



Jeremiah 18-19

JEREMIAH Chapter 18

Let's turn to Jeremiah 18.

The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

As we mentioned most of the time when Jeremiah was commissioned to go someplace, he was commissioned to go and preach the word of the LORD. Go to the gate of the temple and the LORD said, "Speak My word to the people." But here he was told to go and to hear the word of the LORD. He was not to go and preach a sermon he was to go and receive a sermon as he watched the potter working there in the potter's house. Go to the potter's house and I will cause you to hear My words.

And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Jeremiah in obedience to the LORD went down to the potter's house to watch him as he was working and the fellow was busy, the wheel was spinning and the clay was there and he watched him as he was making this vessel, watched him as he worked there with this clay on the wheel. And as the potter was working the vessel was marred. Somehow, some way in the potter's hand so the potter started all over again, he re made it into a vessel that pleased him or seemed good to the potter.

The art of pottery is an ancient art. Some of the earliest civilizations they had their pottery. You go to the museums and you see the various forms of art that are exhibited in the pottery of the people and they can tell pretty much as they are excavating, the date of the excavation by the type of pottery and by the way it was fired and the consistency. It is quite a scientific study.

There are the basic things: there is the potter, there is the wheel, there is the clay. In the Bible on four different occasions this analogy of the potter and the clay is used to express our relationship to God. He, the master potter, my life the clay. It speaks to us the sovereignty of God over our lives, the ability of God to make of us whatever He desires.

The clay in it's natural form is almost worthless because of the abundance of clay, it is common. But yet the potter, through skill, can take that worthless clay and make out of it a vessel of art, a vessel of beauty and a vessel of utility. He can make something worthwhile, something that can be used. And our lives in their natural state are worthless, almost. There is only one life, it will be soon be passed and only what you do for Christ will last.

So many people spend their whole lives in things that are going to pass away, in the temporal mundane things of this world. And thus, at their demise, everything is wiped out. Someone asked a fellow, "How much did your old man leave when he died?" He said that he left everything. That is much you are going to leave too. Like Greg Laurie says that he has yet to see a U-Haul trailer following a hearse to a graveyard. You leave it all here. And yet it is possible for us to lay up treasures in Heaven, to invest in those things, our life in those things that are eternal. And only those things are going to last, that service for God, being useful unto God, a vessel that God can use for His purposes.

The wheel is the instrument in which the potter fashions the clay. It is under his control and he uses

it to help bring symmetry to that clay. He uses it to form the clay into the shape that he wants it to be. And thus the wheel is the circumstances of our lives that God is in control of by which God molds us and shapes us. God uses circumstances to mold and to shape the character of our lives. And sometimes we don't understand what is in the mind of the potter as Paul uses the analogy. He said, "What right has the clay to say to the potter, 'Why hast thou made me thus.'"

And there are many times when we are going through difficult circumstances. We are going through heavy trials. There are pressures that are upon us. We are prone at those times to complain to God and ask God, "Why have you allowed this to happen?" But it is all a part of God's molding and shaping me. And He uses that adversities so many times in His purposes of molding and shaping my life into the vessel that He would have me to be.

So the Bible says don't count it strange concerning the fiery trials which are to try you as though some strange thing has happened to you. God uses these trials as His instrument to mold and shape our lives. So many times as we are complaining and murmuring to God about our circumstances we are complaining against those very things by which God is molding and shaping us into an image that He can use. We sing that song and surely we should mean it from our hearts, "have thine own way, Lord, have thine own way. Thou art the potter, I am the clay. Mold me and shape me after Thy will, while I am waiting yielded and still."

That is a problem. We are not always waiting yielded and still. Many times we are shouting or crying or complaining instead of just yielding to the LORD. Now every analogy breaks down somewhere or other. There is not really a perfect analogy. This one breaks down because that lump of clay has no mind or will of its own. Whereas, we have a mind and a will of our own and that is where the rub often comes. As our will comes in conflict with God's. Where we begin to resist that work of God in our lives. Or we determine to go our own way. I will be what I want to be. I will shape my own destiny. And so many times rather than being pliable clay, being shaped by God, we resist and we rebel against that work of God in forming and shaping and we have decided what we are going to be what we are going to do. We make that foolish mistake of exercising our will against Him.

