

Isaiah 45 - Cyrus to Restore Jerusalem

III. Prophecies of comfort (Is 40:1–66:24)

(1) Promises of Israel's deliverance from Babylonian captivity because of God's attributes (Is 40:1–48:22)

(F) Deliverance based upon prediction of Cyrus (44:24–45:13)

(b) Cyrus as deliverer from political captivity (45:1-13)

(G) Deliverance based upon Judah's predicted supremacy over the Gentiles (45:14-25)

(a) Gentiles to bow to Israel (45:14-19)

(b) Gentiles to worship God (45:20-25)

Isaiah 45

(b) Cyrus as deliverer from political captivity (45:1-13)

1 This is what the LORD says to Cyrus His **anointed**, Whom I have taken by the right hand, To **subdue nations** before him And to undo *the weapons belt on* the waist of kings; To open doors before him so that **gates will not be shut**:

1 Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed, Whom I have taken by the right hand, To subdue nations before him And to loose the loins of kings; To open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:

1 This is what the LORD says to his anointed, Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him, as I strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him and gates that cannot keep closed:

1 Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

- "...anointed" - used for a Gentile king!

- "...subdue nations" - 46 nations (among which were the Medes, Babylonians, Lydians, Carians, Caunians, Lysians, Bactrians, Sacae, Parthians, Hyracanians, Chorasmians, Sogdians, Arians of Herat, Zarangians, Arachosians, Satagydians, Gandarians)

- "...loose the loins of kings" [KJV] - Cf. Dan 5:6

- "...gates shall not be shut" - was the key to their battle-less victory

2 "I will go before you and make the rough places smooth; I will shatter the doors of bronze and cut through their iron bars.

2 "I will go before you and make the rough places smooth; I will shatter the doors of bronze and cut through their iron bars.

2 "I myself will go before you, and he will make the mountains level; I'll shatter bronze doors and cut through iron bars.

2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

- A fulfillment of prophecy! Belshazzar's embarrassment was a public (and prophetic) landmark! (other details also faithfully accurate...)

3 "I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden wealth of secret places, So that you may know that it is I, The LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.

3 "I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden wealth of secret places, So that you may know that it is I, The LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.

3 I'll give you concealed treasures and riches hidden in secret places, so that you'll know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by name.

3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.

Cyrus' Response

Cyrus was duly impressed. He freed the captives and returned the vessels that had been plundered from the Temple 70 years earlier. He even gave them incentives to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple (2 Chr 36:22; Ezra 1:1-4). Only about 50,000 Jews responded to this royal proclamation and returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Zerubbabel.

The Stele of Cyrus

This cylinder, discovered by Hormuzd Rassam in the 19th century, can presently be seen in the British Museum in London.



“...without any battle, he entered the town, sparing any calamity; ... I returned to sacred cities on the other side of the Tigris, the sanctuaries of which have been ruins for a long time... and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I also gathered all their former inhabitants and returned to them their habitations.” [British Museum, London]

Ezra 1:2-3:

2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

4 “For the sake of Jacob My servant, And Israel My chosen one, I have also called you by your name; I have given you a title of honor Though you have not known Me.

4 “For the sake of Jacob My servant, And Israel My chosen one, I have also called you by your name; I have given you a title of honor Though you have not known Me.

4 For the sake of Jacob my servant, Israel, my chosen, I've called you, and he has established you with a name, although you have not acknowledged me.

4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

- Cyrus had no personal relationship with the Lord, but 200 years before he was even born, God had chosen him to be the one who would free the Babylonian exiles to return to Israel after their 70-year captivity

5 "I am the LORD, and there is no one else; There is no God except Me. I will arm you, though you have not known Me,
5 "I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me;
5 I am the LORD, and there is no other besides me: and there are no gods. I'm strengthening you, although you have not acknowledged me,
5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

6 So that *people* may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no one else,
6 That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other,
6 so that from the sun's rising to the west people may know that there is none besides me. "I am the LORD, and there is no other."
6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.

7 The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating **disaster**; I am the LORD who does all these things.
7 The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these.
7 "I form light and create darkness, I make goodness and create disaster. I am the LORD, who does all these things.
7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.
- "...disaster" - *ra*, adversity, calamity; never refers to sin
— God didn't create sin (Hab 1:13; 2 Tim 2:13; Titus 1:2; James 1:13; 1 John 1:5), but He assures the consequences of sin

Hymn of Praise

8 "Drip down, heavens, from above, And let the clouds pour down righteousness; Let the earth open up and salvation bear fruit, And righteousness sprout with it. I, the LORD, have created it.
8 "Drip down, O heavens, from above, And let the clouds pour down righteousness; Let the earth open up and salvation bear fruit, And righteousness spring up with it. I, the LORD, have created it.

8 "Shout, you skies above, and you clouds, and let righteousness stream down. I am the one who says to the earth, 'Let salvation blossom, and let righteousness sprout forth.'

8 Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.

The Rebuke of the Critics

9 "Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker— A piece of pottery among the *other* earthenware pottery pieces! Will the clay say to the potter, 'What are you doing?' Or the thing you are making say, 'He has no hands'?

9 "Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker— An earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth! Will the clay say to the potter, 'What are you doing?' Or the thing you are making say, 'He has no hands'?

9 "Woe to the one who quarrels with his makers, a mere potsherd with the potsherds of the earth! Woe to the one who says to the one forming him, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no human hands?!"

9 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?

10 "Woe to him who says to a father, 'What are you fathering?' Or to a woman, 'To what are you giving birth?!"

10 "Woe to him who says to a father, 'What are you begetting?' Or to a woman, 'To what are you giving birth?!"

10 Woe to the one who says to his father, 'What are you begetting?' or to a woman, 'To what are you giving birth?!"

10 Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?

