God had for that family, and in respect of the Lord's promise to King David, God forewarned the king of the dangers of being disobedient to God's rules of justice. It was therefore an act of love that God sent the prophet Jeremiah to talk prophetically to the king. And the message was simple: rule justly. In plain words, the king, his government, and the ruling class must not rob, defraud, or oppress poor and helpless people. Note that in that group of poor and helpless persons, God included foreigners. These were people from other nations who were in the country for one reason or another. The shedding of innocent blood was also addressed in the warning (verse 3).

Obedience brings blessings; disobedience brings disasters.

In verses 4-5 God took the position which God takes about all divine commandments. God leaves it up to the individual to make a choice. Obedience brings blessings; disobedience brings disasters. Yes, the king and his family were special people in God's sight. Yet, God was going to tear them down and ruin them, if they chose to disobey God. God was serious about this matter! God showed how serious God was when he swore by himself. This is one of those rare events in scripture where we find God swearing by his own honor. You can read Jeremiah 49:13 and 51:14 to see other instances of such an oath. Also note that in scripture there is no stronger affirmation.

So the warning in the passage was a stern warning. Still, it was a warning born out of divine love. And it was not a complex message. If the king and his family decided to disobey God, they would come crashing down from privileged to pitiful. The fall would be so dramatic and the destruction so devastating it would make world news. People who see or hear about it would wonder how God could be so mean to a royal family. Eventually, they would understand the fall was a result of rebellion and disobedience. People who reject God can expect to feel the pain of God's rejection.

SANKOFA

Sometimes the things we read in the Bible can seem so remote from the world