

The Potter and the Clay

Isaiah 29:13–16

Monday July 19, 2021

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The Lord says: “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.”

—Isaiah 29:13

“Can the pot say to the potter, ‘You know nothing?’”

That question is one of my favorite questions in the Bible. Only a few times in Scripture do we see God questioning a person. He questioned Adam and Eve about why they were hiding. He asked Job if Job had been there when God had created the foundations of the world. He inquired of Elijah why he had run so far from the nation of Israel when threatened by Queen Jezebel. But what God says to, and how He questions His wayward people, in Isaiah 29, stands out as my favorite.

In Isaiah 29:13, God directly addresses the hypocrisy of His people. He confronts their audacity to challenge Him. In verse 16 of the same chapter, the Lord says, “You turn things upside down, as if the Potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, ‘You did not make me’? Can the pot say to the Potter, ‘You know nothing’?”

As human beings, we often come up with our own version of who God is and how we relate to Him. We begin to think too highly of ourselves. Through the Prophet Isaiah, the Lord confronts the arrogance and hypocrisy in His people hundreds of years before Jesus walked on earth. The same problem too easily creeps into our hearts and minds today.

Do a heart check. Do you find yourself trying to tell God how He should be God? Do you, the clay, think you know better than God, the Potter? He is the master creator and designer of the universe. He made you. He made me. He created us for purpose and to walk with Him.

As beings who are the result of the Lord’s handiwork, we should look to Him to know what life is all about and how to find meaning in it. Instead, we often assume we know better than He does. We think we understand our relationships, our behaviors, our attitudes better than the one who made us. How foolish.

In this passage found in Isaiah 29, God says he will bring our human wisdom to an end. He will make sure we know we are far from Him. Why will God do this? He will do it to get our attention and cause us to return to a clear understanding that He is the Potter, and we are the clay! God establishes what is true and right for us. He defines what love and justice are. He is God, and we are His people. We should live out that reality!

Let God know you get it. You understand He is the Potter and you are the clay!

Today’s Prayer

Father, humble me. Teach me to see you for who you are not who I want or expect you to be. Remind me throughout the day that you are the potter and I am the clay. —Amen