The analogy comes back in that the vessel was marred in the hands of the potter as Jeremiah was watching it. And vessels can be marred by different causes. One of them is the wrong consistency in the clay. And so you will watch the potter as he kneads the clay, he works it in his hands. He presses it, he pushes it, he squeezes it. He is trying to get the right consistency, adding a little water until he feels that the clay is at the proper consistency where it is pliable and yet stiff enough that it will hold the shape. There is a real art in just developing the right consistency in the clay.

Jeremiah does not tell how or why the vessel was marred. Sometimes you will get a lump in the clay. There will be a portion that will harden and become lumpy. And you cannot work with it. When you put pressure on it, it will just mar the vessel. It will just make a hole, or make a big deep rut in it.

However it was that the potter was working with became marred and so he took the clay and he began to work the clay again. And from that clay he made another vessel that seemed good to the potter. As Jeremiah watched this little procedure and this little drama then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah saying:

O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

Cannot I make of you a vessel that pleases Me, a vessel that is good to me? It is true that as God had

created this nation for His praise and glory that the nation had been marred in the hands of the potter. They had rebelled against God. They had resisted the work of God. And God is going to really bring them back to just a blob again, just a glob of clay. They have resisted now the work of God. So God is going to have to reshape and remold the nation.

The thing that strikes me about this is that God is so patient. Though there is the failure, the vessel becomes marred in the hands of the potter, he does not give up. He will start over. He will remold and reshape until it becomes a vessel that pleases him. That comforts me because it means that God does not give up on my life. As clay is in the potter's hands so is my life in the hand of God. God does not give up on me. There are flaws. There are stiff spots. There are lumps. There are things that cause the work of God to be marred in my life but God does not give up on me. But He starts over again. We used to have a phrase: Back to zero. You just blow it all and you come back to zero. And how many times that God has brought us back to zero and He starts all over again so patiently that work of love in our lives and His grace in our lives.

Here in this picture we see the beautiful patience of God by which He works with us and works in us as He is forming and shaping us into the image of Jesus Christ. Paul said, "We with open face beholding the glory of the LORD are being changed from glory to glory into the same image by His Spirit that is working in us." Paul says that God has given gifted men in the church in order to perfect the saints for the work of the ministry, to build up the body of Christ until we all come into the unity of the faith to the knowledge of the Son of God. Into that complete maturity. In Christ Jesus unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the image of Christ. So God is working in you to conform you into the image of Christ, patiently, lovingly. When the vessel gets marred, then He starts over again. But He continues His work in us. How I appreciate it and thank God for His mercy and for His patience with which He has worked in my life.

Now the LORD continues His message:

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it:

The clay was marred and so the potter just stopped the wheel and took the clay and began to work with it again to start over again. So the idea is plucking up, pulling down and destroying that which was done.

If the nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

So again, God's patience and God's goodness and love. If a nation has failed in the purposes of God and is deserving the wrath and the judgment of God, if that nation will turn to God, will repent, though God has pronounced the judgment upon it. Now, these words are interesting to pluck up, to pull down and to destroy. Back in the Jeremiah 1 when God called Jeremiah and commissioned him to preach to the nation, to be a prophet to the nation. God said that He had called him to pluck up, to pull down and to destroy. You see, the nation had become so marred that there was no reforming. They had gone so far down that it was too far to try to reform. They had to start all over. The time had come when it had to be plucked up. It had to be pulled down. It had to be destroyed in order that God might start a new. That is what the whole picture of the potter is and the vessel marred.

