

Jeremiah the Prophet

Spiritual Characteristics of his Book and ministry (4)

In this article, we will conclude our discussion about the most important elements of the divine message that God instructed Jeremiah, His faithful servant, to deliver to His people. This message included seven points: **Reproach – encouragement – rebuke – guidance – clarifying facts – prophecies – illustrative examples.** We emphasized that these points urge people to repent and paint a general picture about God's approach towards His people. In the previous articles we talked about five of these point and we will complete the rest of the points in this article.

Sixth, prophecies

We can sum up these prophecies in three points, all of which are fulfilled:

1. Prophecies regarding forthcoming good shepherds, *“And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding”* (Jeremiah 3:15).
2. Prophecies regarding forthcoming punishment that will befall the people of Israel and other nations, *“Thus says the Lord: “Behold, I will surely bring calamity on them which they will not be able to escape; and though they cry out to Me, I will not listen to them”* (Jeremiah 11:11)
3. Prophecies regarding the Lord Jesus:
 - + *“Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there? Why then is there no recovery For the health of the daughter of my people?”* (Jeremiah 8:22)- Jesus is balm and the physician whom Jeremiah sought after.
 - + *“But I was like a docile lamb brought to the slaughter...They had devised schemes against me, saying, “Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be remembered no more.”* (Jeremiah 11:19)
 - + *“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS”* (Jeremiah 23:5-6)
 - + *“Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers ... My covenant which they broke, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make ... I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people...They all shall know Me. from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”* (Jeremiah 31:31-34). St. Paul highlighted the fulfillment of this prophecy in the New Testament (Hebrews 8:8-12).
 - + *“There shall be heard in this place... The voice of joy and the voice of gladness... The voice of those who will say: ‘Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for His mercy endures forever’, and of those who will bring the sacrifice of praise (Eucharist) into the house of the Lord.”* (Jeremiah 33:10-11).

Seventh, illustrative examples

The book of Jeremiah is filled with examples that God used as illustrations. We ought to study and contemplate upon each of these examples. Some of these examples: **The branch of an almond tree** (Jeremiah 1:11), the ruined sash (Jeremiah 13:7), the clay pot (Jeremiah 18), the broken flask (Jeremiah 19), the two baskets of figs (Jeremiah 24), etc.

Finally, since Jeremiah is a great example for the faithful servant, lets conclude our topic with a beautiful verse that God mentioned about servants and it reveals the value of prayer in the life of the fruitful servant:

“But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused My people to hear My words, Then they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings.” (Jeremiah 23:22)

May the blessings of Jeremiah, the great prophet, be with us Amen.

Fr. Yohanna Naseef

fryohanna@hotmail.com

St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church, Palatine, IL