

## ~POTTER (361)

[Hebrew, *yoh-tser'*, Greek, *ke-ra-meus'*]

- **The maker of earthenware pots, dishes, and other vessels.** The Hebrew word for potter *yoh-tser'* literally means, former or one forming.
- And the vessel that he was making with the clay was spoiled by the **potters** hand, and he turned back and went making it into another vessel, just as it looked right in the eyes of the potter to make. (**Jeremiah 18:4**) *Footnote*
- While the Greek term *ke-ra-meus'* comes from a root meaning **mix**, perhaps referring to the need to mix water with the soil or clay to prepare it for use.
- Since very early times **potters** have fashioned clay into vessels and baked these, thus producing hardened utensils that would not soften when wet.
- The **potter** might work alone, but he sometimes had assistants, frequently apprentices. Among the Hebrews a group of **royal potters** seems to have existed at one time.
- The sons of Shelah the son of Judah were Er the father of Lecah and Laadah the father of Mareshah and the families of the house of the workers of fine fabric of the house of Ashbea. (**1 Chronicles 4:21**)
- And Jokim and the men of Cozeba and Joash and Saraph, who became owners of Moabite wives, and Jashubi-lehem. And the sayings are of old tradition. (**1 Chronicles 4:22**)
- They were the **potters** and the inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah. It was with the king in his work that they dwelt there. (**1 Chronicles 4:23**)
- A typical method of making **pottery** began with such steps as washing the clay and purifying it of foreign matter, weathering it, and trampling the moistened clay by foot to make it pasty and malleable.
- I have roused up someone from the north, and he will come.

From the rising of the sun he will call upon my name. And he will come upon deputy rulers as if they were clay and just as a **potter** that **tramples down the moist material**. (Isaiah 41:25)

- Next the clay was kneaded by hand and then placed on the **potters** wheel.
- The early **potter's** wheel was generally made of stone, though sometimes of wood, and was, basically, a flat disk centered on a vertical axle and made to rotate horizontally.
- Heavy material at its edge gave the disk stability and momentum as it was turned by hand. The later addition of a larger, heavier lower wheel, on the same shaft as the top wheel and also revolving horizontally, enabled the seated **potter** to rotate the wheels by foot.
- Having thrown or placed the shapeless clay on the wheel, the **potter** used his hands to form a vessel as the wheel was turned.
- And I proceeded to go down to the house of the **potter**, and there he was doing work upon the **potters** wheels. (Jeremiah 18:3)
- And the vessel that he was making with the clay was spoiled by the **potters** hand, and he turned back and went making it into another vessel, just as it looked right in the eyes of the potter to make. (Jeremiah 18:4)
- The utensil might next be dried somewhat in the sun and again put on the wheel, where the **potter** might employ pebbles, shells, or some implement to smooth and burnish it and to impart a design to its surface.
- Methods varied, but he could give it a rope pattern, for instance, by pressing a twisted cord against the still-moist article. Vessels were often painted decoratively. Others were glazed
- As a silver glazing overlaid upon a fragment of earthenware are fervent lips along with a bad heart. (Proverbs 26:23)
- And then fired, or baked, in the nearby **pottery** kiln. Or, colored **slip**, **potters** clay in a semiliquid state, might be applied for decorative purposes, after which the article was again fired in the kiln.
- The **potter** made articles ranging from large jars,

