

# THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

Jeremiah 18:1-11.

LESSON 122 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: “Yield yourselves unto God” (Romans 6:13).

## BIBLE TEXT

### Jeremiah 18:1-11.

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

4 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.

5 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

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.

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

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

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

10 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.

11 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.

### The Potter's House

Let us imagine that we are going to the potter's house with Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a preacher who loved and obeyed God. God told him to go down to the potter's house, because He wanted to talk to him there.

### The Wheel

We can picture the potter sitting before his wheel as we enter the door. A potter's wheel is round and flat, something like the top of a table, and it is called a wheel because it goes around and around as he pushes it now and then with his hand. In the middle of the wheel there is a small part of the surface that is higher than the rest. On this little raised platform he has thrown a piece of carefully prepared clay, or mud. He throws it rather than putting it down gently, so it will stick while he moulds or shapes it. He wants to make something useful and beautiful.

### Preparation

God wants to make us useful and helpful to others and beautiful in our hearts, too; so He carefully prepares us, when we are saved, by putting many good things in our hearts. One of these good things is love; we love God, and we love everybody. Another thing is joy; it makes us glad to do what God wants us to do. And another thing is gentleness. When we love Jesus with all our heart we always want to be gentle and kind to our pets, to our playmates, and to everyone.

### Marred

Let us suppose the potter is making a cup. This cup will be useful, but it is to be beautiful, too. As the wheel spins around, we see that the potter is moulding or shaping the clay with his hands. But suddenly something happens! – the cup is no longer beautiful – it is marred or spoiled. Perhaps the clay has become a little stiff and hard.

Sometimes children are stiff and hard, too, are they not? Maybe they forget to pray every day, and they become disobedient and want to have their own way. But let us see what the potter does. He stops the wheel, takes the clay and works it with his hands. He does not throw it away, because there is a way to make the clay good again. The potter adds water, and works it into the clay. Then he throws it down on the wheel again.

### **Made Good Again**

This time the clay is just right – soft and smooth. At the touch of the potter’s fingers, the clay seems to obey and even to know what the potter wants it to be, and he makes it into a pretty cup.

God wants to do that with us, too. If we have done wrong, if we pray and ask God to forgive us and help us to be good all the time, He will start again to mould and make us beautiful in our heart.

### **More Work**

There is still more work to be done on the cup. If it were left just as it is when the potter takes it off his wheel it would soon break and crumble. It has to be baked in a hot oven so that it will be strong. When the cup is taken out of the oven, it is ready to be decorated. Perhaps the potter paints a row of yellow daises around the edge of the cup. Then the cup is dipped into a liquid that makes it shiny. This has to be baked, too, so the cup is put back into the oven and it is heated again. You see there is much to be done to the cup to make it just right. So God has to do much with us, too, to make us just what He wants us to be.

### **Beautiful and Strong**

When it comes out this time, the cup is lovely to look upon, as well as strong enough to last and last. Some of the cups and dishes, which were made like this a long, long time ago – even before Jesus was on earth – are still good today.

### **Our Lives**

God wants to do still more for us, too, after He saves us. He wants to help us to be obedient even when it would seem easier to have our own way; He wants us always to tell the truth even when Satan would tempt us to tell a lie; He wants us to be helpful and kind to others when we might want to do something for ourselves. Then God wants to make us more beautiful and dress our hearts in a pure white robe, and when we pray and ask Him to make us clean and holy, He sanctifies us.

There is still more beauty to be added to our lives, and when we desire with all our heart to be just what God wants us to be, and pray earnestly, God baptizes us with the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost adorns our heart with beautiful jewels – love, goodness, and many others.

We can be good and helpful, and have beautiful, clean hearts all our lives if every day we yield ourselves to God, or give up our own way to do what God wants us to do. We can always know what God wants us to do, because He tells us in the Bible.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Why did God tell Jeremiah to go down to the potter’s house? Jeremiah 18:2.
2. What did the potter do after the vessel was marred or spoiled? Jeremiah 18:4.
3. What does God want to do with us? Jeremiah 18:6.
4. What must we do so that God can make our hearts beautiful? Jeremiah 18:11.
5. What must we do to keep the beauty God puts in our hearts? Psalm 119:11.

