

THE PARABLES—Part 1

Jeremiah 18:1-6

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1. A parable is an ancient teaching technique in which that which is well known is laid alongside that which is not known in order to explain it.
2. Jesus used many parables to illustrate what the Kingdom of Heaven is like.
3. Working through parables is effective because it helps make abstract truth more concrete, more interesting, easier to remember.
4. 18:1 Israel was being punished for rebellion against God because they had given themselves over to idolatry. In the midst of their suffering, Israel began to question God's authority and goodness. They needed a new view of reality.
5. 18:3 Jeremiah had seen potters working many times, but on that day, he learned something new about God.
6. 18:5-6 Meaning: Like a potter determining the shape of the clay, God exercises that same action over individuals and nations.
7. 18:6 Where the Bible at times uses the image of a shepherd to show God's capacity to guide and to care for His people (Psalm 23), this image of the potter stresses the Lord's authority and the importance of submission to His will (Isaiah 29:15-16).
8. 18:4 God's activity also contains His mercy and patience; He does not give up on us when we fail Him.
9. 18:4 The only reason you are what you are, where you are is because God's hand is still on you, even though you might feel like you have already been thrown on the floor.
10. When you decided to follow Jesus, you placed yourself on God's "potter's wheel" and agreed to His will. He will mold you and shape you according to His plan.

SONG TITLES

"Church (Take Me Back)" words and music by Michael Cochren, Bryan Fowler, and Micah Kuiper
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"I Need Thee Every Hour" words and music by Annie Sherwood Hawks, Robert Lowry, and Jars of Clay
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11. When life is not going as we have planned, we are prone to challenge God. When God takes actions to achieve His will, we are prone to judge Him by a finite, sin-tainted standard.
12. It is inappropriate for the created to talk back to the Creator as though we have wisdom to judge His activities (Romans 9:20-21).
13. How does God mold and shape us?
 - by trials
 - by chastening
 - by circumstances

GREEK WORDS

Parabolê—a placing beside, a comparison

HEBREW WORDS

Māshāl (maw-shawl')—a pithy proverb, usually of a metaphorical nature; a simile :- byword, proverb

QUOTES

Jesus' parables are "...weapons of warfare in a great campaign against the powers of darkness." ~Dr Archibald Hunter, 1974

"The sovereignty of God is to the proud heart of man a most unpalatable subject...." ~Charles Simeon, 1833

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