

Jeremiah 18:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

Another formulaic phrase marks divine interpretation of the object lesson: "Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying." God will now explain the theological significance of what Jeremiah observed. The visual lesson alone was insufficient—divine interpretation was necessary to understand its meaning. This principle extends to all Scripture: the Holy Spirit must illumine our minds to grasp spiritual truth (1 Cor 2:14, Eph 1:17-18).

The two-part structure—observation then interpretation—models sound hermeneutical method. We observe the text carefully, then seek divine illumination to understand its meaning and application. Human wisdom cannot penetrate spiritual mysteries without the Spirit's teaching (John 16:13). This underscores the Reformed principle that Scripture interprets Scripture, with the Spirit guiding believers into truth.

The imminent interpretation (vv. 6-10) will reveal God's sovereignty over nations, His responsiveness to human choices, and the conditional nature of some prophecies. The potter-clay imagery establishes that God has absolute rights over His creation, yet He exercises those rights in ways that take human responses seriously. This paradox pervades Scripture—divine sovereignty and human responsibility coexist without contradicting each other.

Historical Context

Ancient prophets often received visions or participated in symbolic acts that required subsequent divine interpretation. Dreams needed interpretation (Dan 2, 4), visions required explanation (Ezek 1-3, Rev 1), and symbolic actions demanded commentary (Ezek 4-5). This pattern reflects the principle that divine revelation transcends natural human understanding—God must reveal not only the message but also its meaning.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does your approach to Scripture reflect dependence on the Spirit's illumination rather than mere intellectual analysis?
2. What role does divine interpretation play in understanding spiritual truth beyond human observation?
3. How do you seek God's explanation when you observe His works but don't understand their meaning?

Interlinear Text

לְאָמֹר: אֶל־יְהוָה דְּבָר יָמִין
H1961 Then the word of the LORD H413 came to me saying
H1697 H3068 H559

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