## **LESSON RESOURCES**

# THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

Lesson 122

Jeremiah 18:1-11

# Jesus Is The Joy Of Living

WATCH & PRAY 192

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# Jesus Is The Joy Of Living

Jesus is the Joy of Living,  
He's the King of Life to me  
Unto Him my all I'm giving  
His for evermore to be,  
I will do what He commands me,  
Anywhere He leads I'll go;  
Jesus is the Joy of Living,  
He's the dearest Friend I know.

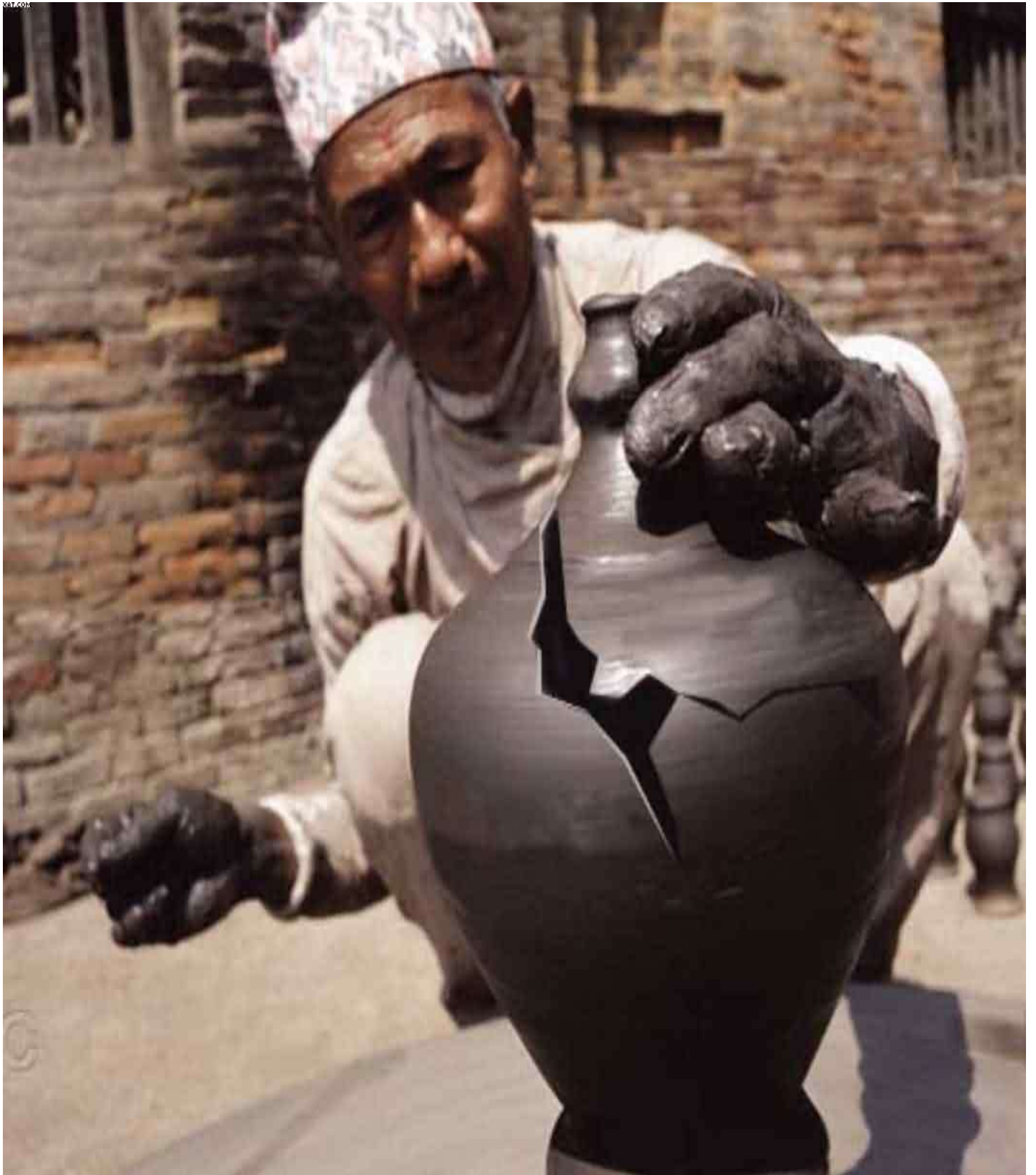
**PICTURE 1**



PICTURE 2



PICTURE 3





PICTURE 4



PICTURE 5