- As for the precious sons of Zion, those who were weighed against refined gold, O how they have been reckoned as large jars of earthenware, the work of the hands of a **potter**! (**Lamentations 4:2**)
- To lamps, ovens, and toys such as dolls and animal figures. Bowls, cups, flasks, and other vessels were among his products.
- And an earthenware vessel that the one having a running discharge might touch should be smashed, and any wooden vessel should be rinsed with water. (**Leviticus 15:12**)
- Brought beds and basins and **potters** vessels, and wheat and barley and flour and roasted grain and broad beans and lentils and parched grain. (**2 Samuel 17:28**)
- This is what Yehowah said; Go, and you must get an earthenware flask of a **potter** and some of the older men of the people and some of the older men of the priests. (**Jeremiah 19:1**)
- He said to them; Look! When you enter into the city a man carrying an earthenware vessel of water will meet you. Follow him into the house into which he enters. (**Luke 22:10**)
- He also produced cooking pots and some griddles. Earthenware items were sometimes stamped to show where they were made. The **potter** frequently stamped his own trademark on a pot handle.
- Sometimes the **potter** used an open mold, into which the clay was pressed to pick up details. In later times lamps were often made in that way, in two pieces that were joined when the clay had dried to about a leathery hardness. Occasionally things were molded by hand without using the wheel. Usually, however, the **potter** used the wheel.
- Broken pieces of **pottery** are often discovered at archaeological sites, sometimes in great numbers. The kinds of **pottery** found are viewed by archaeologists as aids in identifying different cultures as well as in estimating the period of occupation represented by various layers at such sites.
- They have also endeavored to estimate population density of a particular place in ancient times on the basis of the quantity of such fragments discovered there.

## See Also POTSHERD

- The **potter's** authority over the clay is used illustratively to show Yehowah's sovereignty over individuals and nations.
- Woe to those who are going very deep in concealing counsel from Yehowah himself, and whose deeds have occurred in a dark place, while they say; Who is seeing us, and who is knowing of us? (**Isaiah 29:15**)
- The perversity of you men! Should the **potter** himself be accounted just like the clay? For should the thing made say respecting its maker; He did not make me? And does the very thing formed actually say respecting its former; He showed no understanding? (**Isaiah 29:16**)
- And now, O Yehowah, you are our Father. We are the clay, and you are our **Potter**, and all of us are the work of your hand. (**Isaiah 64:8**)
- To God the house of Israel was as the clay in the hand of the **potter**, He being the **Great Potter**.
- The word that occurred to Jeremiah from Yehowah, saying; (**Jeremiah 18:1**)
- Rise up, and you must go down to the house of the **potter**, and there I shall cause you to hear my words. (**Jeremiah 18:2**)
- And I proceeded to go down to the house of the **potter**, and there he was doing work upon the **potter's** wheels. (**Jeremiah 18:3**)
- And the vessel that he was making with the clay was spoiled by the **potter's** hand, and he turned back and went making it into another vessel, just as it looked right in the eyes of the potter to make. (**Jeremiah 18:4**)
- And the word of Yehowah continued to occur to me, saying; (**Jeremiah 18:5**)
- Am I not able to do just like this **potter** to you people, O house of Israel? Is the utterance of Yehowah. Look! As the clay in the hand of the potter, so you are in my hand, O house of Israel.

**(Jeremiah 18:6)**

- **At any moment that I may speak against a nation and against a kingdom to uproot it and to pull it down and to destroy it. (Jeremiah 18:7)**
- **And that nation actually turns back from its badness against which I spoke, I will also feel regret over the calamity that I had thought to execute upon it. (Jeremiah 18:8)**
- **But at any moment that I may speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to build it up and to plant it. (Jeremiah 18:9)**
- **And it actually does what is bad in my eyes by not obeying my voice, I will also feel regret over the good that I said to myself to do for its good. (Jeremiah 18:10)**
- **Man is in no position to contend with God, just as clay would not be expected to challenge the one shaping it.**
- **Woe to the one that has contended with his Former, as an earthenware fragment with the other earthenware fragments of the ground! Should the clay say to its former; What do you make? And your achievement say; He has no hands? (Isaiah 45:9)**
- **As an earthenware vessel can be smashed, so Yehowah can bring devastating calamity upon a people in punishment for wrongdoing.**
- **This is what Yehowah said; Go, and you must get an earthenware flask of a **potter** and some of the older men of the people and some of the older men of the priests. (Jeremiah 19:1)**
- **And you must go out to the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is at the entrance of the Gate of the Potsherds. And there you must proclaim the words that I shall speak to you. (Jeremiah 19:2)**
- **And you must say; Hear the word of Yehowah, O you kings of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. This is what Yehowah of armies, the God of Israel, has said; Here I am bringing a calamity upon this place, of which when anyone hears, his ears will tingle. (Jeremiah 19:3)**

