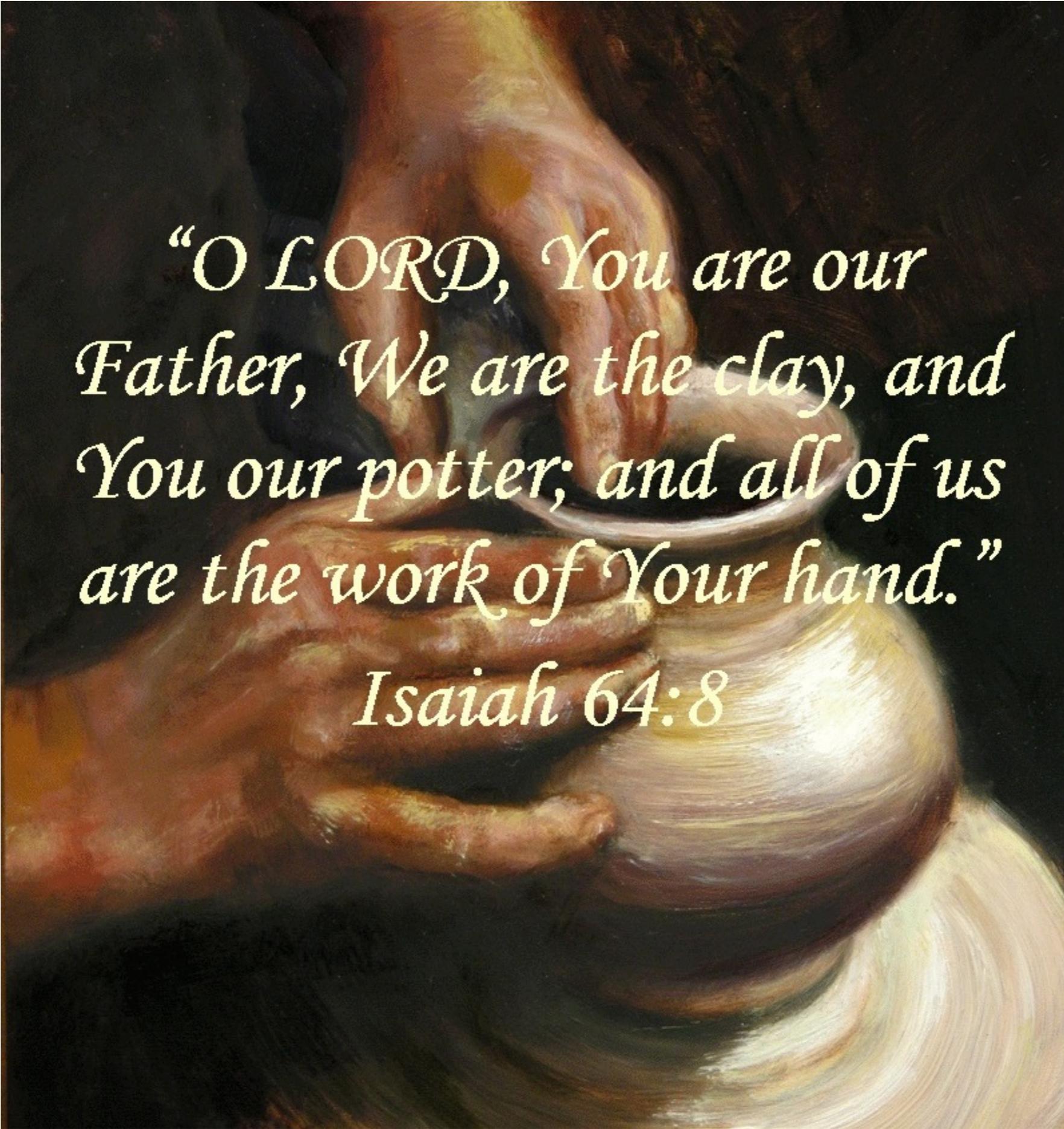


Lessons Old
Testament Prophets
Could Give
to America Today

Jeremiah 18

Introduction

- This message from Jeremiah consists of a number of parables and events.
- The parable of the potter (chapter 18) shows God's sovereign dealing with Judah.
- The next chapter (chapter 19) is the symbolic breaking of a potter's jar to show God's impending judgment.

A detailed oil painting showing a pair of hands working on a pottery wheel. The hands are rendered with soft, realistic brushstrokes, showing the texture of the skin and the way light catches the fingers. The clay being shaped is a warm, reddish-brown color, and the wheel itself is a lighter, creamy tone. The background is dark and indistinct, focusing all attention on the hands and the pot. The overall mood is one of quiet concentration and craftsmanship.

