

# Go To The Potters House

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Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome to you all to our service this morning. We gather in the name of our Lord and we pray that his blessing would accompany the preaching of his word. We can begin by singing some verses from Psalm 19. Psalm 19 and we're going to sing the first four stanzas. Verses 1 to 6 of Psalm 19.

The heavens God's glory do declare, the skies his handworks preach, the other speech today, and night to night does knowledge teach.

There is no speech nor tongue to which their voice does not extend. Their line is gone through all the earth, their words to the world's end.

In them he set the sun a tent, who bridegroom like forth goes, from his chamber as a strong man does, to run his race rejoice.

From heaven's end is his going forth, circling to the end again, and there is nothing from his heat that hidden does remain.

[ 1 : 23 ] Let us sing these verses 1 to 6 of Psalm 19. The heavens God's glory do declare, the skies his handworks preach. The heavens God's glory do declare, the skies his handworks preach.

The heavens God's glory do declare, the skies his handworks preach.

The heavens God's glory do declare, the skies his handworks preach.

The heavens God's glory do not quite everywhere. The heavens God's glory do declare, the skies their hands and places nearer, of his eyes at ■■■ designs age.

Hischoated His ■■al, by His deciphering in ■erty, Amen.

[ 4 : 18 ] There is a proverb among the sons of men that a friend in the court is a friend indeed. Amen.

If our great advocate is with the Father in heaven and even through him that we have direct access to you.

Amen.

[ 7 : 23 ] Our concerns are often too many for us. We strive and we struggle daily to meet even the strangest of challenges.

The things that overtake us unexpectedly. The events of life for which we are not prepared. Lord, even though we could and should be ready for many of them because there is no sense in which any of these things that are commonplace in the world cannot also be our experience.

And yet, Lord, we find ourselves when we are visited by events that we have seen others encounter that we are not prepared for them when they become our experience.

We confess our weakness, our infirmity, our incapacity, our lack of resources that leaves us ill-equipped to deal with even the least of the twists and turnings of life.

But we pray that we are not prepared for them.

[ 9 : 15 ] We are not prepared for them. We pray for them. We are not prepared for them. We pray for the God who is worthy of receiving all our praises.

we pray for this congregation we pray for every member of it every person associated with it all the families, all the homes those who are interested in the things of God and those who are mere unlookers from afar we also pray for those who have a disinterested heart those whose lives go on apace with our own and who think themselves able to walk through this world without resource and without access to God and this does not trouble them may they have their eyes opened and their interest kindled may we experience a day of power and a day of awakening that the things of God would indeed be the stimulus to a greater interest in having a relationship with God for ourselves we pray for homes and families loved ones young and old that you would pour out spiritual blessings upon us we are mindful of those who have need and we bring these needs to you those who are struggling with ill health some in their homes some confined to hospital some depending on the visitations of others to sustain them to minister to them we would pray for them and for their recovery and that you would measurefully undertake for those whose concern for them is such a burden that they find difficult to bear we remember in your presence the grieving and the sorrowful as these visitations of the ever diligent messenger of death reminds us of our own frailty and the certainty of a walk that will ultimately conclude at some point and it's always in the distant future but who of us can dare presume upon that so bind up the wounds of the hurting may they seek comfort in your word and in the God whose word it is pour out your spirit upon us as an island community accompanying the preaching of the gospel with power from on high remember all the congregations of our denomination remembering all the congregations that proclaim Christ Jesus and Him crucified we pray for vacant congregations and ask that you would be at work in them as they await a fixed pastory to give thanks for those congregations that have recently been settled we seek that your blessing would be shown in calling others to go out with the gospel that would ensure that a continued witness is something that we are aware of most especially we pray for a night pouring of your spirit that we would know that you are our God that you have not forgotten us remember the nations of the earth most certainly we pray for them with regard to the

proclamation of truth in the midst those who have gone out with the gospel into strange lands we pray that you would preserve them as they seek to sow the seed especially in places in the world where there is a constant struggle because of the hostilities of war remember those who are afflicted those who are sorrowing as you have torn the heart out of families so many of them have had countless numbers of loved ones taken from them some left without parent some left without child some in the infirmity of old age without shelter or the hope that that would be afforded them we pray for the starving we pray for those who are diseased we pray for those who are affected in so many different ways may we learn what it is to plead the mercies of God even at the throne of grace remember us now as we continue in your presence bless the congregation bless the

