



To Begin With...

During the 6 sessions that make up 'Spoiled Clay?' we shall consider these topics:

- 1: Good and Evil
- 2: Intention and Happenstance
- 3: What is sin?
- 4: Who is the Devil?
- 5: Does Jesus make a difference?
- 6: The End: where does this all lead?

In preparation we hope that you can read through the story of the Potter from Jeremiah and consider the questions that follow. Thank you.

From Jeremiah Chapter 18

¹The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ²'Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.' ³So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. ⁴The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

⁵Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁶'Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. ⁷At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, ⁸but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. ⁹And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, ¹⁰but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. ¹¹Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the Lord: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.



Please spend a little time thinking about these questions. There is space to write some answers if you wish – please don't feel that you have to.

What goes through your mind when you read Jeremiah's words?

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God speaks through Jeremiah and applies the image of the potter and the clay to the 'house of Israel'. Does the image work just as well for other happenings in the Bible – Noah's Flood for instance?

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Are we living in a *world* that God is continually reshaping as was done with the house of Israel through the Old Testament?

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Do we live in a world of spoiled clay?

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