



**I AM AN UNREPEATABLE
MIRACLE OF GOD
-CRAFTED AND CALLED**

Crafted

Isaiah 64:8 Common English Bible (CEB)

*But now, Lord, you are our father.
We are the clay, and you are our potter.
All of us are the work of your hand.*

Our scripture gives us lots of different images for understanding our relationship with God. Each image tells us something about God, about ourselves, and about our relationship with God. Our most familiar and favorites images include: “God is my Rock”, “The Lord is my Shepherd”, “I am the Bread of Life”. Metaphor is the language we use to describe something that is otherwise difficult or impossible to describe. Metaphors are powerful. They can open up the imagination. Metaphors can help us see or understand something in ways we never before considered. Metaphors put the intangible into tangible and everyday things. The Rock, the shepherd, the bread... these are things we know and understand, and each one can tell us something about God.

One of the most powerful metaphors for understanding our relationship with God comes from the Book of Isaiah. In Chapter 64, verse 8, the prophet describes our relationship with God like this:

Yet you, Lord, are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

So, what do we know about the relationship between the potter and the clay? And, more importantly, what does it tell us about God and his relationship with us? We know that when a potter is molding the clay it responds to the gentle movement of the potter’s hand. And the potter responds to the uniqueness of the clay. The potter and the clay are interdependent. They are in relationship. As the potter begins to spin the clay, it may be resistant. The loving hands of the potter are firm, yet flexible. As the clay continues to spin, it becomes responsive to the potter and, with one touch, the potter opens up the clay to find the unique beauty hidden inside.

Like the clay, God sees something unique in each of us. We have each been carefully, skillfully, purposefully crafted. Crafted by hands that were firm and flexible, hands that were gentle and patient. Every one of us has been crafted differently, uniquely, and on purpose. When we take the implications of this metaphor seriously, we realize that we do not have to be anybody other than who God created us to be.

The scriptures are ancient text and we must remember the context of this metaphor. The pottery in the days of the prophet Isaiah was created to be *used*. This pottery was not art, it was not formed to be put on a shelf and

admired. It was crafted to be useful in the world. Like this pottery, each of us is crafted for a purpose: to be useful in the world and in God's kingdom.

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

The writer of Psalms picks up this idea that we have been handcrafted in Psalm 139, "I praise, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well." (Psalm 139:14)

I am fearfully made. Understanding the Hebrew here is helpful. The word we translate as fearfully is "yare". It does not mean the kind of fear that we associate with being afraid. No, the Hebrew word here means to approach something or someone with great reverence, heartfelt interest, and deep respect. It is how we are often expected to approach God, but, here in this scripture, it is actually how God approaches us. We were made with reverence, heartfelt interest, and deep respect!

The Psalmist also says that we are made wonderfully. The Hebrew word here is "palah". It literally means unique, set apart, and marvelous. We have been crafted with yare and palah - with awe and wonder!

As God crafted the human race, scripture reminds us that God was intentional. There was nothing random about how we were formed. We were created, respectfully and uniquely created, with purpose for good. It is so easy for us to look at the world and marvel at God's creations, the beautiful sunset, the flowers, and the trees. It is easy for us to see the beauty of creation and praise God. It is not as easy for us to look at ourselves and each other and marvel at this creation. When we say, "Wonderful are your works", do we really understand that we are one of those "wonderful works?"

What does the metaphor of the Potter and the Clay tell you about God?

What does the metaphor tell you about yourself?

What does the metaphor of the Potter and the Clay tell you about your relationship with God?

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Psalm 139:14 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

*I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.*

In the original Hebrew text of the Bible, the word fearfully means: with great reverence, heart-felt interest and with respect.

The word wonderfully means: unique, set apart, marvelous.

What has God crafted uniquely in me? What makes me - me?

What do I love about me?

What gifts has God given me to share with the world?

My Fearfully and Wonderfully Made Manifesto

Hello, my name is _____ and I am fearfully and wonderfully made!

I, _____, am an unrepeatable miracle of God! I am the only me God ever made!

God has uniquely crafted into me _____, _____, and _____.

I love that I am _____, _____ and _____.

I will take what God has hand-crafted into me and share it with the world by

_____.

I am _____ and I am wonderfully and fearfully made!