Sunday school the children who will attend and those who will seek to set your word before them be near to us all cleansing from sin in Jesus name Amen boys and girls before you go out I believe you're going to continue talking about the work of the gospel at the very beginning of the New Testament era today you're going to be talking about Peter Peter was one of the disciples of Jesus and some of the disciples had suffered persecution and they had been greatly affected by the people's enmity to Christ and those who hated

Christ hated them also and Peter having witnessed the martyrdom of one of his friends he was taken and put into prison and the people who put him in prison pretended that he would remain there and that he would be made an example of when the time was ready for them to do so so they wanted him to stay in prison and they made sure as far as they were concerned that that was how it would be they put him in prison the doors were shut and he was well guarded we're told that there were four quarternans which is four soldiers times four soldiers so 16 soldiers were put with the responsibility of making sure that

[ 17 : 01 ] Peter stayed in prison but that wasn't enough not only was he put in prison and the door locked and 16 soldiers guarding him he was also put in chains and not only was in chains there was a soldier put on either side of him to make sure that he stayed put and that's the way it was for him they wanted to make sure that there was no way that Peter was going to get out but during the night we are told that something strange sharpened a bright light shown in the prison and Peter was visited by an angel he didn't know it was an angel he thought he was having a dream but the angel came and it prompted

Peter it struck Peter on the side so he must have been asleep and he got Peter to get up and get dressed and his chains fell off and he was led by the angel from the prison he walked past the soldiers now we're not told how the soldiers didn't see him but he was led by the angel past the guards the doors that were barred and shut they just opened off their own accord and Peter was taken to the home where the fellow disciples were met and we are told that when this happened not only was Peter amazed but his friends didn't believe their eyes either the girl who went to the door when she heard the door knock she heard the voice of

Peter she recognized the voice of Peter to her amazement it couldn't have been him but it was she wanted to tell her friends and they refused to believe it was him because he was in prison and they believed that he couldn't be released but he was and that was just one angel I believe that you were hearing about angels just a short while ago and we don't really understand much about angels and because we don't we haven't met them except maybe if we have met them unaware that is we might have met an angel without realising that it was an angel and who can say but the bible tells us that they are there but if you can think of an angel just one angel the power that that angel possesses this was just a messenger sent by

God to release the servant that he wanted taken out of prison the apostle John who wrote the book of the revelation tells us that in a dream that he was dreaming he saw it to heaven and he saw before the throne of heaven not one angel but thousands of angels he heard first of all the voice of many angels ten thousand he says times ten thousand he must have been good at sums and then he says well maybe not it was thousands upon thousands wonder what that figure was maybe you do your sons when you go home what is ten thousand time ten thousand many angels Jesus when he was in the garden of

Gethsemane they came to arrest him and when the soldiers came to arrest him one of the disciples took out a sword in order to keep Jesus safe that's what they thought the sword will do it but Jesus said put away your sword do you not know that I can pray my father and he can send as a response to my prayer he can send twelve legions of angels not one angel but twelve legions and one legion we are told is round about six thousand soldiers and Jesus was saying my father can send seventy two thousand angels just by my asking what he was doing was he was telling them my power or the father's power is greater than anything that you can think of so when he uses an angel just one angel to do his bidding to ensure that one of his people is kept safe or is preserved to do more work another day

