

# The Thorn in the Flesh

by Keith Daniel

---

*The sermon explores how our personal struggles, likened to a thorn in the flesh, can lead to spiritual growth and reliance on God's grace.*

**Duration:** 47:59

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 1:4-15

**Topics:** "Suffering"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the story of Jeremiah and how God called him to be a prophet. The preacher emphasizes that God knew Jeremiah even before he was formed in the womb and had a specific purpose for him. Despite Jeremiah's initial hesitation and feeling of inadequacy, God reassured him that He would be with him and give him the words to speak. The preacher then relates this story to our own lives, highlighting the importance of surrendering to God's will and trusting in His grace, even in our weaknesses and struggles.

---

## Transcript

We read in Jeremiah 18, verse 1, the word, the word which came to Jeremiah, the word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord saying, Arise, arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels, he wrought a work on the wheels, and the vessel, the vessel that he made of clay, the vessel that he made of clay was marred, was ruined. In the hand of the potter, the vessel that he made of clay was marred, in the hand of the potter.

So, so, he made it again, he made it again, another vessel. As seemed good to the potter to make, then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter, cannot I do with you as this potter, saith the Lord? Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, say, O ye in mine hand, O house of Israel, at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to pull down and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have pronounced turned from their evil? I will repent of the evil that I sought to do unto them, and at what instant to build and to plant it, 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. 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. 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.

Make your ways and your doings good. And they said, and they said, What does the nation say when God cries out, There is no hope. Devise devices against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the prophet.

Come and let us smite him with the tongue. Let us not give heed to any of his words. I would like for us, I would like for us very carefully to all look back.

In chapter one, verse four, Then the word of the Lord came to me. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I, before I formed thee in the belly, I, and before thou camest forth, go to all that I shall send thee. Be not afraid of their faith.

Then the Lord put forth his hand, and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my word, I have put my word in. Years later, years later, deep into his ministry, in chapter fifteen, verse fifteen, a disillusioned, bitter, confused, and spiritually wounded priest who stands before the God who sent him and prays, Visit me, visit me, to wane thy lungs. Know that for thy sake I have suffered.

Thy words were found, thy words were found, and I did eat them, I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart. For I am called by thy name, who filled me with indignation, my wound incurable. Therefore thus saith the Lord, that well, if thou return, therefore thus saith the Lord, return, then will I bring thee again, thou shalt be as my mouth.

One of the greatest theologians in the history of the church, one of the greatest theologians in the history of the church says that the most accurate interpretation of this verse, most accurate interpretation of this verse would read like this, therefore thus saith the Lord to Jeremiah, if you own heart from unworthy, if you give up this mistaken tone of this, you shall be as my mouth, but if you do not come to this, God does not say that. These things were never meant to destroy you or realize why God allowed these things in his above measure through the abundance of the Lord. Depart from me, my grace, thy rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest.

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, then spare and bitter trouble, but Paul in the same difficulties wrote in 2 Corinthians 4 verse 8, we are trouble on every side, but not in despair, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my body, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body, always, beloved, so hard, continually, the thorn in the flesh, slow us down, boy, a little boy, on jungle, to go deep, deep, cry and weep and scream, walk, I couldn't walk one step, cannot walk like I want to, but all the time, you can't switch off and say it's not, every time you try to walk, not walk, we cannot walk as we want to, for God's glory, like Paul, and we cry out not once, but three times, not just three words, three sessions, he set aside his life, let me go through life like this, held back, set back, born in your life, I could never have written this 30 years ago, not even 20 years, the thorn in the flesh, the thorn in the flesh is something about your character, become conscious as a woman, was feared eventually, yet another Christian, strong character, that God had given her, is the thorn in the flesh, and again, that something happened in your past, that you cannot shame, stand in brokenness, but because of that thorn in the flesh, there's greatness, because brokenness, there is greatness, not you breaking yourself, but if God's brokenness is a beautiful thing, brothers, sisters, but now I want you to be careful, to remember this all your life, what to one person is truly a thorn in the flesh, that drives them to despair, is not necessarily a thorn in the flesh to

another person, D.L.

Moody, you all heard of the great D.L.

