (qtd. in Zeleny and Nagourney A1, 17). While some people may still have questions about the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah's influence on President Obama, it is more enlightening at this time after the election to question the caricature of the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah and to examine the facts about the relationship of his beliefs and values to "the perspective of the black church," which was and is mainly Baptist or Methodist for most African Americans.

GENERATIONAL SHIFTS IN CULTURAL IDENTITY

"At 11:00 on Sunday morning when we stand and sing and Christ has no east or west," as typical black elders of the pre-Civil Rights generation of the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah who were raised with black brothers and sisters in African American Baptist and Methodist churches know, and as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., reminded us in 1963, "we stand at the most segregated hour in this nation. This is tragic. Nobody of honesty can overlook this" (King). Is this one of the probable reasons that so many typical white media journalists and pundits, as well as politicians, reduced the complex identity of the unashamedly black and unapologetically Christian Rev. Dr. Jeremiah to spliced controversial sound bites from his sermons? Quoted repeatedly out of context during the presidential campaign by the news media from sermons he preached in 2001 and 2003, the sensational sound bites, as in yellow journalism, fostered the false impression that he is an unpatriotic, radical black separatist and racist bigot who deserves vilification and crucifixion. Some in the media and in blogs even exacerbated their historical, political, cultural, and rhetorical disingenuousness or ignorance by questioning President Obama's reference to his pre-Civil Rights white grandmother's belief in racial stereotypes and prejudice as that of the typical white person of her generation.

Typical is hardly an esoteric word. Nor is that commonly used adjective as difficult to define as the commonly misused and abused abstract nouns patriotism, separatism, racism, and terrorism. So, what is there about *typical* that ordinary educated folks don't understand? Well, *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* reminds us that *typical* means "combining or exhibiting the essential characteristics of a group." Although academic postmodern theorists and critics like Jean-François Lyotard undermine the traditional grounds for belief in the essential or core principles in master narratives of national identity, unity, community, truth, and reality, readers and listeners do not have to be high-school graduates to know that the media have helped to foster and perpetuate the negative racial stereotypes, myths, and prejudice that constitute some of the fundamental characteristics

of our shared national identity that President Obama seeks to change.

Who, then, is the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah? And how does his dedication, like that of Jeremiah and the other fifteen prophets of the Old Testament, to a social Gospel, and his commitment to an African American sermonic, especially jeremiadic, tradition, like the Reverends Martin Luther King, Jr., Wyatt T. Walker, and Jesse Jackson, contribute to the complexity of his identity as one of the most respected and influential, until recent political attacks, African American ministers in the nation? President Obama's former spiritual advisor and the retired senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ (TUCC), a primarily African American megachurch in Chicago, Illinois, with more than six thousand members, the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah is the Philadelphia son of a Baptist minister, a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy, a graduate of Howard University (BA and MA in English), the University of Chicago Divinity School (MA in Divinity), and the United Theological Seminary (DMin). A highly distinguished national and international preacher and speaker, as well as an accomplished musician and writer, he is the author, editor, or co-editor of more than eight books, many articles, and a vast number of sermons. He also serves on several national committees and boards of directors. His numerous awards include eight honorary doctoral degrees and three presidential commendations. An important demonstration of his and his congregation's dedication to the social Gospel are the more than seventy TUCC ministries that serve the community, including HIV/AIDS, Drug & Alcohol Recovery, Health Advisory, Can-cer-vive, Domestic Violence Advocacy/Care, Housing, and Career Development. These facts suggest that the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah's comments, beliefs, and values are consistent with the tradition and perspective of many urban black American Baptist and Methodist churches.

The commitment of the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah to the African American jeremiadic tradition is more dramatically demonstrated in the complete fiery sermons delivered in TUCC than on the video sound bites by sensationalizing journalists and newscasters. ABC News reporters Brian Ross and Rehab El-Buri, for example, open their March 13, 2008, yellow-journalism column "Obama's Pastor: God Damn America, U.S. to Blame for 9/11" with the sensational, fallacious statement that "Sen. Barack Obama's pastor says blacks should not sing 'God Bless America' but 'God damn America.'" According to these reporters, "The Rev. Jeremiah Wright, Obama's pastor for the last 20 years at the Trinity United Church of Christ on Chicago's south side, has a long history of what even Obama's campaign aides concede is 'inflammatory rhetoric,' including the assertion that the United States brought on the 9/11 attacks with its own 'terrorism.'" Based on an alleged review by ABC News of "dozens of Rev. Wright's sermons," Ross and

El-Buri claim to have “found repeated denunciations of the U.S. based on what he described as his reading of the Gospels and the treatment of black Americans” (Ross and El-Buri).

