

Jeremiah 18:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

God commands an object lesson: "Arise, and go down to the potter's house." The imperative *qum* (קום, arise) indicates immediate action—this isn't a suggestion but a divine command. The potter's house (*bet ha-yotzer*, בֵּית הַיּוֹצֵר) was likely a well-known location in Jerusalem where potters worked their craft. "There I will cause thee to hear my words" promises direct revelation at the specified location.

God often used visual object lessons to communicate profound spiritual truth—Isaiah walked naked (Isa 20), Ezekiel performed symbolic acts (Ezek 4-5), Hosea married a prostitute (Hos 1-3). These acted prophecies engaged multiple senses, making abstract theological truths concrete and memorable. The potter's workshop would provide the perfect illustration of divine sovereignty over nations.

This method demonstrates God's condescension—He accommodates human learning by using familiar images and experiences to convey spiritual realities. The Reformed tradition emphasizes God's pedagogical wisdom in revelation, progressively teaching His people through types, symbols, and ultimately through Christ, the perfect image of the invisible God (Col 1:15).

Historical Context

Pottery-making was ubiquitous in the ancient Near East. Clay vessels served countless domestic and commercial purposes. Archaeological excavations throughout Israel reveal extensive pottery remains, providing crucial chronological

markers. Potters' workshops typically included a wheel (likely foot-powered), kilns, and clay preparation areas. Jeremiah's audience would have been thoroughly familiar with the pottery-making process.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when God directs you to seemingly ordinary places to receive spiritual insight?
2. What everyday experiences might God use as object lessons to teach you spiritual truth?
3. How does God's use of familiar imagery to communicate profound truth demonstrate His wisdom and grace?

Interlinear Text

קוּם	וַיֵּבֶדְתָּ	בְּיַת	הַיֹּצֵר	אֶשְׁמָה
Arise	and go down	house	to the potter's	H8033
H6965	H3381	H1004	H3335	
	אֲשַׁמְיעֶכָּ	אֶת	דְּבָרָי:	
	and there I will cause thee to hear	H853	my words	
	H8085		H1697	

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 1:1 (Parallel theme): God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

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