

Like Clay to the Prophet and to the Poet

הִנֵּה כַחֲוֶמֶר בְּיַד הַיּוֹצֵר כֵּן-אַתֶּם בְּיַד יְהוָה יִשְׂרָאֵל

Just like clay in the hands of the potter, so are you in my hands, O House of Israel!

(Jeremiah 18:6)

כִּי הִנֵּה כַחֲוֶמֶר בְּיַד הַיּוֹצֵר,
בְּרָצוֹתוֹ מְרַחֵב וּבְרָצוֹתוֹ מְקַצֵּר,
כֵּן אֲנַחְנוּ בְּיַדְךָ חֶסֶד נוֹצֵר,
לְבָרִית הַבֵּט וְאֵל תִּפְּן לַיּוֹצֵר.

We are like clay in designer's hand,
As he wills—to contract, as he wills—to expand,
So are we in your hand to lovingly define,
Look past *our* designs keep the covenant in mind.

(Yom Kippur piyyut/poem by an anonymous poet)
Translated by Rabbi Steven Sager