



From Vessel to Vessel

By JENNIFER KENNEDY DEAN

“Moab has been at ease since his youth;
He has also been undisturbed, like wine on its dregs,
And he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel,
Nor has he gone into exile.
Therefore he retains his flavor,
And his aroma has not changed” (Jer. 48:11, NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE)

The Scripture is the living Word of God, so even those passages addressed to a particular audience in a specific time regarding a unique event have layers of meaning. Even those passages that are spoken within the context of time echo into eternity, speaking fresh truth to God’s people in any given moment.

This passage is describing the nation of Moab regarding a situation framed in time. But it speaks to me through the present Voice of the Living God.

God says that Moab has been left undisturbed. He is describing what a person is like who has never been challenged and forced to face disappointment or disruption of his life. He is like wine on its dregs. Wine left to sit on its dregs becomes bitter and harsh. It is unpalatable. It is useless.

The art of winemaking involves stages. A wine must be moved from vessel to vessel along the way. Each stage of winemaking requires a vessel of different size, shape, and construction. Each stage accomplishes something different for the final product—the wine that is becoming. At each stage, the dregs have settled to the bottom and must be strained out to prevent the ruin of the wine. The stage at which a wine must be emptied from one vessel to another is not a static and predictable period. Only the winemaker can tell.





God, the Great Winemaker, is fermenting a rich and perfect wine in you. Do you feel yourself being emptied from vessel to vessel? You get used to the shape and the feel of your life, and then find yourself being emptied out. During part of the process, you have been poured out, but not poured in yet. You know that your old vessel has been emptied out, but you do not feel yourself having arrived in a new vessel yet. There is a transition period, a pouring. It is disorienting and uncertain. Then you find yourself poured into a life of a completely different shape and size and made up of new materials. It is new to you and it doesn't feel like it fits.

Learn the ways of the Winemaker. Don't be discouraged or frightened when the shape of your life and the construction of your days seem to be changing. God will not let you sit on your dregs. Unlike Moab, you will not stay in the same place. You will not be locked into your immaturity, retaining the same aroma as in your youth. He is ripening you, fermenting you, enriching you.

Rejoice! You are being emptied from vessel to vessel.

