

A FEW CLAY & POTTERY FACTS FROM SCRIPTURE

A factory was in the valley of Hinnom near the potsherd gate (Jer. 19:2) and near furnaces or kilns (Neh 3:11;12:38)

A field was needed for weathering the dry clay dust and for mixing it with water and treading it by foot into potter's clay. (Isa 41:25)

Kneaded for several hours to remove all the air bubbles. Impurities in the clay or insufficient treading could mar the vessel on the wheel.

The potter easily remedied this by reshaping the clay into a ball and making a less elegant object out the former discard (Jer 18:3-4)

After drying to a leathery consistency the clay was placed on the wheel for turning, cutting or paring off excess clay. Pores were filled with a creamy clay, often with color added. Next he might rub the surface with a smooth stone to produce a sheen. He might paint on it a design. Finally the jar, vessel, was fired by heating it in a kiln. Firing was the more difficult art to master.

EARTHEN VESSELS WERE BROKEN WHEN UNCLEAN

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

MAN IS A CLAY CREATION BY THE HANDS OF GOD

*Job 10:8 ¶ **Thine hands have made me and fashioned me** together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.*

*Job 10:9 Remember, I beseech thee, that **thou hast made me as the clay**; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?*

*Job 33:6 Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: **I also am formed out of the clay.***

HIS SONS ARE ESTEEMED AS EARTHEN WORKS OF THE POTTER'S HANDS

*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?*

*La 4:2 The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they **esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!***

MAN IS CLAY & A PRODUCT OF THE POTTER

*Ro 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?*

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

*Ro 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:*

*Ro 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,*

*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.*

*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.*

*Ps 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt **dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.***

*Jer 19:10 ¶ Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee,
Jer 19:11 And shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, **as one breaketh a potter's vessel**, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury them in Tophet, till there be no place to bury.*

*Re 2:27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; **as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers:** even as I received of my Father.*

*2Co 4:7 But we have **this treasure in earthen vessels**, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

*Da 2:34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon **his feet** that were of iron **and clay**, and brake them to pieces.*

EARTHINESS

Esau

*John 3:31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is **of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth:** he that cometh from heaven is above all.*

*2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have **this treasure in earthen vessels**, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

*Philippians 3:19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind **earthly things.**)*

*James 3:15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is **earthly**, sensual, devilish.*

*1 John 5:8 And there are three that bear **witness in earth**, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.*

*Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out **into the earth**, and his angels were cast out with him.*

THE POTTER & THE CLAY

If you have the chance to listen to the song The Potter's Hand do so.
The lyrics go something like this.

*Beautiful Lord, Wonderful Savior
I know for sure
All of my days are held in your hand
Crafted into your perfect plan*

*You gently call me
Into your presence
Guiding me by your Holy Spirit
Teach me Dear Lord*

To live all my life through your eyes

*I'm captured by your holy calling
Set me apart
I know you're drawing
Me to yourself
Lead me Lord I pray*

*Take me, Mold Me, Use me, Fill me
I give my life to
The potter's hand
Call me, Guide me, Lead me,
Walk beside me
I give my life to the potter's hand*

It should strike a chord in your heart. Any child of God whose spiritual receiver is tuned to the transmissions of heaven will undoubtedly hear the voice of the Spirit of God speaking to them. Why do I say this?

The basis of human existence is that of a Potter and his creation.

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

We came about from the potter's craft. It part and parcel of who we are. It is the warp and the woof of the fabric humanity.

We were created from the dust of the earth into God's design on a physical level. Parents continue this creative molding process on a many levels with their off-spring. Ultimately it happens on a spiritual level when each human finds the reality of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's all about molding. David said in

...Psalms 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

The miry clay is all of our origins. The solid rock is our destination. From Clay to Stone.

Isaiah said in 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.

DOWN AT THE POTTER'S HOUSE

Jeremiah 18:1-6

*The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,
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.
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.
Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 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.*

God is in the Pottery business. Shaping and Changing lives. Shaping us into vessels upon his

spiritual potter's wheel. It does not happen once. It happens all life long. Whether the number of our days be as Jacob's of 130 years or 70 or as few as 12. The Father is shaping us. He wants his way with us. He wants a **vessel for his honor and his glory**.

Much can be learned about the workings of the Holy Spirit and God's purposes for and in our lives by learning of the Clay Process.

THE CLAY OR THE CERAMIC

Pottery is artificial stone produced by firing clay shapes to a temperature sufficiently high to (a.) change the physical and chemical properties of the (b.) original clay into a (c.) new substance which afterward has many of the (d.) characteristics of stone.

EARTHEWARE OR STONEWARE

Earthenware is porous pottery usually fired at lower temperatures of 900 - 1200 degrees. Glazing makes it waterproof. A great portion of contemporary dinnerware is painted ceramic.

Stoneware is water resistant, much more durable, and fired at higher temperatures.

TWO TYPES OF CLAY : Primary Clay and Secondary Clay

*****Natural occurring Clay** is not suitable for use, ..whether in the ground (earth) or river beds,.

Primary Clay : Porcelain is made from a white clay that is found in the earth where granite has decomposed.

Secondary Clay: are borne by rivers to their deposit sites. Their impurities give them various colors. Their coarse foreign matter can be removed or used to achieve particular effects such as; retaining it's shape during firing.

Bone China, somewhat harder than the original Porcelain China. It gains it's hardness, whiteness, translucency and stability through the inclusion of calcium phosphate.

CLAY PREPARATION – SHAPING – DRYING - FIRING

CLAY PREPARATION

- 1> Dug out of the earth or deposit site in a river
- 2> Allowed to weather for weeks in the potter's field
- 3> Dumped into a water trough for lump removal; softening, stirring
"Slip" , slimy mud remains. It is drawn off into settling tanks.
Rocks and lumps are left behind.
- 4> Water drawn off and Clay Worked or Treaded under foot
- 5> Often mixed with several earths for right consistency
- 6> Packed away for months to improve plasticity

CLAY SHAPING

- 7> Kneading by hand to remove air bubbles
- 8> Shaping the wet clay
- 9> Cutting off of excess clay at leathery stage
- 10> Filling of Pores

CLAY DRYING & FIRING

- 11> Decoration :glazing,painting,sheen by stone rubbing,
- 12> Firing in a Kiln (glazing can be, before or after firing)

SIGNIFICANCE

Chemical changes wrought in clay by weathering and firing render it practically indestructible when exposed to the weather, action of moisture, gases, and compounds found in the soil.

Thus cities and civilizations have crumbled and others built on top of them, yet their pottery helps to define their period and serves as a guide.