So let us examine more closely their claims and those of some anti-Rev. Dr. Jeremiah bloggers. Even though many people will express different interpretations of historical facts, of patriotism, of racism, of terrorism, and of the invention of HIV, the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah was speaking truth to the people and to power as a preacher and prophet in the African American jeremiadic tradition when he engaged in hyperbolic rhetoric and passionate denunciations of America for its national sin of racialized slavery, for its violation of the founding principles of the nation with institutional antiblack racism, and for its selective demonizing and violent destruction of nondemocratic, non-Christian peoples as suspected threats and terrorists to the United States. In “Love of God, Love of Man, Love of Country,” a speech on American slavery in 1847, Frederick Douglass stated: “So long as my voice can be heard on this or the other side of the Atlantic, I will hold up America to the lightning scorn of moral indignation. In doing this, I shall feel myself discharging the duty of a true patriot; for he is a lover of this country who rebukes and does not excuse its sins. It is righteousness that exalteth a nation while sin is a reproach to any people” (qtd. in Foner). This is the tradition to which the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah bears witness. According to the responses in the blogs of some people, especially African Americans, ABC News and other media are shamelessly guilty of reprehensible yellow journalism for sensationalizing, distorting, and misrepresenting the rhetoric and character of the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah by quoting him out of historical and cultural context.

In “Confusing God and Government,” his April 13, 2003, sermon, he did not say, for example, that blacks should sing “God damn America.” Assuming the traditional role of the preacher and prophet in many black American Baptist and Methodist churches and communities, like his father the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright, Sr., he passionately declared in righteous indignation that “the government gives them the drugs, builds bigger prisons, passes a three-strike law and then wants us to sing ‘God Bless America.’ No, no, no, God damn America, that’s in the Bible for killing innocent people. God damn America for treating our citizens as less than human. God damn America for as long as she acts like she is God and she is supreme” (qtd. in Cooper). Why do so many people, especially those with access to such research engines as Google, blind themselves to the unpopular, unpleasant facts about our government? Why have so many newscasters, pundits, politicians, preachers, and everyday Americans failed to understand the relationship of the sin of blasphemy in the adverbial clause, i.e., “for as long

as she acts like she is God," to the American and African American jeremiadic traditions? In other words, the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah prophesies that until America repents its sins of overbearing pride against God and man—for acting like God, "for killing innocent people" and "for treating our citizens as less than human"—the nation is destined for divine—not man's, not the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah's—wrath and damnation. Perhaps more Americans would understand better our complex national identities, moral transgressions, and historical fate if they learned and lived the lessons of the Bible, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States, as well as the lessons in classic books on American and African American language, literature, and life!

We learn, for instance, in the Old Testament of the King James edition that the prophet Jeremiah is empowered by the Lord to curse the political corruption, oppression, immorality, and idolatry of the king of Judah, his son Shallum, and the Hebrew nation. "Woe unto him," the Lord angrily declared in the voice of Jeremiah, "that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong, that useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work" (Jeremiah 22:13). Similarly, in preaching to his predominantly black working-class and middle-class congregation, the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah was justifiably angry at the crimes and sins of our government for breaking the covenant with God that all men are equal and endowed with such inalienable rights as life and liberty, replacing the covenant with the myth of white supremacy. The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., was also similarly impassioned with righteous indignation at the injustice of the Memphis government. As Taylor Branch, a prize-winning King biographer, reminds us in "The Last Wish of Martin Luther King," two sanitation workers, "Echol Cole and Robert Walker, had been crushed in a mechanical malfunction; city rules forbade black employees to seek shelter from rain anywhere but in the back of their compressor trucks, with the garbage" (15). The night before he was assassinated on April 4 while supporting civil demonstrations by black Memphis sanitation workers in 1968 for higher pay than \$1.27 an hour and for more healthful working conditions, he completed writing his Sunday sermon with the jeremiadic title "Why America May Go to Hell." Like the antiwar voice of the post-1963 Rev. Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech, the voice of the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah was radical. Both voices were in the tradition of the antebellum David Walker, a free North Carolina black man who owned a secondhand clothing store in Boston and whose jeremiad, "Walker's Appeal in Four Articles" (1829), culminated in rebuke and scorn by the government and his death by antiblack racists. Like the Rev. Dr. King and David Walker, the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah was impassioned and provocative in developing his jeremiad on American

national sins: "y'all looking to the government for only what God can give. A lot of people confuse God with their government" (qtd. in Cooper).