This was the ministry to which God called Jeremiah. Now, when God has proclaimed such judgment against a nation, if they will turn from their evil then God says, "Then I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." The judgment that He thought to bring. The classic example of that when Jonah

was called of God to go to Nineveh and pronounce to them that in forty days the judgment of God was to fall upon that wicked city. And so he went through the streets of Nineveh crying out, "Forty days and comes destruction!" And the people of Nineveh in dust and ashes right up to the king. They all got on their knees and repented before God. Because they repented before God, God forestalled the judgment that was promised. It made Jonah mad. He went out and pouted. God said, "What is wrong with you?" He said, "I did not want to come here in the first place, You remember that. You sort of forced me to come. And the reason that I did not want to come because I knew that You were a softy. And I want these people destroyed. I figured if I came to preach that they might repent and then You would not destroy them and that is exactly what happened." He was mad.

Isn't sad the instruments that God has to often use to do His work? We have learned that the instrument that God uses are not all perfect, haven't we? I hope we have. God uses imperfect people because He has obliged to. And because God uses a man, don't immediately think that he must be perfect because God is using him. Jonah was used by God but he was not really a loving minister. He had only one message and that was judgment. He was not at all happy when they repented. He was angry with God because they did repent and they were not judged. No wonder Jesus said that the men of Nineveh will rise in the day of judgment and they will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah.

Here Jesus came with a message of love and God's love and these people did not repent. So, God uses imperfect instruments. But the time had come to pluck up, to pull down and to destroy as the vessel marred in the hands of the potter. But God said that even now if they will turn from their evil then I will turn from the judgment that I thought to bring upon them.

And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it;

Now, Jeremiah's commission was also to build and to plant. In other words, he was first of all to pluck up, to destroy, to pull down and then he was to build and to plant as we said in chapter one they had gotten so bad that there reformation would not work. They had to start over again. But before you can start you have to break down and pull down that which is there. The system is so corrupt that you have to get rid of it and start over fresh. That is the condition that it had come to. But when the time comes to build up now and God has spoken that He is going to build and to plant the nation:

If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

In other words, it is all conditional. The promises of blessing and the benefits of God are conditioned upon the people walking after God. And even these blessings of benefit and good if the people do evil in their heart then God will turn from the good that He was going to do for them. The promised blessings will not come or be fulfilled if the people's hearts are not right before God.

Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah,, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.

It was a call for the people to repent. God has promised that His judgment is going to come but He has already said that if they would turn from their evil then He would turn from the judgment. So Jeremiah is sent to the people to preach this message to them. Judgment has been determined by God against you therefore return from your evil ways and make your ways and your doings good.

And they said, There is no hope:

That is, they more or less said to Jeremiah, “Forget it man, we are not changing.” It was a message to Jeremiah that they were set in their ways and they had no intention of changing at all. They had become obdurate in their stand against the things of God.

but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

You know that it is a sad and tragic thing when people are so given over to evil that they just proclaim that we are going to go on with our evil. We don’t care! We don’t care if the judgment of God comes! And they are so bent towards evil that there is no repentance at all. I think of the situation that has happened today in America. And we see a plague that is called AIDS. A plague that is effecting those primarily who are involved in un-Scriptural sexual activity. Now, unfortunately, there are innocent victims of AIDS. Those that have received blood transfusions, and those that have contracted AIDS through dentists and through children whose mothers were HIV positive and it is passed on to the children. And there are the innocent victims, tragically and unfortunately.

In the seriousness of this plague that we know is primarily transmitted through homosexual activities and most generally through anal sex. Also to some degree through heterosexual activities with numerous partners, the chances of getting AIDS is increased with the number of sexual partners that you have. That rather than saying, “Hey people, we need to get back to a Biblical base of morality. We need to realize that sex is not a toy to be played with. That it is something that has been designed by God to be practiced between husband and wife who have committed themselves to each other in a once for life kind of commitment.” And rather than coming back to this Biblical moral base we are spending millions of dollars to try to teach people how to continue their sexual activities but reduce the risk of AIDS. And spending billions of dollars to try to find some vaccine or whatever by which we can become immunized against it or can find some cure for it.