[ 23 : 00 ] God is able to do that his power not just the power of one angel because you have to remember we think of angels as being supernatural beings and they are but they're God's messengers they're God's servants and his power is greater than theirs he has power to send them to do his work when he chooses and this is what the Bible tells us about the release of Peter to do God's work allowed by one angel I wonder if you think of what it's going to be like when Jesus Christ comes again he's coming again he said and he will be accompanied by countless numbers of heavenly angels which will speak then as it speaks now of our power that is without measure and without equal may

God help us to try and do our sons properly and think what God means for us to think about for our good we're going to sing now as you go out to Sunday school from Psalm 74 and we're singing from verse 16 and we're going to sing to verse 21 thine only is the day O Lord thine also is the night and thou alone prepared it has the sun and shining light by thee the borders of the earth were settled everywhere the summer and the winter both by thee created where that the enemies reproached have or keep it in record and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name O Lord and to the multitude do not thy turtle soul deliver the congregation of thy poor do not forget forever and to thy covenant have respect on earth dark places he be full of the habitations of horrid cruelty

O let not those that be oppressed return again with shame let those that poor and needy are give praise unto thy name we'll sing these verses 16 to 21 of psalm 74 thine thine only is the day o lord thine also is the night thine only is the day o lord thine also is the night and the heart prepared the sun on shining light by thee the borders of the earth where settled every way there the sun on the winter long and he created where that the earth have a own keep it and record and let the foolish speak the love that speak thy name

O Lord unto the righteous return thy church and soul deliver that all creation of thy faith cannot forget forever unto thy covenant respect for Whatever thy blessed be for all there hand it is ca created through witchoo let

O let not those that be oppressed return again with sin.

[ 28 : 40 ] O let not those that be oppressed return again with sin.

We will read the whole chapter. The book of the prophet Jeremiah chapter 18. The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord said, Arise and go down to the porterhouse and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

Then I went down to the porterhouse and behold he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the porter.

So he made it again another vessel. I seemed good to the porter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this porter, saith the Lord.

Behold, as the clay is in the porter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to pluck up and to pull down and to destroy it.

[ 30 : 25 ] If that nation against whom I have done, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to build and to plant it.

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.

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 everyone from his evil way and make your ways and your doings good. And they said, There is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will everyone do the imagination of his evil heart.

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.

[ 31 : 44 ] Will a man leave the snow 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 walking paths in a way not cast up.

To make their land desolate and a perpetual hissing. Everyone that passeth thereby shall be astonished and walk his head.

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

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.

[ 32 : 52 ] Come and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words. Give heed to me, O Lord, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me.

Shall evil be recompensed for good? For they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them.

Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour out their blood by the force of the sword. 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. 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. Yet, Lord, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay me.

[ 34 : 00 ] Forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy side. But let them be overthrown before thee. Deal thus with them in the time of thine anger.

Amen. And may the Lord add his blessing to this reading of his word, and to his name be the praise. We're going to sing from Psalm 94, and at verse 9.

Psalm 94, and verse 9. Lord did plant the ear of man, and here then shall not he.

He only formed the eye, and then shall he not clearly see. He that the nations doth correct, shall he not chastise you? He knowledge unto man doth teach, and shall himself not know.

Man's thoughts to be but vanity, the Lord doth well discern. Blessed is the man thou chastenest, Lord, and makes thy law to learn, that thou mayst give him rest from days of sad adversity, until the pit be digged for those that work in equity.

[ 35 : 24 ] For sure the Lord will not cast off those that his people be, neither his own inheritance, quit and forsake will he.

But judgment unto righteousness shall yet return again, and all shall follow after it that are right-hearted men.

And so on. Psalm 94, verses 9 through to 15. The Lord did plant the ear of man, and here then shall not he.

The Lord did plant the ear of man, and here then shall not he.

The holy twenty-SNIUMH.■ The holy four-one-penet shall be not where we see.

[ 36 : 27 ] He but the nations of the Lord shall he not chastise you.

He will in charge to hand the feet and shall himself not know.

Man's thoughts do even have it. The Lord just left his hand.

Christ is the Lord that is the Lord and makes thy love to him.

But thou mayst give him rest on this false and adversity.