Moody, oh, he shook the world, he brought Scotland back to God, he brought Queen Mary and King George to God, he brought Chicago to God, he was one of the greatest soul winners of the five greatest soul leaders, Moody was, but listen to Moody, you must remember what to one person is truly a desperately hurting thorn in the flesh, is not necessarily a thorn in the flesh to another person, Moody was walking along the streets of Chicago one day, and he had this hat on, and he was looking down, terrible, and Moody was looking down, and he was worried, and he was grieving, do you know why, what was he thinking, why has nothing gone wrong, I'm worried that the devil not worried about me anymore, goodness me, I wish I went through two, but here's old Moody now, there's something wrong with me,

the devil's not worried about, he's walking, now he's getting more and more worried, he thinks about it, suddenly there's a man standing the other side of the road in a tramway terminal, waiting for the tram there in Chicago, and this uncouth, coarse man looks and he sees and recognizes, there's that mad fool, Moody, that's terrible, there's that mad fool, Moody, look, there he is, that fanatic, Moody looked up, and he took his hat off, and he said, hallelujah, the devil still hates me, well that must have confounded the devil, brother, that would have, to one person, beloved, is a thorn in the flesh, is not necessarily, it's your thorn in the flesh, only God and you have an understanding, and why God has allowed it eventually, and not taken it out of your life, listen to this, the vessel

that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter, that was speaking about a nation, but do you know that the whole old testament was never ever meant to be history, to be read as history, it is history, it is perfect history recorded, but God only allowed it to be recorded for you and me, every word, brother, every promise in the book is mine, every warning, the dealings of God to the old testament, you, the nation, are the dealings of God, they give me an understanding of the heart of God and His dealings to me, when I whisper the grief it causes Him, when I rebel, when I send all these warnings of God's grief and heart are to you and me as individuals, His promises, if I stay faithful and true, the blessing will be to my children originally you and me, in the light of all

scriptures, beloved, there is nothing in the old testament in its context, first we must understand, but somehow understand it was written for you, and beloved, how many of us, maybe not Israel, but what God says there is by the Holy Ghost reaching to your heart, the vessel that God has been making, molding, marred, you know what the word means, ruined, in the hand of the potter, so He made it again, another vessel has been good to the potter to make it, then the word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter, say the Lord, behold as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel, how many of us, we are ruined, the work of God has been ruined and destroyed, why, because we couldn't accept that it was God in control

leaving this in our lives, and so we have lost hope and faith and courage, and we become bitter, and instead of God accomplishing greatness in our lives, what has He, a ruined vessel, and He longs, He longs for us for resignation, in our desperation that the revelation He gives will bring resignation, that the potter can have the clay yield it, yield it, thou art the potter, I am the clay, O God have thy way, how many of you need desperately to do that, beloved, if you take forth the precious from the vial, not just Jeremiah, if you give up this mistaken tone of distrust and despair, cleansing your own heart from unworthy suspicions concerning God's faithfulness, you shall be as my mouth, Jeremiah, what I intended for you to

be, but if you don't, I cannot use you, I will not use you,

beloved, whatever God is saying to you of what He willed for your life, I cannot do it, child, if you don't give up this mistaken tone of distrust and despair and what I've allowed, whether it's persecution or infirmities, physical weaknesses and setbacks and handicaps, will you go through your lifestyle fighting God about what He is leaving in your life till your dying day to bring greatness and instead of greatness will become bitterness, will you from this day do something that will stagger the devil who's played havoc with you by accusing you that this thing is allowed in your life by accusing God of not dealing with it totally and ridding you of these things that you feel harm you and destroy you, will you go on fighting God's way which is not your way in spite of the revelation Paul

gave us of why God allowed things in his life that brought out greatness or will you come to resignation this morning, you see, brother, sister, if you had no infirmity, no trials, no sorrows, no grief, you would never want, you would never have once in your Christian walk have had to look away from your own strength knowing it's not going to carry you through and have to look in utter sincerity for the first time to God for strength, for His strength to be able to survive, you would never once have proved the power of God in your life if you didn't have these things and let me shock all of you, God is going to bring every one of you to a place in the school of God where it's not just once you're driven to have to look away from your own strength knowing this cannot be enough and look to

God for His strength to carry you through, God will bring you to the place eventually that every step you take in life you know you have to look away from what you've got to take another step again, you know it must be God's grace and when God gets that right in your life, beloved, you may feel based, weak, despised but let me tell you there won't be a soul on earth that doesn't see in your life greatness, greatness, weakness that made you, can we stand please, can we in this sacred moment in quietness please, please let it be sacred, I always get lost in your indexes, I can't even find the index, let alone find the number, have you got such a thing as have thine own way Lord, have thine own way, thou art the potter, I am the clay, now every one of you be careful here, we sing hymns you

know, most of them become a great rebuke to heaven as we sing them because we don't sing them to God and God in heaven wonder if only you had been singing at this once in your life you prayed that prayer from your heart not just to harmonize, not just for others to hear you, if only you just once in your life prayed that from your heart child, imagine what I could have done most of the prayers we sing, God would have sent revival long ago, if it had come from our heart that's not a rebuke, that's a talent, I dare you sir, I dare you lady, don't sing to anyone else just to God here, every word now but sing it in resignation, have thine own way Lord, have thine own way, thou art the potter,

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9475.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/keith-daniel/the-thorn-in-the-flesh/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**