*“O LORD, You are our
Father, We are the clay, and
You our potter; and all of us
are the work of Your hand.”*

Isaiah 64:8

Potter and Clay

- Verses on potter and clay
- Isaiah 64:8 - “But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.”
- Romans 9:21 - “Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?”

12 Tribes				722	Assyria takes 10 tribes		2 Tribes of Judah		609	Babylon	539	Medo-Persia	
Obadiah	Joel	Jonah	Amos	Hosea	Nahum		-		Daniel			-	
Elisha		-		Micah	-	Zephaniah	Habakkuk		-	Ezekiel	-	★ Zechariah	
-				Isalah		Jeremiah				-	Haggai	Malachi	

Obadiah

Zephaniah

Habakkuk

Jeremiah

The Potter and the Clay

Jeremiah 18

The Potter

- God directed Jeremiah to go down to the potter's house and watch him molding clay into pots on his wheel.
- As Jeremiah watched, the potter discovered a flaw in the pot he was shaping with his hands.
- So he pressed the clay into a lump and formed it into another pot (verse 4).



The Potter

- The potter applies pressure to turn the clay in the right direction, so that the clay takes the form intended.
- But when the clay resists, the potter repents of making a vessel and crushes it into a lump to make another.
- A challenge in your life will bring you against the pressure of the Potter's hand ready to mold you.
- Will to accept His hand in your life or will you resist?

The Potter

- God explained that the potter and the clay illustrated His relationship to His people.
- They are like clay in His hand (verse 6). He has the right to tear down or built up a nation as He pleases.
- He had promised the national blessing, but the nation continued to do evil.
- He would reconsider the good He intended (verse 8) and bring about judgment.

The Potter

- However, if Judah would turn from her evil ways, God would also revoke the disaster He was about to send.
- 2 Chronicles 7:14 - “if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”
- But instead they continue to follow in their own plans (verse 12) in the stubbornness of their evil hearts.

Judah

- Judah stood alone among the nations in a stubborn refusal to follow God.
- Jeremiah 2:11 - “Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit.”
- Even the snow on the slopes of Lebanon and the cool waters that flow from these mountains are more dependable than fickle Judah.

Judah

- Jeremiah asks a question: “Do the mountain waters run dry? the cold flowing streams?”
- Does snow melt away from the tops of the high mountains?
- Do the waters of these streams ever run dry when the snow is continually melting?
- This is contrary to what we see in nature.

Judah

- They have turned from God to worship worthless idols (Jeremiah 2:5) which only cause them to stumble.
- By abandoning the ancient paths of obedience to God (Jeremiah 6:16), Judah found herself on bypaths and wandering aimlessly over rough roads.
- God was going to judge the nation for her sin by having her land laid waste (verse 16). People will be appalled at her stupidity in abandoning God.

Judah

- The Lord vowed to scatter the nation like the wind from the east (Jeremiah 4:11-12, 13:24).
- They should expect God's judgment: "I will show them my back, not my face" (Jeremiah 18:17).
- God's judgment - His back
- God's favor - His face

Jeremiah

- They responded by making plans against Jeremiah.
- They refused to accept his declaration of doom because it conflicted with their belief that all would continue as it had without interruption.
- They chose to attack him with their tongues in an effort to slander and malign his message (verse 18).
- They also chose to pay no attention to his words.

Jeremiah

- The government conspired and began to plot against Jeremiah.
- Essentially, they were saying: “This man is not going to change anything in this country.”
- Verse 18 - “for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise.”
- They launched a campaign of defilement and defamation against Jeremiah.

Jeremiah

- Jeremiah responded to the Lord that they were even plotting to take away his life.
- Verse 20 - “they have dug a pit for my life.”
- Jeremiah asked God to listen to their accusations, to remember his faithfulness, and to judge the plotters for their sin.
- Earlier, Jeremiah asked God to turn His wrath away (Jeremiah 7:16; 8:20-22) but now changed his message.

