

many years ago when i was in high school, i took an art and crafts class. i was working with clay. my first project was a monk kneeling in front of an altar and cross. i had that for many years until it finally turned up missing. my next project was a life size bust of jfk after he was assassinated. we never kept that one since it took so much clay.

clay has to be kept moist while it is being formed. we used to keep a damp cloth around it between work sessions. if it becomes hard and dried out, it must be broken up and reconstituted down to workable clay once again and one starts over. when the desired outcome is achieved and hardened, it is then fired in a kiln to make the shape permanent.

we are clay in the hands of a master potter. "We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand." isa 64:8 even as He formed us in our mother's womb, He is now shaping each of us into that thing He sees in us. we must stay moist with the water of the word while He does His work. if we allow ourselves to become dry and hardened, we must be broken that He might begin again. then when our shape has taken place, we are placed in the fire to allow the shape to become permanent.

we all have a test of our faith at some point. He has promised to keep us in those times. "when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." isa 32:2 fire is a purifying force, mentioned so often in connection with God. it is a fire that allows all the impurities to be burned up so the true essence remains. our

purification is necessary if we are to behold Him in all His glory. the sin and dross must all be burnt away.

truly He is a God that hides Himself. the word says that the fall in the garden allowed man to know good and evil. the choice is then up to us. good or evil. light or darkness. one seeking Him can find Him woven throughout the pages of His word. they are not just stories. they are examples and prophecies and promises one must discover for themselves. if one is really seeking, He will allow His self to be known.

i am reminded of job, the oldest book in the bible. he was tested almost beyond human endurance. he still said "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him". job 13:15 God allowed it all because He knew the end from the beginning. He knew job had not really lost anything because it all was safe in God's keeping. his wealth, his children, all were waiting for him even as he received again in this life. the devil was reminded that a righteous man will still choose the good over evil. it was augustine that said "our souls are restless until it finds it's rest in You".

i think of all the prophets of old who foretold hidden meanings in their writings. led by the Holy Spirit they revealed things that only now seem possible. "the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints." col 1:26 by faith they spoke to us, being fully assured that what He has said will come to pass. grace and truth has now been revealed to us in Jesus. He is the fulfillment of all the law and requirements. as He

said in john 14:9 "He who has seen Me has seen the Father".

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." rev 1:8

linda