

Vessels of YAHWEH

By Yirmeyah Tan, 24th Oct 2026

I. The Potter & The Clay

- a. We are all made by the Potter

Isa 64:8 But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

- b. YAHWEH shapes people and nations

Jer 18:1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

Jer 18:2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

Jer 18:3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

Jer 18:4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Jer 18:5 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Jer 18:6 O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

II. Precepts of Men

- a. Remember we are merely clay shaped by YAHWEH the Potter
- b. He sees everything including things we do in the dark
- c. Many have substituted His wisdom and understanding for the precepts of men
- d. As a result, they only honour Him with their lips, but their hearts are far from Him

Isa 29:13 Wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

Isa 29:14 Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

Isa 29:15 Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?

Isa 29:16 Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

III. Vessels of Mercy & Vessels of Wrath

Rom 9:18 Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.

Rom 9:19 Thou wilt say then unto Me, why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?

Rom 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?

Rom 9:21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

*Rom 9:22 What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the **vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:***

*Rom 9:23 And that He might make known the riches of His glory on the **vessels of mercy**, which He had afore prepared unto glory,*

- a. YAHWEH is sovereign: He makes vessels of honor and dishonor
- b. He makes vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath
- c. YAHWEH is long-suffering towards the vessels of wrath in order to reveal His glory on the vessels of mercy.

IV. Vessels of Honor & Vessels of Dishonor

- a. vessels of gold and silver are vessels of honor
- b. vessels of wood and earth are vessels of dishonor

2Ti 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

2Ti 2:20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

- c. Vessels of wood can be cleansed with water. Water speaks of the Word of YAHWEH which is able to cleanse us when we walk in obedience.

Lev 11:32 And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so, it shall be cleansed.

- d. Vessels of earth that become unclean cannot be reused or restored but must be destroyed: this is a warning to us.

Lev 11:33 And every earthen vessel, whereinto any of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it.

- e. We are to sanctify/purify ourselves, like fleeing from lusts and pursuing righteousness:

2Ti 2:21 *If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*

2Ti 2:22 *Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

2Ti 2:23 *But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.*

- f. We are not to strive but be gentle, patiently teaching people so that they can repent, acknowledge the truth and escape the snares of the devil.

2Ti 2:24 *And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,*

2Ti 2:25 *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;*

2Ti 2:26 *And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*

V. Striving With The Potter

- a. Do not strive with our Maker
- b. Accept what He has done in you

Isa 45:9 *Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?*

VI. Mercy Before Grace

Eph 2:1 *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

Eph 2:2 *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

Eph 2:3 *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

Eph 2:4 *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,*

Eph 2:5 *Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*

- a. Only vessels of mercy can be quickened
- b. Examples of quickening:
 - 1. The 3000 at Pentecost: Acts 2:37
 - 2. Paul was pricked: Acts 9:5
 - 3. Gentiles ordained to salvation: Acts 13:48

c. Grace follows quickening:

Eph 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

Eph 2:9 *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

VII. Jacob As a Vessel of Mercy

Rom 9:11 *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*

Rom 9:12 *It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.*

Rom 9:13 *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

Rom 9:14 *What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.*

Rom 9:15 *For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*

Rom 9:16 *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*

- a. Jacob was a supplanter at birth
- b. He bought the birthright from Esau by exploiting his hunger
- c. He stole the blessing of the firstborn
- d. He wrestled with God; his thigh became dislocated and his name was changed to Israel, which means Prince of God
- e. He kept idols until he was running away from his father-in-law Laban in Gen 35:2
- f. His favouritism of Joseph provoked jealousy among his brethren
- g. Yet God favoured him as a patriarch of Israel and became known as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- h. His children from 2 wives and 2 concubines became the heads of the 12 tribes of Israel.

VIII. Esau As A Vessel of Wrath

Mal 1:2 *I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob,*

Mal 1:3 *And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.*

Mal 1:4 *Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.*

Heb 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and **the sin which doth so easily beset us**, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Heb 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Heb 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Heb 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Heb 12:16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Heb 12:17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

- a. Esau had a besetting sin
- b. Unforgiveness
- c. Root of bitterness
- d. He married a Canaanite woman to spite his parents
- e. Vessels of wrath do not receive mercy from God
- f. No grace for vessels of wrath
- g. His descendants were cursed: The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever. [Mal 1:4]

Mal 1:2 I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob,

Mal 1:3 And I hated Esau and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

IX. Conclusion

Overall, the concept of the potter and the clay in the Bible reminds us of God's sovereignty and authority, our need to humble and submit ourselves to Him, the merciful, quickening work of the Holy Spirit resulting in the grace of redemption and transformation, and the importance of trusting in God's plan for our lives.