THE SACRED AND SECULAR ORIGINS OF THE AMERICAN JEREMIAD

As defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, jeremiad means a "lamentation; a writing or speech in a strain of grief or distress; a doleful complaint; a complaining tirade." It is derived from the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, who, between the sixth and seventh centuries BC, predicted the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem as divine punishment for the Israelite violations of the Mosaic covenant. Jeremiah also prophesied the future redemption and restoration of Israel after its atonement in a golden age. The complete rhetorical structure of the American jeremiad, according to David Howard-Pitney in *The Afro-American Jeremiad* (1990), has three elements: "citing the *promise*; criticism of present *declension*, or retrogression from the promise; and a resolving *prophecy* that society will shortly complete its mission and redeem the promise" (8).

The corridors of American history resound with the cries for justice and prophecies of national disaster by blacks in the tradition of Jeremiah and other Old Testament prophets. Many cultural historians argue that the messianic rhetoric of the American and African American jeremiad has its origins in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Bible, and New England Puritanism. The historians George Bancroft, Perry Miller, Henry Nash Smith, R. W. B. Lewis, Sacvan Bercovitch, Ernest Tuveson, David Noble, Wilson Moses, and David Howard Pitney credit sacred and secular myths of origin as the foundation of the providential interpretation of American history and America's self-righteous mission of saving the world and establishing the kingdom of God on earth. For example, in his ten-volume *History of the United States* (the first volume appeared in 1834 and the last in 1873), George Bancroft, the father of American history and the most widely respected nineteenth-century interpreter of America, celebrated a providential view of Americans as a chosen people covenanted by God to save the world—not to purify America—and usher in the millennium by spreading the American way: freedom, individualism, capitalism, and democracy. This is the Judeo-Christian myth and mission, secularized in the ironies and paradoxes of the American Dream, that informed our nation's City-upon-a-Hill "civil religion" of 1630, whites-only Naturalization Act of 1790, anti-Europe expansionist Monroe Doctrine of 1823, and transcontinental Manifest Destiny of 1845, as well as our imperialism in the Spanish-American War of 1898. This myth of origin and mission of ourselves as a Chosen People also

informed both President George Bushes' declarations of a new world order of the American way in the wake of the balkanization of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in our own time.

In addition, recent works in the field of African American studies by such historians as John Blassingame, Nathan Huggins, Lawrence Levine, and Leslie Owens argue persuasively that vestigial elements of African religious customs have endured through the process of syncretism, that is, the merging or hybridization of African and non-African cultural patterns and sign systems. Perhaps the most illuminating discussions of the relationship between African religious survivals and black messianism are in *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (1976) by Eugene Genovese and *Black Messiahs and Uncle Toms* (1982) by Wilson Moses.

Derived from the Hebrew *mashiah*, or "anointed," messiah, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is "the Hebrew title . . . applied in the O.T. prophetic writings to a promised deliverer of the Jewish nation, and hence applied to Jesus of Nazareth as the fulfillment of that promise. . . . An expected liberator or saviour of an oppressed people or country." In *Black Messiahs and Uncle Toms*, Moses concisely summarizes the Judeo-Christian tradition of messianism:

The belief in a messiah grew out of the Hebrews' experience of oppression at the hands of the great Middle Eastern empires. It symbolized their hopes for an improvement in the fortunes of their nation and the restoration of their ancient ideals. The messiah would usher in a messianic age. The chosen people would revolt against their political oppressors and revitalize the conservative values advocated by the prophets. Messianic ideas were adapted by the early Christians, who saw Jesus of Nazareth as the long-awaited messiah (*Christos* in Greek means the anointed one). After the death of Jesus, the early Christians began to await his second coming, at which time he would inaugurate a messianic era of a thousand years' duration. This belief came to be known as millenarianism or chiliasm, from the Latin *millenarias* and the Greek *chilios* (a thousand). . . . A messianic people are a chosen or anointed people who will lead the rest of the world in the direction of righteousness. The messianic people traditionally see themselves as a conscience for the rest of the human race—sometimes as a suffering servant or a sacrificial lamb, sometimes as an avenging angel. (4–5)