[ 37 : 51 ] Until the pain he gave for those that were given with thee.

For sure the Lord will not cast off those that is thee of thee.

My kindness theme is called When thy power speak will he.

But judgment unto righteousness shall yet return again.

And all shall follow unto it as a right-hearted man.

[ 39 : 16 ] Shall we turn to the passage read, the Old Testament, book of the prophet Jeremiah, chapter 18.

And we'll read verse 6. 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.

As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. I don't think that what is taught by the Lord here is a comfortable message for any one of us.

Especially if we think that we know better than the Lord himself.

[ 40 : 35 ] And very often we do. Those of us who are Christians profess to believe God and to trust God and to be completely at ease with whatever God is doing.

And yet there are times when we find that there are things that we know God is doing and yet we are not at ease with them.

Perhaps there are things that God is doing in our providence that we are less than comfortable with.

There are ways in which we have found ourselves challenged. Just for example, in the way that we think or the actions that we intend to take or have taken.

And God has seen fit to teach us that these actions are not as they should be. That they are at times totally wrong.

[ 42 : 08 ] And when God takes us into the classroom as Christians and teaches us that, sometimes we find ourselves having to bite our tongue or to swallow our pride and submit because we know better than to confront God.

But that doesn't mean to say that we don't feel like doing it. We may have sufficient wisdom to know better than to confront God or to challenge Him in what we know Him to be saying or we know Him to be saying to us personally.

And yet, at the same time, we are very reluctant to bend to His will.

Now, Jeremiah the prophet is sent by God to the potter's house. And the picture that we are given here is sometimes explained to us as a parable of the Old Testament.

Now, parables are variously described, but I don't think this conforms to what you would expect a parable to do.

[ 43 : 51 ] It's not a story that is meant to convey a particular truth. Instead, the Lord speaks to Jeremiah and tells him to go to the place of work of the potter and to observe the potter at work.

And when he observes the potter at work, then he receives a sermon from the Lord from what he sees.

It's not the Lord actually filling his mouth with words that he is meant to take to his own people, Israel or Judah, as they are now.

He doesn't say, just, I'm going to give you a sermon and go and preach it. That's what he does, but it's not what he says.

He tells them to go to this place, watch what is happening and learn from what is happening and from what you see, go and speak to this, my people.

[ 45 : 11 ] And that's where the message comes from. Message from God to his people. And there are three things that we have here that are brought home to us that the Lord means the prophet to understand and he means his people to understand.

Remember, he is speaking to his people. He is speaking to his people of Judah, bear his name. But in a sense, he is also reminding us to bear his name, who would be part of the church that bears his name, the Christian church.

We want to notice the divine porter because he means us to understand.

That's the picture that is conveyed to the mind of Jeremiah when he sees this happen. Secondly, he has something to say to him about the clay that the porter is using.

The clay is marred, it is spoiled. And thirdly, he has something to say to him about the porter and the clay.

[ 46 : 33 ] When the clay is found to be marred, he reforms it. He takes it again and reworks it.

And through what the prophet saw, he had this message to convey to the people. I think the Lord himself understood or meant the prophet to understand that instantly, when he saw the porter at work, that the mind was open to the way the Lord worked in the lives of his people.

God himself intends to be compared to the porter. Like the clay in the porter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.

And the language of Scripture often reminds us of the activity of God on the scene of time.

Many people are totally oblivious to God at work simply because they don't see his hands and they don't recognize his hand works.

[ 48 : 02 ] But if our eyes have been opened by God, we can't but not see it. We can't but not understand this is the doing of the Lord.

God. And he reminds us at the very outset of the Scripture that he is the artist per excellence.

He is the creator God. And he is the God who was responsible at the very outset for all of creation.

And we see the creation of mankind from the dust. But even more, we see him in the dust that he created mankind from.

He was responsible for all that we survey and all that we are capable of recognizing all its origin as far as God's word is concerned to the God whose word it is.

[ 49 : 13 ] and that is something that we find repeatedly brought to our attention throughout the word of God.

