

38 Isaiah 45:1



The Father Knows Best

School of the Bible Class

Isaiah

Isaiah 45-48

038

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Indian Hills Community Church

Detectives looking for Eschatological Evidences in Isaiah

Tribulation and Kingdom Truth



Continuing

As Usual My Predictions—

- Last week I made a guesstimate about our lesson for today—again we linger here for another week or two—for my good reasons.
- ❖ We introduced Cyrus “the Great” last week.
- Since there is much to learn about the functions and power of God surrounding his name we pause for a closer look-see at this famous personage—and the more famous prophecy about him.

Here O Israel, our God is One

- You remember that the last (and on-going) chapter was about the contest of the gods and God.
- The Lord has made the point many times by various literary devices to press the point that He is God and there is no other.
- Witnesses have been invited to present their deity as in a court room. But while the boasting and the protestations before these gods continue no one has raised even a feeble argument that the gods of wood or silver should be obeyed. Leaving them powerless as a block of wood.
- Last week we skipped over Isaiah 44:9-20 the familiar satire of satires concerning man-made idols and their powers.

Here O Israel, our God is One

- One of the proofs offered is that the God of Israel (not only exists but) that **He acts on behalf of the His nation.**
- So strikingly convincing is His display of power in the nation that the **whole world stands in awe of the God of Israel**—and trembles.
- Signs or evidences, starts with internal statements made to the nation which spills into the **world at large.**
- **Next week we will show such a demonstration of power in the future! A sign to Israel and the nations—Gog and Magog.**

Here O Israel, our God is One

- With the prophecies surrounding Cyrus—God will demonstrate His superiority
- Not just a marginal superiority but One Who is stupendously powerful. He is the only God—there is no contest, there just is NO OTHER.
- To make the point—God names a future Gentile king who will rule over a world class empire, a people that has not yet come into any fame.

Here O Israel, our God is One

Here is the fuller formula—

- (1) **Nation** will **rise** to world —
- (2) **Empire** status.
- (3) A named **king** will rule a **world** empire.
- (4) This king will pave the way for the nation of Israel to **return** to the Land from an—
- (5) Exile that has not yet occurred. Given elsewhere, the nation returns after 70 yrs c. 535-515 b.c.

Here O Israel, our God is One

- That king will make the return of Israel smooth. He will finance the rebuilding efforts—**likely never in the history of man.**
- **As prophesied:** Rebuilt is the (6) **temple** (515 b. c.) and the (7) **city walls** (444 b.c.)—(8) **under subsequent kings.**
- The “God of Israel” is honored and the people who wish to— can return.
- The city walls are rebuilt without Persian opposition by the later kings who tacitly relinquish sovereignty over the territory.
- However, Israel still functions under the authority of Persia, Greece and Rome until their deportation in 70-135 a. d. Israel lost her independence in 586 b. c. until 1948!

Contrasting the Idols with no Power

- Isaiah 44:28 “It is I who says of [1] Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.’
- [which is] And he declares of Jerusalem,
- [2] ‘She will be built,’
 - [3] And of the temple, [Second Temple of Ezra]
 - ‘Your foundation will be laid.’ ” Isaiah 44:28

God Increases Improbabilities

- This is a boat load of prophecies—at least eight.
- Every time an additional promise is made the odds of all of them being fulfilled increases exponentially.
- Increasing improbability not by adding but by multiplying the odds.





Hey Cyrus! Come here!

- 3“I will give you (Cyrus) the treasures of darkness (conquest warfare?) And hidden wealth of secret places, so that you (Cyrus) may know that it is I, The Lord, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.
- 4“For the sake of Jacob My servant, And Israel My chosen one, I have also called you by your name (Cyrus); I have given you a title of honor Though you have not known Me. Isaiah 45:3–4

I am the Lord there is no other

- 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;
- ⁶That 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,
- ⁷The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the Lord who does all these. Isaiah 45:5–7

We will come back to this point
Springing forward to the Eschaton

I am the Lord of the Big Picture

The Eschaton

- 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.
 - Next: The coming captivity may be questioned by Israel’s “best.”
 - Q. What does Judah know about the coming captivity? Whatever it is subsequent readers will be tempted to question God’s wisdom here.
- 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’? Isaiah 45:8–9

I am the Lord of the Big Picture

- ¹⁰“Woe to him who says to a father, ‘What are you begetting?’ Or to a woman, ‘To what are you giving birth?’ ” [It is an insult to the father to ask this question. Lesson: It is an insult to God to question his plans for the Captivity by Babylon and Cyrus’ restoration]
- ¹¹Thus 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 [let Me do My job] the work of My hands. [Why? Remember—]**
- 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. Isaiah 45:10–12