We are going about it the wrong way. We should just say that God has established the rules of sexual behavior. We need to get back to God’s rules. But you see, we don’t want that as a society. They are saying, “We will hold on to these sexual liberties that we have gained over the past years through our lobbying and all and we don’t want to change.” And that is exactly what the people were saying to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah was saying that God is determined to bring judgment upon this nation and upon you people. Turn from your evil way that you might forestall that judgment of God and they said, “Forget it man! We are going to do what we want! We will follow the evil imaginations of our hearts.” And they openly rebelled against God’s command and His word. In so doing they brought the judgment of God upon them. When they said to Jeremiah, “There is no hope or forget it, we won’t listen.” Jeremiah said:

Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing. Will a man leave the show of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense] to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up; To make their land desolate, and perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag hi head. I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy:

Back in the Jeremiah 2 the LORD again said, “Search and see if anything like this has ever happened. Will a nation forsake their gods which really are not gods?” People will be faithful to false gods.

But here He says, “My people have forsaken Me. The fountain of living water and they have made for themselves cisterns that cannot hold water.” The same message is basically here just spoken a different way. See if this has ever happened, the virgin daughter of Jerusalem, of Judah has done a very horrible thing.

Now, will a man leave the snow of Lebanon that breaks out in the field? You go into the northern area of Israel and there by the ancient city of Dan, as you go there you see this tremendous spring of water that just comes gushing right up out of the earth. And it flows down and it becomes a part of the Jordan River. It just comes right out of the ground there in the open field. But it comes from Mt. Hermon, the snows of Mt. Hermon. They flow on down underground but they break out in a spring right out there in a field. Its life. That is why they built the city of Dan there. There was this fabulous spring where water just gushing up out of the ground and formed into a river.

You go a little further north, not too much further and slightly to the east and you come to the area known as Banias and you will see coming right out of the rock this water that is coming right out of the rock and forming a good river. The Banias river. And you see again the snows of Hermon come out in the spring there. The fresh water. This is in the ancient world and even in the United States most of the cities were built on major thoroughfares where there was a spring or where there was a river. The major cities were always built around rivers or around springs because water is necessary for life.

What a glorious thing it is to have a spring of cold water coming right out of the ground, a good place to build your house. You always have a supply of water which we need to survive. And God said, “Would you forsake that in order to try to survive off of a cistern, a reservoir that you have dug out of a rock to catch the water.” But He said the reservoirs do not hold water.

The whole thing is this. The water is representative of the living water. The living water represents God and the cisterns and the stale water represents the other religious systems and the other gods. And they have forsaken Me the fountain of living water but they have substituted these other gods. They have tried to quench their thirst with these other things. And God speaks against that. So here again He brings the same charge against Israel. The virgin daughter of Israel has forsaken the LORD. You find this. Ask the heathen, see if anything like this happens where a people will forsake their god? They have forsaken the water of life that springs out of the ground and thus the judgment in verse 15.

Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, (the beginning of the nation where they followed after God in the wilderness) to walk in paths, in away not cast up: To make their land desolate, and a perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head.

When people pass by and see the ruins of Jerusalem they all hiss and wag their heads and hold it in derision.

I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

That is, God said, “I will turn My back on them. They won’t see My face. I will just turn My back upon their calamity.”

Now, what was the response of the people to Jeremiah’s message?

Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah: for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the

tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

So they scoffed, they mocked, they scorned, they said, “Ah, that won’t happen here. The words of the prophet they will not fail. The priests and so forth.” And they determined to speak against him and to smite him with the tongues and not listen to any of his words.

So Jeremiah in response to this said,

Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. Shall evil be recompensed for good?

Now Jeremiah was seeking the good of the people. What he was saying was for their good and here they are devising evil against him because he dared to speak to them the word of the LORD.

