

Poem Into

We come, original clay to Your hand,
Ready to be molded to your purpose,
Wet with the living waters.

Humble, we submit to the power of Your will,
We begin to spring into life.

Awry and out of balance,
We long for your centring touch
Yet resist on first contact.

Full of the words and images of the world,
We swing this way and that
Till Your firm hand grasps us, pulls us back,
Draws us to the center,
Spinning into rings.

Yielding, we spring, begin to sing,
Picking up the rhythm,
Rising and falling
Becoming smooth
Forming and filling.

Slowing and we spin,
Vessel we become,
Vessel to be shared,
Full of the living waters.

Context

- We can use the word spinning to describe the first readers of today's text in Isaiah
- They were continuously called the chosen people by God
- At the same time continuously facing exile from their land
- They had moments of laughter and victories
- At the same time of grief and captivity
- Spinning
- It is hard to know how it all makes sense
- It is hard to know that God holds you by your hand
- When everything is...spinning

(Israel Pereira) Isaiah 64:8 & 29:16-24

Message

How many of us today feel like there has been too much spinning?

Did you have the feeling this year is spinning too fast? Moments of laughter, moments of sorrow, moments of kindness, moments of hurting.

In a blink of an eye, we are entering in July.

Or Perhaps the feeling that the year has gone too slow

Situations have made you long for it to be over, and over really fast. Like the people of Israel in the book of Isaiah, you have been years longing for a situation to be over

For me, arriving in Germany as an immigrant was a spinning wheel

At times, I felt welcomed and integrated in this beautiful country, as people did all they could to help me with a place to live, and a possibility to pay the bill.

At times, I felt alone and not welcomed

Sometimes I lacked direction. When arriving in a new country, it is difficult to walk towards a long term goal, it is difficult to know the next step because you gotta worry about the next necessity.

Getting through the spinning becomes an end of itself

And with all the different shapes of life. Shaping and reshaping.

We might lose sight of what is at the end of the journey.

“Will you restrain yourself, O Lord?

Will you be silent and afflict us to extremity?”

Asked the people of Israel in chapter 64 verse 11.

The fear of disconnection to the God we trust. The fear of being left behind when no answer can be found. The moment of not having a shoulder to lean on. The moment Jesus cries on the cross saying “why have you forsaken me?” To be left alone when everything is spinning

It is therefore, in such situations, that I lose grasp of the situation

Forgetting that God’s hands take hold of me

That I am clay

And He is the potter

Forgetting that I am clay, sometimes confident

But He is the potter

Forgetting that I am clay, sometimes proud

But He is the potter

Forgetting that I am clay, sometimes lost

But He is the potter

(Israel Pereira) Isaiah 64:8 & 29:16-24

Forgetting that I am clay, sometimes spinning
But He is the potter

Our lives might be spinning today, with the good and bad, it might seem so out of shape
Hard to tell its form
Hard to tell, its purpose
Hard to tell its direction
Easy to forget its creator, so much spinning going on!

But even the speed and the rhythm of all the spinning, has its purpose
And though shapes and situations may seem random, there is a pattern
For every shape and spin, a purpose

In Isaiah, the people of Israel were spinning, just like you and I today. They also at times were overwhelmed towards all the spinning around them. The potter and His ways were forgotten at times. Yet they never left the potter's hands. It is at the moment of repentance and remembrance, that the clay looks beyond the spinning. A positive outlook, even in exile, emerges. There are Hands in control of all the spinning

The awareness of God as a potter is so strong, that while the context spins

- Lebanon is turned into a fertile field
- The deaf hears the word of the scroll
- out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind see.
- The ruthless vanish, the mockers will disappear
- Those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding;
- Those who complain will accept instruction.”
- And God said “When they see among them their children the work of my hands, they will keep my name holy”

And so I try to remind myself, not to focus on the spinning and different shapes
But to trust on the Potter's hands
Hands of understanding, foresight peace and love

Hands that I see through those, who brought a smile to my face in times of sorrow
Hands that I see through the Peace Church community and many others in the world
Hands that gave something to eat, when hungry. Something to drink, when thirsty, when as a stranger, invited. When sick, looked after, when in prison, visited. When afraid, encouraged.
When at fault, shown grace.

An awareness that the Hands of the potter never left us.
Although at fault, God never left the people of Israel. Restoration has always been the goal.
The potter works towards a new heaven and a new earth and though the spinning cannot be ignored, be reminded that the hands of the loving potter never left. Amen