I am the Lord of the Big Picture

- ¹³“I have aroused him (Cyrus) in [to do] righteousness And I will make all his ways smooth; He will build My city and will let My exiles go [home] free, Without any payment or reward,” says the Lord of hosts. [Out of the goodness of his heart!]
- ¹⁴Thus 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.**’ ” Isaiah 45:13–14

I am the Lord of the Big Picture

- ¹⁵Truly, You are a God who hides Himself [from the rebels], O God of Israel, Savior!
- ¹⁶They will be put to shame and even humiliated, all of them; The manufacturers of idols will go away together in humiliation.
- ¹⁷Israel **has been saved** by the Lord With an everlasting salvation; You will not be put to shame or humiliated **To all eternity.**
- ¹⁸For 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. Isaiah 45:15–18

The Earth is to be Inhabited by His Creation

The original purpose still remains—not reason to abandon the earth

- G. Smith: “There is disagreement on what it means when God claims that he did not create the earth *tōhû* "empty" (NIV, HCSB), "a chaos" (NRSV), "a waste place" (NASB).
- “Each of these translations is possible, but the context of the next line ("in order to be inhabited") suggests that "empty, uninhabited" is the best translation. Indeed, at creation God did not leave the world in its initial "empty" state (Gen 1:2) but filled it with stars, fish, birds, plants, animals, and people. These declarations demonstrate that he is God (there is no other God like him) and that he has a plan and a **purpose for this world**. Therefore the audience can trust him to carry out the **rest of his purposes for this earth**. (There is no reason not to extend the earth's purpose into eternity.)
- Smith, Gary U. Isaiah 40-66: Volume 15 (The New American Commentary) (pp. 290-291). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

I am the Lord there is no other

- **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’; [But publicly in Jerusalem] I, the Lord, speak righteousness, Declaring things that are upright.
- **FOR ISRAEL: 20**“Gather yourselves and come; Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; They (Gentiles) have no knowledge, Who carry about their wooden idol And pray to a god who cannot save. Isaiah 45:19–20

I am the Lord there is no other

- **21**“Declare and set forth your case; Indeed, let them [nations] consult together. [But] 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.
- **FOR ALL PEOPLE: 22**“Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.
Isaiah 45:21–22

I am the Lord there is no other

- 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.**
- “so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth.” Philippians 2:10
- 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. ²⁵“In the Lord all the offspring of Israel Will be justified and will glory.” Isaiah 45:23–25

An Extra Heaven?

- What could be better? The idea of an eternal state that is better than we have witnessed gives us evidence that someone has tampered with the kingdom text. There is only one kingdom. See R Bruce Compton's unpublished paper in To Seek, To Do, To Teach, p. 177
- We will not encounter a text or even a suggestion that after the glorious kingdom there is yet another "heaven" that is completely different.
 - A place modified as where God's justice reigns and believers death ends. But these have already been accomplished in the Messianic Kingdom.
- The Jews would be dumbfounded to learn that after the kingdom there is another new "state."

The Prophecy of Cyrus is Timeless

- In the chapters that follow, the Babylonian captivity may not be clearly understood for Isaiah's generation as in Jeremiah's. He will prophecy in the days of the Babylonian invasions 605-586 b. c.
- In Isaiah, the first wave of deportation is two or three generations away. The first wave of deportations is in 605 b.c. the last was 586 b.c.
- Our dating of Isaiah is in the range of 750-670 b.c.
- In other words people born in Judah say 700 will be 95 years old at the time of the first wave of captivity (605). Take off 20 yrs (75) for those born in 585.

Jeremiah's Prophecy of the Captivity

Active after 626 b. c. 20 years before Nebuchadnezzar's siege

- ⁹Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' declares the Lord, 'and I will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. ¹⁰'Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ¹²'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the Lord, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation. ¹³'I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. Jeremiah 25:9–13

Isaiah 46-48

- As the person Cyrus appears, we remember that it was Jeremiah that predicted in detail the Captivity of Babylon. (Jer. 25)
- We have no detail in Isaiah. Too many years ahead and confusing.
- Isa 46 is a general encouragement — remember God's acts in your old age.
- But we have likely a reference to Nebuchadnezzar in Isa. 46:11
- “Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.”