During the civil rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s, the African American jeremiadic cry was "No more water, the fire next time," as well as "We shall overcome!" The recurring jeremiadic shift between lamentation and righteous anger is grounded in the contradictions and paradoxes of a nation founded simultaneously on the principles of freedom and equality and on the practice of slavery and inequality. These contradictions,

however, find synthesis in the mixed emotions of faith, perseverance, and hope in the cry from black folk for social and moral justice, cries which have deep historical roots in the Old Testament tradition of Jeremiah and the other prophets, as well as the principles of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States. This tradition has also been syncretically combined with elements of sub-Saharan African religious beliefs and values.

Perry Miller's *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (1939) reveals the sacred Puritan roots of the secular myth of Americans of themselves as a chosen people, whose exodus from the corruption and bondage in the old Crown-dominated church in England took them to the promised land of religious freedom and "a city upon a hill" in America. In *The American Jeremiad* (1978), Sacvan Bercovitch identifies the American jeremiad as the crucial rhetorical ritual that has characterized the major writings of Anglo-American culture since the Puritan era. This rhetorical ritual involves three stages: promise, declension, and prophecy. According to David Noble in *The End of History*, the promise of the first stage held that "the exodus of the Puritans as a New Israel was leading toward the millennium." The second stage of the jeremiad was the assertion of declension:

Although the Puritans as a Chosen People had crossed the frontier threshold from the medieval past in which history had no meaning, they, as individuals and as a group, had not fully accepted their responsibility to make history a progressive path toward the future Kingdom. They were slothful. They were distracted and pursued false and evil values. And they received divine punishments for their failures to act as a Chosen People. This Progressive jeremiad . . . established great tension in the community of saints as the distance between the perfection of the promise and the imperfection of daily activity was examined and deplored. (Noble 5)

The third and final stage of the jeremiad was "a prophecy that the Chosen People would accept their responsibility, reject their sinful lifestyles which looked so similar to those of the corrupt medieval past, and construct the environment for the Kingdom in the immediate future" (Noble 5). This myth of God's covenant with Puritans as a chosen people informed John Winthrop's sermonic proclamation on the *Arbella* in 1630 of the Massachusetts Bay Colony as "a city upon a hill." Spreading from the New England Puritans to all colonial Protestants in the eighteenth century, the Puritan jeremiad became political and American by 1776. "The promise was a virtuous republic," writes David Noble. "The Revolution was the exodus from the Egyptian bondage of monarchy. The new citizen saints found themselves living in a state of declension,

reflecting their failure of the promise and the gap between the ideal republic and their imperfect political experience. But political prophets pointed out their failings, explained their sufferings as punishment for those failures, and pointed toward redemption and the fulfillment of the promise in the future" (6).

More important for black Americans, Moses indicates, is the evolution of two varieties of American messianism: hard line and soft line. Hard-line messianism "eventually developed into the doctrine of white racial supremacy, ruthless expansionism, religious intolerance, and economic insensitivity"; the latter grew "out of the unrealized ideals of the Jeffersonian tradition and the American enlightenment, which came to emphasize America's mission to preserve the inalienable rights of man." According to soft-line messianism, "the American mission was not to dominate the rest of the world, forcing it into the paths of righteousness, but to serve as an example of the spiritual perfection that human nature could aspire to in an atmosphere of political freedom" (Moses 8).

Many students of American history are familiar with Thomas Jefferson's advocacy of political, religious, and educational freedoms as principal author of the Declaration of Independence and Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom and founder of the University of Virginia. Fewer are familiar with his advocacy of the myth of white supremacy in *Notes on the State of Virginia* (France 1785, England 1787), which includes an American jeremiad that contains a classic ironic illustration of the fusion of oppositional varieties of messianism:

And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever; that considering numbers, nature and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation is among possible events; that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest. (289)

Although Jefferson believed that abolition followed by deportation was the best solution to his personal guilt and fear about the national sin of slavery, *Notes* also reveals his belief in white supremacy. Such racist comments as "the blacks are . . . inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind" (270) and that blacks prefer white mates "as uniformly in the preference of the Oranootan [sic] for the black woman over those of his own species" (265) were answered in black jeremiads by "Othello," Benjamin Banneker, and David Walker.