He tells us and I wonder if he has to tell us that because we forget it. we are so far removed from God intellectually and spiritually and we can't conceive of a God whose power is inexpressibly so majestic and so omnipotent that there is no bounds to his power that when we are confronted by it we refuse to acknowledge it or recognize it because to us it is something of an impossibility.

And yet the very thing we are confronted with at the beginning of God's word is in the beginning was God. and in Genesis chapter 2 we read then the Lord formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

It's the emphasis there on the formation of man from the dust by God. Now when you're told that man owes its origin to God that instantly that at that moment relegates you to a position of inferiority.

You are at that moment confronted with that truth that is uncomfortable. There is one who is greater than you. And that's that truth that mankind oh mankind is uncomfortable with.

[ 51 : 22 ] Because constantly we are told that we are masters of our own faith that we are in control of all the events that our life is made up of.

We are on the throne as far as our life is concerned. But the reality that the scripture brings to our attention is this that God is at the head of all that ever came into being.

The psalm that we were singing we are reminded of a simple truth. He who planted the ear does he not hear? He who formed the eye does he not see?

in the next psalm the sea is his for he made it and his hands formed the dry land.

Emphasis constantly on the power that he possesses which is a creative power. power. And when we study it and when we consider it and when we reflect upon it it should inspire us to think yes this is a God who is great.

[ 52 : 40 ] and the language that is used by God here as he speaks through the prophet tells us that there is in a sense when we think of the creative power of God there is something that we can compare to.

And I'm always I've always been to places where I've seen masters or skillful individuals working away at their own chosen sphere of labour and it's impressive.

When you see, remember visiting a glass factory in Ireland and seeing there the blowing glass and working glass and it's a skill I don't possess and I wouldn't know where to begin.

But not only are they able to create from origins that would suggest to you it is not possible for such a beautiful creation to emerge.

And yet you see with your own eyes this is where it all began and this is what the end product was. And it's all down to the skill of this person who knows how to handle the tools that are his, the tools of his trade.

[ 54 : 14 ] But even those of you who've seen the ordinary joiner, woodworker at work, I mean I don't know much about but you see them and watch them and they'll take a plank of wood and they'll hold it up to their eye and you're looking to see what they're seeing and you can see what they're seeing and you see this bit of wood which seems alright for you to hammer and nail into it but it's full of knots and it's absolutely useless if you're going to use it for a particular type of work.

But the skill of the wood worker understands how this works and there's a skill to that trade. It doesn't matter what the trade is.

There's always ways in which the skill is nurtured and developed and experienced is all. And there Jeremiah is caused to go and visit the potter and he sees this person skilful in creating works of art.

Maybe not works of art, menial, pots and pans that were used in the household necessary for carrying water or making food or some description.

And yet he took the lump of meager clay from the ground dirty and formless and he placed it on the potter's wheel and he took some water and he took some whatever it was and he began to turn and out of what emerged this object that was clearly recognisable came, that was useful, that was meant to be used for a purpose for which it was designed.

[ 56 : 20 ] the potter can fashion his pots from the clay itself. But that's where the analogy breaks down.

And we always have to remember when we're dealing with proverbs, when we're dealing with parables, when we're dealing with imagery in the scripture that often times there are segments of it that are designed to be considered and considered very closely and deeply and see the truth that they contained.

Other elements are just there because they have to be there to support the truth that is brought to our attention.

They're not meant to be considered as irrelevant, but the relevance of the parable is not in them.



And when we think of God as the porter, in comparison to the porter that Jeremiah was sent to look at and to observe, the porter that Jeremiah saw had to find a lump of clay and had to provide the water that was used to shape and to fashion the clay.

- [ 57 : 46 ] And like the God of heaven who brought forth all things by the word of his mouth, he created the clay, he created the water, he provided all things, and in that sense his position in the scheme of things is one that is primary, that is essential for our understanding of what he has to say.