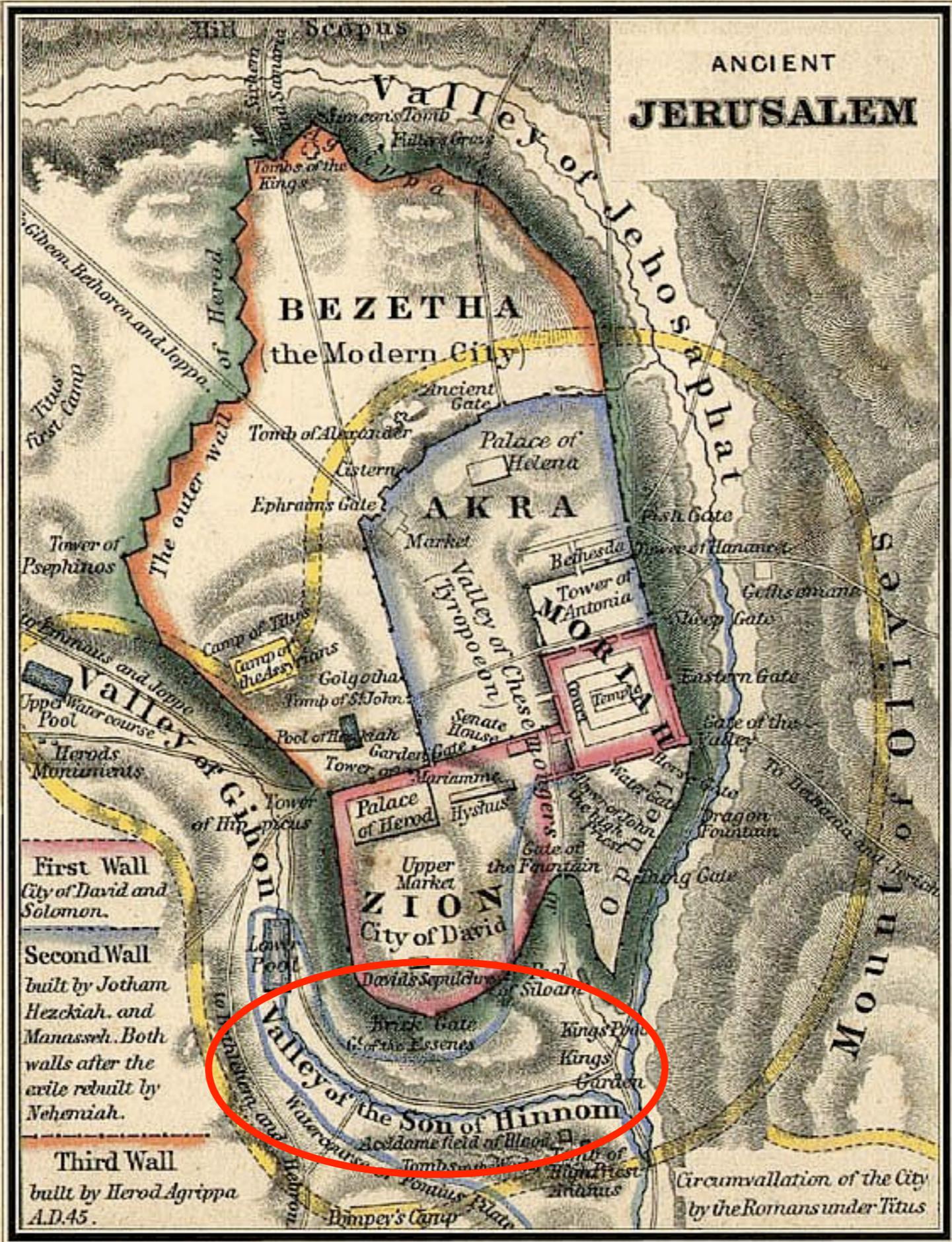
The Broken Jar

Jeremiah 19

Broken Jar

- God directed Jeremiah to buy a potter's jar (flask) and take it out to the Valley of the Son of Hinnom.
- This was located just outside of the Potsherd Gate and served as Jerusalem's "community dump."
- It was called that because the people would carry their potsherds (broken pieces of pottery) and other garbage and throw it in the Hinnom Valley.

ANCIENT JERUSALEM



First Wall
City of David and Solomon.

Second Wall
built by Jotham, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. Both walls after the exile rebuilt by Nehemiah.

Third Wall
built by Herod Agrippa A.D. 45.



Circumvallation of the City by the Romans under Titus

Broken Jar

- After gathering a group of elders and priests, Jeremiah delivered his message.
- God vowed to bring disaster on Jerusalem because of her idolatry (verse 4-5) who slaughtered their sons to offer them as sacrifices in the fire.
- God would therefore rename this place the “Valley of the Slaughter.”

Broken Jar

- Jeremiah elaborated on the coming catastrophe.
- The people would fall by the sword before Babylon.
- The city would become an object of scorn (18:16) to those who observed her destruction.
- Those who sought refuge in the city would resort to cannibalism as the food supply was choked off.

Broken Jar

- To dramatize the message to the audience, God commanded Jeremiah to break the jar he carried.
- God said he would smash both the nation of Judah and the city of Jerusalem just as Jeremiah smashed the jar.
- After that pronouncement, Jeremiah went directly to the temple court. The message given to the leaders was now repeated to all the people.

Historical Perspective

- This prediction came true.
- The armies of Nebuchadnezzar surrounded this city, laid siege to it, and the resulting famine grew so severe, that the people resorted to cannibalism.
- Then the armies broke down the walls of the city and leveled them to the ground.
- Later those passing by would whistle in amazement at the destruction of the city.

Resources