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN JEREMIAD

In *Black Messiahs and Uncle Toms*, Moses defines the African American jeremiad as "mainly a pre Civil War," ingenious adaptation of messianic traditions in the form of "constant warnings issued by blacks to whites, concerning the judgment that was to come for the sin of slavery" (30–31). Diverse scholars from W. E. B. Du Bois, Melville Herskovits, and E. Franklin Frazier to Lawrence Levine, Albert Raboteau, and Orlando Patterson persuasively argue that evidence of the retention and reinterpretation of vestigial African religious traits by black people in the Americas is stronger in the Caribbean than in the United States. As historian Wilson Moses notes, "The religion of black slaves in the United States was similar to both that of West Africans and that of Europeans. These similarities may be attributed to African retentions, syncretic tendencies, and spontaneous parallel evolution" (28). A dramatic, historical example of the sociocultural, sociopsychological dualism, or double consciousness, of black Americans is the connection between revolutionary black nationalism and African religious survivals. This is apparent, on one hand, in the role of conjuring by Gullah Jack, a leader in the 1822 slave revolt of Denmark Vesey, and, on the other hand, in the messianic avenging angel mission that Nat Turner assumed in his 1831 revolt. Both, similar to the contemporary examples of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Minister Malcolm X, involve a synthesis of orthodox and unorthodox faith in the ritual power of the spoken word: incantations, curses, blessings, and prayers, as well as the magical power of charms, fetishes, and totems to bridge and balance the physical and spiritual, historical and mythical realms of reality, knowledge, and truth.

Some scholars believe that the African American jeremiadic tradition began in 1788 with the "Essay on Negro Slavery" by a free black from Maryland who used the pen name "Othello." Adapting the American jeremiad and warning of God's wrathful judgment for the American national sin of slavery, he wrote, "Beware Americans! Pause—and consider the difference between the mild effulgence of approving Providence and the angry countenance of incensed divinity" (qtd. in Moses 33). There are four important responses to the racial injustice and social inequality expressed in Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* and in American life of the time: Benjamin Banneker's letter in 1791, the Reverends Richard Allen and Absalom Jones's "Address to those who keep Slaves, and approve the Practice" in 1794, Prince Hall's speech "Charge Delivered to the African Lodge at Menotomy" in 1797, Robert Alexander Young's *Ethiopian Manifesto* in 1829, and especially David Walker's "Walker's Appeal" in 1829.

Black Americans have responded historically to the hypocrisy, injustice,

and immorality of white Americans both by reacting ambivalently to the prophecies of false prophets and by reinterpreting the prophets and prophecies in a manner consistent with their own bicultural African American tradition of faith, hope, resistance, resilience, and resourcefulness. Probably the most moving passage in President Obama's memoir, *Dreams from My Father* (1995, 2004), is his tearful memory of the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah's "meditation on a fallen world" in his sermon "The Audacity of Hope." "It is this world, a world where cruise ships throw away more food in a day than most residents of Port-au-Prince see in a year," the reverend chants, "where white folks' greed runs a world in need, apartheid in one hemisphere, apathy in another hemisphere. . . . That's the world! On which hope sits!" Drawing on the story of a barren and taunted Hannah in the Book of Samuel and the analogy of a bruised and bloodied woman harpist playing on a single frayed string in a museum painting titled *Hope*, "Reverend Wright spoke of Sharpville and Hiroshima, the callousness of policy makers in the White House and in the State House" before his stories "became more prosaic, the pain more immediate," our new black president recalls his former preacher's and advisor's words. "Like Hannah, we have known bitter times! Daily, we face rejection and despair. . . . And yet consider once again the painting before us. Hope! Like Hannah, that harpist is looking upwards, a few faint notes floating upwards towards the heavens. She dares to hope. . . . She has the audacity. . . to make music. . . and praise God. . . on the one string. . . she has left" (293)! Unlike such false prophets and charlatans as Daddy Grace and Father Divine, the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah has scriptural and secular authority for his prophetic mission of warning the nation of divine judgment for transgressing our personal and national covenant with God and man. Like "Othello," Benjamin Banneker, Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, Prince Hall, David Walker, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Benjamin "Pap" Singleton, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Jesse Jackson, the Rev. Dr. Jeremiah is respected by many black Americans, especially Baptists and Methodists, as an African American prophetic preacher in the tradition of Jeremiah. Can I get a witness?

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