And the porter, more than likely, he was providing a pot for somebody else. Somebody else had probably spent some money and told him go and provide a jug or a jar or a bowl, or maybe at the end of it all he would take it to the marketplace and sell it on because that was his trade.

But God as a porter, he provides the clay and he provides all necessary for forming it and the glory that belongs to that is his.

it is for his glory, it is for his good, and for the good of those who are his, his glory is bound up with his because he has chosen it to be.

The word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this porter, saith the Lord? Behold, as the clay in the porter's hand saw you in my hand, O house of Israel.

- [ 59 : 37 ] But the picture that the prophet saw must have included this porter rather than coming up with something that was going to end up in the British Museum because of its beauty.

The lump that he was working was unworkable for whatever reason. or there was something the matter with the clay or something the matter with the amount of water that he used or something the matter with the constituents of the clay.

It had an impurity in it that made it that it didn't, wasn't able to function the way it should. And whatever he did it couldn't, it didn't work.

Israel, this is a message to Israel, it's a message to God's chosen people. And they have gone away from God.

You remember when the prophet was sent to them with a message from God, did they thank him for it? No, because my people, he says, has forgotten me.

- [ 60 : 59 ] They have burned incense to vanity. 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, perpetual hissing, everyone that passes thereby shall be astonished and walk his head.

They had departed from God, and the messenger from God was sent to them to bring this to their attention. And the way the prophet was to bring it to their attention was they were not to be as God intended them to be.

They were showing that they were not. He was forming them as the porter formed whatever it was he was doing.

But they weren't turning out the way they should. God said to them to them to be as a prophet. God challenges them through the prophet that their blame game that is played by so many is one where instead of acknowledging yes God you've got it right will not the way we should be.

But instead they turn it on its head and say you're not the way you should be. God speaks to them as a God who is their God a people who is who are his people and that is a relationship that they understand and that they have been taught and that they are reminded of again and again.

- [ 62 : 42 ] That is a relationship that belongs within the bounds of covenant. That God says I will be your God and I will be to you all that will ever be needed by you.

I will provide for you. I will clothe you. I will feed you. I will keep you safe. And their ear is open to that.

They hear that. And they say that's what you're bound to do. You're supposed to do that. That's you troll as God. You're supposed to be looking after me.

You're supposed to make sure I'm not hungry. You're supposed to keep me safe. You're supposed to ensure my children will be healthy. You're supposed to keep me warm at night. Is there not another side to it?

What about you? Where are you in this Israel? Well, did you not promise to walk before me and be blameless?

[ 63 : 50 ] Did you not promise to be my people? Did you not promise to be faithful to me as your God? God? And yet you have other gods.

Did you not promise to give your life to me? And to be faithful to me within the terms that you yourself are challenging me for not keeping them as you think I should.

God's God's estimate of the way they are is they despised me and they despised my law and they're bringing that up as if it's all one-sided.

it. And that's our instinct is it not? God can challenge us as to our behaviour and yet when that happens we say what right have you?

You know here's Jeremiah the servant of God and he tells them what God wants them to say to them and what do they do? Well they're ready to put him to death.

[ 65 : 07 ] Let us devise against Jeremiah for the law shall not perish from the priest or the 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.

Give heed to me O Lord and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. The prophet is stimulated to anger and you might say to yourself oh dear he's let his worst side come to the light when he wants them to be dealt with in the way that he does.

And there's the problem. God is dealing with them in a wise way in a just way in a holy way and we can't we can't depart from what God is doing just simply because we suffer at the hands of those who despise that court.

But what did we learn from God? Well he says look this isn't the end. It wasn't the end for the potter. He took this lump of clay that was clearly unworkable.

It was meant to form a pot or a pan or a pitcher of some kind and it had broken down.

[ 66 : 36 ] So what did he do? Well we're not told that he threw it in the bucket. No he stopped the wheel, took it again and he started reforming it.

He started shaping it again. The vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter. So he made it again. Another vessel has seemed good to the potter to make it.

