

“RUIN, REBELLION, AND RESTORATION”

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

Jeremiah 18:18-19:13

“HARD TIMES FOR HARD HEADS”

INTRODUCTION: Many people enter the ministry or their walk with Christ with fantasies of being loved and accepted because of their faith. In reality, Jesus has already told us that not everyone would love us for what we do, because they do not love Him. In our world today, the voice of biblical reason is being loudly challenged by the voices of the ungodly. We must remind ourselves that God’s truth will always have the final say, and lies and liars won’t last forever.

BACKGROUND: Jeremiah had recently learned valuable spiritual lessons at the house of a local potter, as God used that example to explain His own sovereignty over His Creation. However, the people that Jeremiah was speaking to did not want to heed God’s words, so Jeremiah would also have to explain what ultimately happens to those who refuse to cooperate with their Maker

I. OUR JOB IS TO FAITHFULLY PROCLAIM THE TRUTH. JESUS WARNED US THAT SOME WOULD ATTACK US RATHER THAN REPENT. (Jeremiah 18:18)

A. Jeremiah’s adversaries made plans to harm him by speaking against him and ignoring his words. They were content with their religious leaders and false prophets and did not need someone threatening them with judgments.

We should know by now that words hurt and harm much longer than physical pain. (James 3) (Proverbs 18:21) Have you been hurt by being slandered because of standing on God’s word ?

II. GOD IS NOT SURPRISED WHEN WE WANT THOSE WHO HURT US TO BE HURT IN RETURN. THE LORD WILL AVENGE HIS ENEMIES, AND OUR ENEMIES ARE NOT ALWAYS HIS! (Jeremiah 18:19-23)

A. Scripture records the heartfelt cries of God’s children who are struggling to understand His ways, which helps us who are in similar situations. Jeremiah was honestly questioning why God would allow him to be mistreated since he was doing everything God commanded him to do. Jesus has warned us to not be surprised by similar treatment today. (Matthew 5:11-12) (Matthew 5:44-45)

B. The Imprecatory Psalms are those that record God’s servants praying for the Lord to execute judgment upon the wicked. While they may seem vindictive at first glance, it is in alignment with God’s nature that He execute justice on those who return evil for good and dishonor the Lord. We need wisdom and grace for interacting with personal enemies, while praying for God to remove evil from His world. Someone prayed for us when we were rebelling against God! (Psalm 3) (Psalm 55)

III. THOSE WHO REFUSE TO SUBMIT TO THE POTTER'S GOAL IN MAKING THEM WILL ONE DAY BE BROKEN BEYOND REPAIR. (Jeremiah 19: 1-13)

- A. Jeremiah had already learned how the potter will work diligently to make the vessels he wants to use, and we are blessed because the Lord kept working on us. However, every potter would also have projects that would have to be destroyed. The people of Israel who rejected God's work in them would have a graphic picture of future destruction. (Jeremiah 19:1)
- B. Jeremiah was told to purchase a clay jar to take some of the elders and priests with him to the Valley of Hinnom. Some of these leaders probably had lived during Josiah's revival efforts, and now were witnessing the idolatry of the people. Because the potter's house was in close proximity to the place where there wasted products were dumped, that closest gate became known as the Potsherd Gate and also the Dung Gate. The Valley of Hinnom had once been connected to child sacrifice, but Josiah turned it into a garbage dump where rubbish was continually burned. This place became known as Gehenna, a visual image of hell and the Lake of fire. (Jeremiah 19:2-6)
- C. God promised to bring unimaginable catastrophe to Jerusalem because the people had turned from Him to worship idols and sacrifice their precious children in the fires to a pagan god. The place would then be known as the Valley of Slaughter. The siege from the Babylonians would cut off their food supplies, resulting in cannibalism, slaughter, and surrender. (Jeremiah 19:7-9) (2nd Kings 6:24-29) (Lamentations 2:20-21)
- D. The rebellious people would see a graphic illustration of a vessel of clay being broken beyond repair, which would be the fate of those who continued to worship false gods rather than the true and living God. The people who were trusting in God's protection simply because they went to the temple rather than obey the Lord, would soon see their temple, city, and lives destroyed. It is a dangerous thing to continue to disobey the Lord! (Jeremiah 19: 10-13).
- E. Judas was a vessel that chose to reject the work of the Potter. He betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver (common price for a slave) then felt guilt and remorse (NOT REPENTANCE!) when convicted. The blood money was used to buy a potters field, where broken vessels and bodies were scrapped. His body wound up broken and discarded as his soul was forever lost. (Matthew 27:3-10) (Acts 1:18-20)

THE POTTER CONTINUES TO WORK ON HIS VESSELS. HE IS SOVEREIGN, AND CAN MAKE VESSELS THAT ARE USED FOR HIS GLORY, OR THOSE WHO ARE USED IN DISHONORABLE WAYS AND BECOME BROKEN BEYOND REPAIR. (2nd Timothy 2:20-21)

WILL YOU RESPOND TO THE POTTER'S LOVING TOUCH UPON YOUR LIFE?

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