When you speak the word of the LORD it does not always make you popular. People don’t want to hear it. You go to that worldly crowd where you work and start talking about the only true safe sex is just get a wife and get married and stay married for life and they do not want to hear it. So, Jeremiah is now praying to the LORD and said,

for they have digged a pit for my soul.

They have sought to trap me they want to destroy me.

Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them.

In other words, Jeremiah was trying to help them. He was trying to keep them from the wrath of God and the judgment of God that had been determined because of their evil. But because they have now turned against Jeremiah and are plotting against him Jeremiah says,

Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour out their blood by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and be widows; and let their men be put to death; let their young men be slain by the sword in battle.

Jeremiah said, “Okay LORD, if they are not going to listen then just go at it. Let them have it. I have tried to protect them and I have tried to turn them and all they are doing is turning against me.” So Jeremiah is just saying to take over.

Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet.

They are trying to ensnare me. They are trying to trap me.

Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay me:

You know LORD that they are plotting to kill me.

forgive not their iniquities, neither blot out their sin from thy sight,

Isn’t that different from what we hear in the New Testament when Jesus said, “Father forgive them they know not what they do.” And as Stephen when they were stoning lifted up his face towards the Lord

and said, "Don't lay this sin to their charge, receive my spirit." But here is the Old Testament prophet and he is saying, "Alright LORD, wipe them out. Don't forgive them. Don't blot out their sin from your sight."

but let them be overthrown before thee; deal thus with them in the time of thine anger.

LORD, just go ahead, they do not want to listen, just let them have it.

JEREMIAH 19

Thus saith the LORD, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and take of the ancients of the priests; And go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee,

So Jeremiah is to gather together some of the rulers of the nations, the older men and he is to take them down to the valley of Hinnom which is on the southern side of the city of Jerusalem but it joins with the valley of the Kidron. They come together. Now the valley of Hinnom, also known as Gehenna is the place where in their worship of Baal and Molech they built the fires and they offered their babies as sacrifices, throwing them into the fire or placing them into the fire. In the natural history museum in Jerusalem you can see a little iron replica of Baal. It is an idol that they found there in the land, their representation of their god Baal. It is about two and a half feet high. It has little arms that are stretched from the body with the hands and fingers which go upward so that it could cradle the body of the baby.

What they would do is put that into the fire until it began to glow red hot and then they would place their little babies into the arms of little Baal and they would burn them as they would sacrifice to this god. And they did that here in the valley of Hinnom. So Jeremiah is to get this pot from the potter's house and he is to lead the rulers of Jerusalem down into this valley of Hinnom where they built their fires and they sacrificed their children in the bonfires to Molech and to Baal.

While he was there he was to say:

Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.

I am going to bring such evil on this place that you are not going to believe it. Your ears will tingle because, and the reason for the evil:

Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of the innocents:

The little children, the innocent little babies had been destroyed in that valley of Hinnom.

They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind:

It was unthinkable. The things that they were doing were unthinkable. Taking innocent babies and destroying them. And there is not much difference in destroying them once they have come out of the womb and destroying them in the womb. The same idea. The innocent being destroyed. And look how people get out and parade and scream, "Free choice!" Really they are saying, "We want the right to choose to murder.

It is our right to choose to murder an innocent baby.”

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD--that this place shall no more be called Tophet, (which means the place of burning. It was called Tophet because of the fact that they burned their babies there in these fires) nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter.

I am going to change the name.

And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

Their carcasses will fall and be devoured by the vultures and by the beasts.

And I will make this city desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them.

This pronouncement now of God’s judgment that is going to come upon them because they have forsaken the LORD. Turn back to Deuteronomy 28:53 and here you find almost word for word very early in their history God saying pretty much the very same thing as He says here. It is almost as if Jeremiah were quoting from this earlier passage where God had announced the judgment that was going to come.

