

**Articles and Sermons :: A Lesson from the Potter by Alan Martin****A Lesson from the Potter by Alan Martin - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/12/18 12:32**

Paul wrote - "...will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "why have you made me like this?" Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?" Romans 9:20b -21

In most bibles with cross references, we will find a cross reference to Jeremiah 18:6. This passage sheds much light up on Paul's intended meaning in Romans 9:21

Here is a rendering of Jeremiah's words from the Septuagint - chapter 18:3-10

"And I went down unto the house of the potter and behold he was making a work upon the stones. And the vessel failed which he was making with his hands, and again he made it a different vessel. And it came to pass that the word of the Lord came to me saying, 'Shall I not be able to make you even as this potter O house of Israel, says the Lord?' Behold as mortar in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hands O house of Israel. At end I shall speak unto a nation or unto a kingdom to lift them away, and to destroy them, but that nation should turn away from their evils, then I shall change My mind concerning the bad things which I devised to do to them. And at end I shall speak unto a nation and unto a kingdom to rebuild them and to plant, and they do the wicked things before me, to not hear My voice, then I will change My mind concerning the good things which I spoke to do for them."

We can see from this that the Lord, just like the potter, will make out of the vessel whatever is in His mind to make of it. If the Lord, just like the potter, purposes to make a good vessel but the vessel "fails" in His hands, He can make a "different" vessel (a bad one) out of the same lump that He had intended to make a "good" vessel.

If the actions of nations and kingdoms can cause the mind of the Lord to change His purpose, then can the actions of an individual also affect the same change?

If the Lord changes His mind concerning us due to our own actions before Him, what shall we say - "why did you make me like this?" In the end, we will know exactly why He did with us what He chose to do - He will reward each of us according to our own works, according to the deeds we have done in the body whether good or evil."

Context is the key to discovering the correct interpretation and application of scriptural truth.

Re: A Lesson from the Potter by Alan Martin - posted by Koheleth, on: 2013/12/20 5:56

This is a fantastic insight from Alan. Thanks for sharing it!

The Lord has brought a lot of the difficult pieces of Romans together in the past year for me. These would be parts of Paul's letter that didn't seem to square with the rest of the Scriptures or with God. This post is like the icing on the cake. Perfect timing to end the year with.

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2013/12/20 6:11

Yes very good. As Alan says "context is key" and from the Jeremiah passage that Paul is clearly alluding to we can see that God makes of us in accordance with how we respond and act toward Him. The often quoted explanation of this passage to mean that God just decides arbitrarily to make some object of honour and others objects of wrath does not fit the description given in Jeremiah.

Thanks for this.

Re: A Lesson from the Potter by Alan Martin, on: 2013/12/20 10:54

May these words cause us to cry out to the Lord in repentance for our sins and selfishness. Let us be holy as He is holy.

"Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6: 9-11).

Be continually filled with the Holy Spirit.

"If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life" to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death. We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols." (1 John 5: 16-21).