Yet Babylon is Mentioned

- **Isaiah 47 the anachronistic humiliation of Babylon**
- **Isaiah 48 the encouragement of Israel (before, during and after the captivity) to see the larger picture of God's faithfulness to His promise, His people.**
- **Note in the thinking of Israel, if prophetic Cyrus will bring them back to the land and rebuild the temple (still now standing) there must be some unknown deportation that will give the opportunity for Cyrus to return Israel to the Land.**

Here O Israel, our God is One

- All this to show that people that heard the prophecy from Isaiah likely did not see anything of the fulfillment—except some may have been taken to Babylon as the elderly—not very likely they would have been left to die in the Land.
- So nothing in this landmark prophecy could be verified or falsified by the living people who heard it the first time.
- Of course Isaiah was written down for later, even our generation to see God's authority over history.

If a Time is Not Set in the Prophecy—

- We should not determine the “time of the fulfillment” of God’s prophecies. [Any of them.]
- But we offer that many promises are across generations.
- Personal: Hezekiah was given 14 more years of life, he saw them but the impact of that was more personal and therefore had minimal international impact.
- But prophecies that have international and multigenerational implications are the significant ones in establishing God’s claim that THERE IS NO OTHER.

Here O Israel, our God is One

- Since there were no Israelites that could confirm or falsify Isaiah's "Cyrus predictions" it is left for the subsequent ones to accept them as true or try to discredit them. (Prophecy was written out.)
- We as believers cannot confirm them! We have only (singularly) God's written Word.
- What is the common way to discredit a prophecy?
- Ridicule—

Where is the promise?

- **Ridicule is always possible before prophecy is fulfilled. 2 Peter 3:4 “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.”**
- **Skeptics live with this dangerous ridicule—because if the Lord had come the skeptic would be “in Hell.**
- **Not a bad argument to answer the critic.**

They as we must live by faith—

- But by the years after 539 (Fall of Babylon) those who remembered (read) the prophetic words of Isaiah saw the fulfillment of prophecy—it was powerful after the fact in subsequent generations.
- Today “that prophecy” is still a burr under the saddle of the skeptic who insists Isaiah is historic not prophetic.
- To count all the fulfilled prophetic texts would take a long time. Yet without any study, we can easily think of all those that surrounded the coming, life of, and death of, and the resurrection and ascension, of the Messiah as a beginning point.

Ridicule God's Word

- Ridicule of prophecy is not only the sport of the unrighteous world it is also the past-time of those who harbor a great dose of Platonic Augustinianism—(Amillennialism) where the Jewish earthly kingdom has been abandoned for a fully Greek idea of Heaven. (My dying quest is to remove all traces of Augustine in our theology.) A heaven that is in the beautiful isle of somewhere—far from this “cruel sin cursed earth” is wrong!

**Our Hope Is in the future Kingdom and not in this “world order.”
Commonly expressed as simply the “world”**

- **So prophecy should be the beginning of our study for Christians not the last add on—**
- **Sadly, prophecy is relegated to the last section in seminary but it ought to be the first place in our teaching the new believers.**
- **We have text that teaches that a fuller sanctification occurs when our hope is understood. Prophecy gives us reason to continue a faithful witness.**

Our Hope Is in the future Kingdom and not in this “world”

Commonly expressed as simply the “world”

- **Teaching sanctification without our hope makes the task of training in righteousness more difficult, i. e. In light of the prophetic text what manner of life should we live?**
- **In the middle of 2 Peter 3:14 “the rich prophetic text in which he explains the Tribulation and reaching for the new Heaven and earth, he says, “Therefore, beloved, since you **look for these things**, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, ¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; **just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 2 Peter 3:15****

Jesus the Spirit of Prophecy

- **7“Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” 8It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ ” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” 10Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. **For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.**” Revelation 19:7–10**

Prophecies for Our Time

- Perhaps we could say signs of our time.
- The church is given no signs for the rescue that is at any time.
- However, Israel's life as a nation acts as a sign of God's intention.
- We have no reason to doubt that the emergence of Israel as an independent nation in 1948 is nothing but fulfilled prophecy.
- Some old timers may have been caught surprised that the rescue had not occurred yet. Because it was said that all prophecy of Israel must lay within the seventieth year of Daniels prophecy.
- But that is falsifiable since when the Anti-Christ emerges, when he engages in a contract with Israel, the nation is already formed and formidable!!!. Therefore the formation must be before the signing of the contract, out side the 70th week framework.

Thus Far—

- **Let's stop here —next week continue the idea of fulfilled prophecies before the 70th week of Daniel.**

Next week!

- **1. The labor in and the rebirth of Israel the nation.**
- **2. The war of Gog and Magog—a last sign to Israel and to the nations before the great and terrible Day of the Lord.**