And this was the message you see the prophet was meant to deliver. Yes you're marred, yes you're spoiled, yes you've gone away from the Lord, but the Lord can take you back to himself.

As the clay is under the will and under the power of the potter, so are you under the will and under the power of God who is able to make of you better than you would make of yourself.

You think that you're fine, you think that you're okay, you think that what you're doing is going to end up well, but you're wrong. And I know because I'm God, I know because I understand the outcome of the ways upon which men have walked for centuries.

[ 68 : 01 ] And the prophet Isaiah was speaking, he says, woe to him who strives with him who formed a pot among earthen pots.

Does the clay say to him who forms it, what are you making or your work has no handles? You find the prophet Isaiah had a sense of humour.

And you know how ridiculous it looks when you think of a lump of clay speaking to the potter and saying, I'm not happy with what you're making. I didn't want to be a pan, I wanted to be a beautiful ewer with floral design, I wanted to be on the mantelpiece, I didn't want to be in the sink.

But is it not something like that we're telling God? when God tells us, this is how you're going to be useful, this is how your life is going to be profitable, this is how you are meant to live your life for the glory of God, and you say, I don't want that life.

I don't want to go that way. I don't want to be what God wants. So there you have a will that is placed against another will, and you see it, the defiance and the resistance, and you see it as futile.

[ 69 : 50 ] Because if we think that our will will prevail against the will of the divine, the God who is all power, the God who is omnipotent, the God who created heaven and earth, the God who sustains heaven and earth, the God who you say that is incapable of so many things that you are capable of.

In verse 11, now, now therefore go, 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 against you, return you now everyone from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.

God, it's what the Lord gives us in his ministry, the opportunity to repent, the opportunity to return to himself, and yet often we don't choose that opportunity or take that opportunity.

The Apostle Paul in the New Testament wrote these words. Perhaps he had the mind of Jeremiah, the thoughts of Jeremiah in his own mind.

Has the potter no right over the clay to make out of the same lump, one vessel for honour, another for dishonour? What if God, deciding to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath, prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory, for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory?

[ 71 : 39 ] What if Paul says, again he's pitching the will of God, and saying, well, if you say there is no God, and by saying there is no God, there is no will that is against your will, then, clearly, the ground that you occupy is safe ground for you, and you will come to know her, because the God that has a will to reform your life, is someone that you can resist at will.

God is to God is in view as a moral governor, and it is in his hands to pardon or to punish, to bring to repentance, or even to pull down those that he has lifted up.

go to the altar, Jeremiah was told, see there what you see, and report it, so that others can learn from it.

the God who is sovereign, the God who is all-powerful, is able to mend lives, to heal hurts, to bind our bones, to bring back to a sense of reality those who have embraced the realities that are held up but are shadows.

May God help us to appreciate what he means us to learn from the potter's house. Let us pray. O Lord, O God, we give thanks that in our own life we can see how you have taken us and reformed us, and such reformation is necessary in our going on in this world.

[ 73 : 52 ] We would pray for your grace to see how awesome that your works are, even in bringing to yourself a race that is sorely afflicted by sin.

Cleanse us from such sin through the one that you have ordained by which that is possible. Go before us and pardon us in Jesus' name. Amen.

Our closing psalm is Psalm 103. Psalm 103 verse 13.

Such pity as our father hath unto his children dear, like pity shows the Lord to such as worship him in fear, for he remembers we are dust, and he our frame well knows.

Frail man his days are like the grass as flower in the field he grows. To verse 17. Such pity as our father hath. Such pity as our father hath that you have his children dear, like pity shows the hope to such as what should live in fear, for he remembers we are close, and he our great well knows.

[ 75 : 37 ] We love his children to fuerte, like her trust, as fellow and we hear.

For over theuencia standard things is And all the praise where once it was It shall no more be known But unto them that you have feared God's mercy never ends And to let your children Let us live His righteousness exchange

Now may grace, mercy and peace From all the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit Rest and abide with you all now And always, Amen