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The Potter's Clay

18: 1-23

605 BC during the eleven-year reign of Jehoiakim



Over thirty words in the Hebrew vocabulary relate directly to **pottery**, because the manufacture of **pottery** was a major industry in the Near East in that day. No doubt **Jeremiah** had passed **the potter's** house many times, but this time **ADONAI** had a special message for **him** that, after **he** preached it, would put **him** in jail. When you follow **the Lord**, you never know what will happen next. **The potter** sat before two parallel stone wheels that were joined by a shaft. **He** turned the bottom wheel with **his** feet and worked **the clay** on the top wheel as the wheel turned. As **Jeremiah** watched, **he** saw that the clay resisted **the potter's** hand so that **the jar** was ruined, but **the potter** patiently kneaded **the clay** and made another **jar**.

The *interpretation* of the image was national, relating to the house of **Yisra'el (18:6-10)**, but the *application* was individual **(18:11-17)**, calling for a response from the people of **Y'hudah** and **Yerushalayim**. It also calls for a personal response today.¹⁷³

After **the indictment (18:1-12)** and **the sentence (18:13-17)**, we have an expression of **the opposition the prophet** evoked **(18:18)** and **the prayer he** prayed for help, in the face of that opposition **(18:19-23)**.