- Israel is warned not to question God (Cf. Jer 18:1-10; Rom 9:20-21; Ps 2:9)

11 This is what the LORD says, the Holy One of Israel and his Maker: "Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, And you shall commit to Me the work of My hands.

11 Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: "Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, And you shall commit to Me the work of My hands.

11 This is what the Lord says, the Creator of the signs: "Question me about my children, or give me orders about the work of my hands.

11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.

12 "It is I who made the earth, and created mankind upon it.

I stretched out the heavens with My hands, And I ordained all their lights.

12 "It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it. I stretched out the heavens with My hands And I ordained all their host.

12 I myself made the earth and personally created humankind upon it. My own hands stretched out the skies; I marshaled all their starry hosts."

12 I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

- God uses His authentication of His message by describing things yet to happen, prophecy. Precisely, right 100% of the time!

13 "I have stirred him in righteousness, And I will make all his ways smooth. He will build My city and let My exiles go free, Without any payment or reward," says the LORD of armies.

13 "I have aroused him in righteousness And I will make all his ways smooth; He will build My city and will let My exiles go free, Without any payment or reward," says the LORD of hosts.

13 "I have aroused him in righteousness, and I'll make all his pathways smooth. It is he who will rebuild my city and set my exiles free, but not for a price nor reward," says the LORD of the Heavenly Armies.

13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.

(G) Deliverance based upon Judah's predicted supremacy over the Gentiles
(45:14-25)

(a) Gentiles to bow to Israel (45:14-19)

14 This is what the LORD says: "The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush And the Sabeans, men of stature, Will come over to you and will be yours; They will walk behind you, they will come over in chains And will bow down to you; They will plead with you: 'God certainly is with you, and there is no one else, No other God.'"

14 Thus says the LORD,

"The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush And the Sabeans, men of stature, Will come over to you and will be yours; They will walk behind you, they will come over in chains And will bow down to you; They will make supplication to you: 'Surely, God is with you, and there is none else, No other God.'"

14 This is what the LORD says: "The wealth of Egypt, and the merchandise of Ethiopia, those Sabeans, men of great heights. They'll come over to you and will be yours; They'll

trudge behind you— coming over in chains, they'll bow down to you. They'll plead with you, 'Surely God is in you; and there is no other God at all.'

14 Thus saith the LORD, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God.

15 Truly, You are a God who hides Himself, God of Israel, Savior!

15 Truly, You are a God who hides Himself, O God of Israel, Savior!

15 "Truly you are a God who hides himself, O God of Israel, the Savior.

15 Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

16 They will be put to shame and even humiliated, all of them; The manufacturers of idols will go away together in humiliation.

16 They will be put to shame and even humiliated, all of them; The manufacturers of idols will go away together in humiliation.

16 All of them will be put to shame—indeed, disgraced! The makers of idols will go off in disgrace together.

16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols.

17 Israel has been saved by the LORD With an everlasting salvation; You will not be put to shame or humiliated To all eternity.

17 Israel has been saved by the LORD With an everlasting salvation; You will not be put to shame or humiliated To all eternity.

17 But Israel will be saved by the LORD with everlasting salvation; you won't be put to shame or disgraced ever again."

17 But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

- The regeneration of Israel (Cf. Jer 31:31-34)

The Message of Salvation to Israel

18 For this is what the LORD says, *He who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it as a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited):*

"I am the LORD, and there is no one else.

18 For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it *and* did not create it a waste place, *but* formed it to be inhabited),"I am the LORD, and there is none else.

18 For this is what the LORD says, who created the heavens— he is God, and the one who formed the earth and made it, and he is the one who established it; he didn't create it for chaos, but formed it to be inhabited— "I am the LORD and there is no other.

18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.

19 "I have not spoken in secret, In some dark land; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek Me in a wasteland'; I, the LORD, speak righteousness, Declaring things that are right.

19 "I have not spoken in secret, In some dark land; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek Me in a waste place'; I, the LORD, speak righteousness, Declaring things that are upright.

19 I didn't speak in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I didn't say to Jacob's descendants, 'Seek me in chaos.' I, the LORD, speak truth, declaring what is right.

19 I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

(b) Gentiles to worship God (45:20-25)

20 "Gather yourselves and come; Come together, you survivors of the nations! They have no knowledge, Who carry around their wooden idol And pray to a god who cannot save.

20 "Gather yourselves and come; Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; They have no knowledge, Who carry about their wooden idol And pray to a god who cannot save.

20 "Gather together and come; draw near and enter, your fugitives from the nations. Those who carry around their wooden idols know nothing, nor do those who keep praying to a god that cannot save.

20 Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save.

21 "Declare and present *your* case; Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this long ago? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, A righteous God and a Savior; There is none except Me.

21 "Declare and set forth *your* case; Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And

there is no other God besides Me, A righteous God and a Savior; There is none except Me.

21 Explain and present a case! Yes, let them take counsel together. Who announced this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides me, a righteous God and Savior; and there is none besides me.

21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.

The Message of Salvation to the Gentiles

22 "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.

22 "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.

22 Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth. For I am God, and there is no other.

22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

23 "I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*.

23 "I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*.

23 By myself I have sworn— from my mouth has gone out integrity, a promise that won't be revoked: 'To me every knee will bow, and every tongue will swear.'

23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

24 "They will say of Me, 'Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.' People will come to Him, And all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.

24 "They will say of Me, 'Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.' Men will come to Him, And all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.

24 One will say of me, 'Only in the LORD are victories and might.' All who raged against him will come to him and will be put to shame.

24 Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

25 "In the LORD all the offspring of Israel Will be justified and will boast."

25 "In the LORD all the offspring of Israel Will be justified and will glory."

25 In the LORD all the descendants of Israel will triumph and make their boast."

25 In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.