

RE-WORKING THE CLAY

“Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.” —JEREMIAH 18:6

There are choices many of us have made during the course of our lives, which we sensed were out of the will of God, but we made them anyway. Some people have carried regret around for decades because of it, and are so burdened with guilt they believe it is too late to pick up the pieces and start fresh with God.

The story of the potter in the book of Jeremiah is one that depicts the sovereignty of God, and is a story of hope. The Lord sends Jeremiah down to the potter’s house to give him a message. “So I went down to the potter’s house and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the word of the LORD came to me: ‘O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does? Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel’” (Jeremiah 18:3-6).

The potter does not take the marred clay off the wheel and discard it. He re-works it and molds it into something else that seems best to him. In the same way, the sovereignty of God is not a fixed, rigid pattern. We are all marred clay, but no one is irredeemable. There are things, of course, that cannot be fixed or undone, but sometimes, like Jacob, we have to learn to walk with a limp. ‘Jacob’ means

twister and cheat, and Jacob lived up to his name. God had taken on human form and wrestled with Jacob all night. His hip was knocked out of joint, but Jacob did not give up. He clung to the man until God gave him His blessing. God remoulded the clay, and changed Jacob's name to 'Israel'.

Though the moulding can be painful and we may carry a limp, we also carry the legacy of an Almighty God who has re-worked us, and turned us into something that fulfills His purpose. God's sovereignty is not that everything is in an unchangeable, predetermined pattern, but is His working in a broken world, filled with rebellion and disobedience. He is remoulding the clay, but our hearts must be soft and pliable. When we come in humility, confessing our sin, God forgives, and we become pliable in His hands again. It is never too late for our lives to be a living, dynamic moulding into something that seems best to God; not second best, not a quick fix, but something that seems best to Him.

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, thank you for not giving up on me. May I always keep a soft, pliable heart that You will work with.

TO REFLECT UPON: Is my heart soft and pliable in the hands of God?