- **For the reason that they have left me and have proceeded to make this place unrecognizable and to make sacrificial smoke in it to other gods whom they had not known, they and their forefathers and the kings of Judah, and they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent ones. (Jeremiah 19:4)**
- **And they built the high places of the Baal in order to burn their sons in the fire as whole burnt offerings to the Baal, something that I had not commanded or spoken of, and that had not come up into my heart. (Jeremiah 19:5)**
- **Therefore, look! There are days coming, is the utterance of Yehowah, when this place will be called no more Topheth and the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of the killing. (Jeremiah 19:6)**
- **And I will make void the counsel of Judah and of Jerusalem in this place, and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hand of those seeking for their soul. And I will give their dead bodies as food to the flying creatures of the heavens and to the beasts of the earth. (Jeremiah 19:7)**
- **And I will make this city an object of astonishment and something to be whistled at. Every last one passing along by it will stare in astonishment and whistle over all its plagues. (Jeremiah 19:8)**
- **And I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they will eat each one the flesh of his fellowman, because of the tightness and because of the stress with which their enemies and those seeking for their soul will hem them in. (Jeremiah 19:9)**
- **And you must break the flask before the eyes of the men who are going with you. (Jeremiah 19:10)**
- **And you must say to them; This is what Yehowah of armies has said; In the same way I shall break this people and this city as someone breaks the vessel of the **potter** so that it is no more able to be repaired, and in Topheth they will bury until there is no more place to bury. (Jeremiah 19:11)**

- Concerning the Messianic Kings exercise of God-given authority against the nations, it was foretold; You will break them with an iron scepter, as though a **potters** vessel you will dash them to pieces.
- You will break them with an iron scepter, as though a **potters** vessel you will dash them to pieces. (**Psalms 2:9**)
- And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite. (**Daniel 2:44**)
- And to him that conquers and observes my deeds down to the end I will give authority over the nations. (**Revelation 2:26**)
- And he shall shepherd the people with an iron rod so that they will be broken to pieces like clay vessels, the same as I have received from my Father. (**Revelation 2:27**)
- And she gave birth to a son, a male, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod. And her child was caught away to God and to his throne. (**Revelation 12:5**)
- From a single lump of clay the **potter** could make a vessel for an honorable use and another for a dishonorable, a common, or an ordinary use.
- Similarly, Yehowah has authority to mold individuals as he pleases and has tolerated wicked ones, vessels of wrath made fit for destruction, but this has worked to the benefit of vessels of mercy, persons making up Spiritual Israel.
- What shall we say, then? Is there injustice with God? Never may that become so! (**Romans 9:14**)
- For he says to Moses; I will have mercy upon whomever I do have mercy, and I will show compassion to whomever I do show compassion. (**Romans 9:15**)
- So, then, it depends, not upon the one wishing nor upon the one running, but upon God, who has mercy. (**Romans 9:16**)
- For the Scripture says to Pharaoh; For this very cause I have let

**you remain, that in connection with you I may show my power, and that my name may be declared in all the earth. (Romans 9:17)**

- **So, then, upon whom he wishes he has mercy, but whom he wishes he lets become obstinate. (Romans 9:18)**
- **You will therefore say to me; Why does he yet find fault? For who has withstood his express will? (Romans 9:19)**
- **O man, who, then, really are you to be answering back to God? Shall the thing molded say to him that molded it; Why did you make me this way? (Romans 9:20)**
- **What? Does not the **potter** have authority over the clay to make from the same lump one vessel for an honorable use, another for a dishonorable use? (Romans 9:21)**
- **If, now, God, although having the will to demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known, tolerated with much long-suffering vessels of wrath made fit for destruction. (Romans 9:22)**
- **In order, that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory. (Romans 9:23)**
- **Namely, us, whom he called not only from among Jews but also from among nations, what of it? (Romans 9:24)**
- **It is as he says also in Hosea; Those not my people I will call my people, and her who was not beloved, beloved. (Romans 9:25)**
- **And in the place where it was said to them, you are not my people, there they will be called sons of the living God. (Romans 9:26)**