And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:

Now, Jeremiah is saying the time of the fulfillment of this prophecy is going to come very soon. Now it is true that this is exactly what happened when the Babylonians laid siege to Jerusalem and the siege became so severe that they actually(here they had burned their babies in the fires unto Molech) as the siege became so severe that they boiled their own babies and eat them according to history. Actually Jeremiah speaks about this in Lamentations of their boiling of their babies. Lamentations 4:10:

The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.

That is when Babylon came. Lamentations was written after the Babylonian siege and Jeremiah was weeping over this horrible, horrible destruction and desolation that came to the people of God because they had turned their backs of God and would not listen to the LORD. So verse nine was fulfilled literally, tragically, but literally.

Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee,

This bottle that you took out of the potter’s house and you are to announce this message, not an easy one.

And shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter’s vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury them in Tophet, till there be no place to bury.

So he is to break this clay pot. Let it shatter. Then he says, "Like that cannot be put back together again so the nation is to be shattered."

Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and even make this city as Tophet: And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the hore of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

So he speaks about the city being devastated by fire. Today you can go over to Jerusalem and walking down to the spring of Gihon along the path of the new excavations that have been done in the last ten years, you can see the ruins of the city of Jerusalem that date back to the time of Jeremiah. You can actually see that. In fact, in those ruins they found the little seal of Barach the son of Shaphan that is mentioned here in Jeremiah. He was a notary public. The scribes were notary publics and they found his seal. Barach the son of Shaphan even as you find here in Jeremiah. But in that area you see a layer of ash about six inches thick. And that layer of ash comes from the burning of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army.

So even as Jeremiah here is predicting, this place will be called the place of burning, Tophet. You can see the literal fulfillment of this prophecy of Jeremiah today there in the layers of the strata that dates back to this period of history. A mute evidence of the truth of God's word and God's warnings. So he will make this city as a place of burning and the houses of Jerusalem and the kings will be defiled and they will be burned because they have burned incense on them.

Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy: and he stood in the court of the LORD'S house; and said to all the people,

And he gathered now back in the temple and he stood there and announced to all of the people:

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

The clay was marred in the hands of the potter. It was stiff. It would not yield. They hardened their necks that they might not hear My words. You can go so far in your rebellion and in your resistance to God but there comes that place where God says, "Okay." He holds out His hand, He gives you warning, He pleads. If you just continue stubbornly in your way then there remains nothing else for Him. In righteousness He must judge. In righteousness judgment must come. And that to me is the very fearful thing about our nation today. We are just about in the same place that Judah was when Jeremiah was preaching to it. As we see them parading in their unrighteousness, stubborn in it. They do not want to hear. They refuse to turn. And they decide to strike out against those who would dare to tell them to turn.

We saw a demonstration of that a while back right here of there striking out because there was a group from Calvary who dared to go up to West Hollywood to pass out tracts and tell people that Jesus loved them. I thought the fitting statement was they said, "We want them to leave us alone." That is exactly what the demons said to Jesus, "Leave us alone, what have we to do with you, thou Son of David."

God is faithful. He will warn. He will plead. He will give opportunities. But when a person is set in their sin and in their unrighteousness when they refuse to turn then God is righteous and He will bring His judgment to pass. We need to pray for our nation. We need to pray for a revival in our nation. We need to start really being concerned about the nation.

Father, we see the warnings that You gave to the people by the prophet Jeremiah, trying to get their attention in so many different ways. Forcing them to hear when they did not even want to hear. And Lord, we see the tragic consequences of their stubborn resistance to Your love and to Your grace. We see the judgment that came upon them even as You warned. And Lord, we see our nation and are deeply concerned as we see the same kinds of patterns developing. We have forsaken You the fountain of living waters and people are burning their incense to various gods. The gods of the flesh, the gods of the pleasure. And Lord we see their rebellion against You and Your righteous laws and we know that You are patient and longsuffering but we also know that You are just. Lord, deliver Your children. May we be accounted worthy to escape these things that are coming to pass. May we be standing before You around the throne of God in Your glory when that day of judgment comes. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.