

# Isaiah 45:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

## Analysis

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Woe to those who strive with their Maker, mere 'potsherds' (clay fragments) among clay fragments. The Hebrew 'geresh' (potsherd) emphasizes humanity's fragility and commonness. Can clay question the potter, asking 'What makest thou?' or criticizing 'He hath no hands'? This anticipates Romans 9:20 where Paul uses this exact argument.

## Historical Context

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This addresses potential Israelite objection to God using a pagan like Cyrus. Who are they to question God's methods? The Potter has absolute rights over clay.

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. In what ways do you find yourself striving with or questioning your Maker?

2. How does the potter/clay imagery humble human presumption about God's ways?

## Interlinear Text

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ה וי	כ ב	את	לִיצֵרוֹ	חֲרָשׁ י	את
Woe	unto him that striveth	H853	to him that fashioneth	Let the potsherd	H853
H1945	H7378		H3335	H2789	
חֲרָשׁ י	אֲדָמָה	הֵיאֵמֶר	חֶמֶר	לִיצֵרוֹ	
Let the potsherd	of the earth	say	Shall the clay	to him that fashioneth	
H2789	H127	H559	H2563	H3335	
מָה	תַּעֲשֶׂה	וּפְעָלֶךָ	אֵין	יְיָ	לֹא
H4100	it What makest	thou or thy work	H369	He hath no hands	H0
	H6213	H6467		H3027	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 64:8** (Parallel theme): But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

**Isaiah 29:16** (Parallel theme): Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

**Isaiah 10:15** (Parallel theme): Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.

**Jeremiah 18:6** (Parallel theme): O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

**Proverbs 21:30** (Parallel theme): There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

**Jeremiah 50:24** (Parallel theme): I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD.

**1 Corinthians 10:22** (Parallel theme): Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

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