

The Place of Moulding

Peter McArthur



Moulding (or **molding** if you're American) is a method of manufacturing to shape a liquid or some pliable raw material using a frame (rigid or rubber) called a mould or matrix. Think of a cake mixture, or a child's plaster of Paris (gypsum plaster) to make a toy figure. Anything really, from a piece of pottery, to a ceiling decoration, or a child's fantasy figure. You know the thing I'm sure; see below.



Well there's an interesting text in 2 Chronicles 4:16-17 that has a spiritual application.

"The pails, the shovels, the forks and all its utensils, Hiram-abi made of polished bronze for King Solomon for the house of YHWH. On the plain of the Jordan the king **cast them in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah.**"

Here we have a principle. Most pastors and Bible teachers teach out of a "mould", something they've read about in a book, heard at a conference, or which has been passed on from pastor to pastor. However there's a need now for what we might call "teachers of revelation" (see my article [here](#) on that). Such teachers will only teach the "pure" rather than second-hand revelation, or hand-me-down tradition.

Now here is where the above text comes into focus. Note where the moulding took place – on the **plain**. The word in Hebrew is *kikkar* (H3603) and means *a round, a round district, a round loaf, a round weight*. That word itself is derived from another word *karar* (H3769) meaning *to dance, to whirl around as in a circle*. It's used in **2 Samuel 6:14** "**And David was dancing before YHWH with all his might.**" David was whirling about!

The plain referred to is the "**plain of the (river) Jordan**" (2 Chron 4:17). Biblical symbolism or typology shows us that the river "Jordan" signifies "death to self". That word has the meaning of "descend" and that's why in baptism you go down into the waters (of the Jordan) to die to self! The meaning we can

draw from all this is that True Spirituality born of the Holy Spirit and not from man's tradition will "dance" in rejoicing at the prospect of dying-to-self. I wonder how many of us truly rejoiced at our water baptism!

You may have read stories of seemingly irrational saints who acted rather strangely, who rejoiced over the oddest things, and who didn't seem to act sensibly at all. They were (and perhaps still are) viewed as "other wordly". Jesus had something to say about that kind of person.

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. (Matt 5:39-44).

Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. (Luke 6:22-13).

And look how the Saviour acted even while enduring the horrors of crucifixion: **"Father forgive them for they know not what they do"** (Luke 23:34).

This seems all irrational and doesn't make any sense to the human, wordly mindset.

There's a tradition about Saint Paul that when he was taken to his place of execution he ran to meet his executioners and embraced them. Strange indeed if you're not a someone who is soon going to meet his Lord. Paul could've only acted like that (if the story is true) because all his life he had practised dying-to-self over and over in the little things, so that when the big occasion came, he was ready and able to do it. He had been moulded.

Now note in the story from 2 Chronicles that it was Hiram-abi the anointed craftsman who chose the place for the moulding. Jesus our great Moulder has also chosen the place for us as His spiritual vessels to be moulded. Why then do we kick against the work of God? We can talk a lot about dying-to-self as something we should do, but then on the other hand we fight against having to actually do it! Well at least that's my own experience of it.

We've already mentioned that the moulding of the vessels took place "on the plain". But note where on the plain; between two cities, one called Zeredah and the other Succoth. The actual Hebrew reads *Zaredathah* not Zeredah. Nevertheless the meaning behind the word is "change of dominion".

The place where dominion changes (for believers) is the Cross, a dying-to-self where the dominion of Satan's kingdom gives way to the kingdom of God. Interestingly enough another possible meaning behind Zeredah is "ambush" (see [here](#)). Satan's plan was to get rid Jesus by killing Him on the Cross, but it was at the Cross where that plan was ambushed. Interesting!

So we find a wonderful truth hidden in this story. If we take Zeredah to figuratively mean "a change of dominion", for Christians that is represented by Passover/the Cross/Death to self. And if we take Succoth to mean "Booths/Tents/Tabernacles" (Succoth is the Feast of Tabernacles), the great moulding of the holy vessels (believers) takes place somewhere between Passover and Succoth, between the Cross and the Tabernacle = between our salvation and our maturing!

Are you following this? The text says it all happens "between Succoth and Zeredah". We are spiritually moulded between our own Passover experience (death to self = salvation) and our own experience of residing and resting that's found in a personal Tabernacle encounter. Between these two (① death to self and ② rest) we are moulded by the Divine Craftsman to conform to the image He

alone purposes. It takes time, a lot of time, and many testings to arrive just where the Father wants us – conformity to His pattern for us – Jesus!

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren (Rms 8:29).

And it's not just an individual thing, but a corporate one too.

Until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13).

Now between Zeredah and Succoth (both different sides of the Jordan) there was a city called Adam where Joshua parted the waters (Joshua 3:16). And interestingly enough the word “adam” refers to “red earth or clay” from which the first Adam was formed (Gen 2:7) so there's a word play between “adam” and “ground/earth”.

The words “clay” and “ground” in 2 Chronicles 4 are based on other words meaning “*to grow firm, to cleave fast, to be compact*” (H4568 and H5666).

To take the imagery we're looking at in 2 Chronicles 4:16-17 we can see that our Adam-nature has to be re-shaped by a moulding that happens in between our initial Passover experience (salvation) and our Tabernacles encounter (maturity). For most of us this will be quite a long time, just as in the natural Feasts of Passover and Tabernacles there's a very long time gap. The Father has shown us such things in the natural Feasts He inaugurated with Israel, and the spiritual applications for us as Christians today. The Feasts of God always point to deeper spiritual realities.

This might seem a little drawn-out for you but I hope not “flaky”. I am trying to express a truth and divine principle here and words do get in the way!

To sum up: We are being moulded and re-shaped. The end of our re-shaping should see us come to a place where we are firm and compact, steadfast and cleaving to the Father's purpose – to be more like His Son Jesus.

Now should we think this is simply a lesson for the development of our own personal Character/Inner Man, let us remember it's also about the wider Body of Christ. There is too much “self” in today's church (just look at some of the wording of modern Christian songs). Also too many sermons on what's beneficial for the individual. Being a follower of Jesus is greater than US getting blessed more, and MY needs met, or a PERSONAL calling. It's about the Body of Christ and the maturing of our joint ministries that will equip the brethren for service. “**Until we all attain to the unity of the faith**” (Eph 4:13).

Let us therefore allow the Holy Spirit to re-mould us just the way the Father has purposed, to be more like His wonderful Son!

Peter McArthur
issachar.org

