

Striving With God

Isaiah 45:9 says, "*Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!*" This quotation from Isaiah points to a particular problem we sometimes have: striving with God. Contention is probably one of the strongest "emotions" that humans possess. The feeling manifests itself by a constant desire to argue with someone. Normally, it does not matter what the issue is or if we are right or wrong. We just like to argue!

Isaiah's purpose was to show the greatness of God and how foolish it was to question or criticize His ways. This comes in the middle of the discussion concerning Cyrus. God was going to use Cyrus to release the Israelites from their Babylonian captivity. In a sense, Cyrus, king of Persia, would be their deliverer.

However, God knew the children of Israel would have a hard time accepting Cyrus as their deliverer, so He declared a few verses before, "*I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me ...*" God would accomplish the wonderful work of "salvation" through His servant, Cyrus. Cyrus is a type or figure of Christ, the real Savior who would bring a release from sin.

This passage teaches us that God is not some close buddy that we can pal around with, and when we feel like we have been done wrong, go to Him and tell Him why His plan is not working. God works out all things according to the way He wants them to work out. We are merely the "clay" in matters pertaining to God (cf. Job 9:2-3).

Paul makes the final application of Isaiah's statement in Romans 9:20-21. God could choose the Gentiles if it pleased Him in order to spread the riches of His glory upon all men. Although the Jews would not readily accept this arrangement, they had no right to question God's sovereignty in the matter.

Just like God had the right to deal with the Israelites the way He wanted, He has the right to deal with us the way He wants. The fact that God's wisdom is so above ours makes it hard sometimes for us to understand why events happen.

We may never consciously strive with God, but doubting Him really amounts to striving or contention. Christians must take care that their trust in God is not misplaced. Accept the ways of God and always be thankful for your blessings. He does know what is good for us and we must accept that fact.

Kyle Campbell