

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 75

Isaiah Chapter 44:24-45:13

This section consists of three paragraphs. Each paragraph is marked with the phrase “Thus says the Lord”.

Here is an outline of this section. Note that there is an interlude between the second and third paragraphs. It uses imagery to reinforce the message of these paragraphs.

Paragraph 1	Isaiah 44:24-28	The LORD will restore Jerusalem
Paragraph 2	Isaiah 45:1-7	The LORD will direct the activities of Cyrus
Interlude	Isaiah 45:8-10	Righteousness will pour down from heaven like rain. Will clay question the potter?
Paragraph 3	Isaiah 45:11-13	The LORD made the heavens and the earth and created man. He can certainly raise up a Cyrus to bring His exiled people back home.

Let’s read the entire passage: **Isaiah 44:24-45:13**.

In **Isaiah 44:28** , the LORD proclaims three things that He would bring about in the future:

1. He will call **Cyrus** to be His shepherd who will perform all His desire in **rescuing His people**.
2. He will cause **the city of Jerusalem** to be built.
3. He will cause **the foundation of the temple** to be laid.

Three the historical books of the Old Testament describe the LORD fulfilled His promise to restore Israel, the city of Jerusalem, and the temple.

The LORD would use three Persian kings to accomplish His tremendous plan.

Last week, we finished the first two of these. We finish up this evening with the book of Nehemiah.

The LORD declared	Persian King(s)	The scriptural record	Notes
His shepherd would release His people from Babylon	Cyrus	2 Chronicles 36:17-23 Ezra 1:1-3; 2:1-2	
The foundation of the Temple will be laid	Cyrus and Darius	Ezra 3:8-13; 5:16; 6:1-15	During the reign of Cyrus, the work of rebuilding the Temple did not progress beyond laying the foundations.
Jerusalem will be rebuilt	Artaxerxes	Nehemiah 2:1-8; 6:15-16	

The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt by Nehemiah in 445 BC: 245 years after Isaiah predicted it!

Isaiah 45:1-7.

“Cyrus is My shepherd and My anointed!” The words must have caused quite a stir. This was headline news. But make no mistake: the central figure of this passage is not Cyrus. It is the LORD!

The LORD performs all the deeds Himself. Every action mentioned up until verse 13 is the LORD’s work.

There is nothing here about Cyrus's genius, leadership skills, military might – or anything else.

It is as the LORD says in verse 7: "I am the LORD who does all these things!"

The LORD :

- Takes Cyrus by the right hand
- Subdues nations
- Loosens the loins of kings
- Opens doors
- Goes before Cyrus to make the rough places smooth
- Shatters the doors of bronze and cuts through their iron bars
- Gives treasures

Why does the LORD do all of these things?

1. In order that **Cyrus** may know that it is the LORD, the God of Israel, who has called him (v 3b).
2. For the sake of **the LORD's chosen people** – the LORD will direct Cyrus to build the LORD's city and let His exiles go free. (vv 4 and 13).
3. That **all men in the world** may know that there is no one besides the LORD. "I am the LORD and there is no other" (v 6).

The LORD had Isaiah record His words to Cyrus in order to give Israel hope for their future. He wanted to remind them of exactly how amazing He is, and that the LORD, the only God, had chosen them to be His special people.

His track record was impeccable. Every time He promised He would come through for Israel, He delivered on His promise. He performed miraculous deeds, and subdued mighty nations, to rescue them. He will once again.

And there was always that two-fold purpose behind the LORD's work: to finally get His people to completely trust Him, and to let the whole world know of His glory.

Egypt – Pharoah	Moses	“That the Egyptians would know that I am the LORD.”	Exodus 7:1-5; 9:13-16; Joshua 2:8-11
Philistia - Goliath	David	“That all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the Lord's and He will give you into our hands.”	1 Samuel 17:41-47
Assyria – Sennacherib	Hezekiah	“That all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O Lord, are God.”	2 Kings 19:14-19

And now:

Babylon – Nebuchadnezzar	Cyrus	“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,”	Isaiah 45:1-13
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The worldwide impact of God’s work in bringing His people back to their land is one of the greatest testimonies of God’s divine character. Again and again, the nations of the world have seen the power of the Lord at work for His people. But every time, they refused to honor or worship Him as God or give Him the glory.

That will require the greatest King of all to appear and rescue His people: the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ! **Isaiah 45:21-25; Isaiah 49:6; Philippians 2:5-11.**

Verse 7 deserves some explanation. The LORD says that He is the One forming light and creating darkness, causing well-being and creating calamity. Many people find these statements difficult to accept – particularly that the LORD would create calamity. Does this mean that God created evil?

No, it does not. Evil entered the universe when satan rebelled against God. **Ezekiel 28:15-16.** Let’s see what the Bible says about these statements in verse 7.

“forming light and creating darkness”. Look at **Genesis 1:2-5**.

“causing well-being and creating calamity”. Turn to **Deuteronomy 29:15-20**.

Well-being refers to **the LORD’s blessings**.

Calamity refers to **the LORD’s curses**.

These statements in verse 7 also refer back to earlier passages in chapter 45:

to **verse 6** “from the rising and the setting of the sun” (light and darkness)
and to **verses 1-3**- treasure and wealth, nations subdued (well-being and calamity).

Isaiah 45:8-10

Next, we have an interlude of three verses where Isaiah uses imagery to reinforce what has already been said in verses 1-7, and what will be said in verses 11-13.

Verse 8 concludes verses 1-7 in picturesque fashion.

Verses 9 & 10 introduce verses 11-13 in picturesque fashion.

Verse 8 serves as a centerpiece for the entire section from Isaiah 45:1 to Isaiah 46:13 (and, indeed, for the rest of Isaiah as well). It features the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of the LORD, and **HIS SALVATION**.

Let’s see the other verses in chapters 45 and 46 where Isaiah also speaks of these things: **Isaiah 45:13, 17, 19, 23, 24; 46:12, 13**.

The **rain** is used symbolically by Isaiah to represent **the word of the LORD, Isaiah 55:9-11.**

In **Isaiah 45:19, 23-24**; the LORD speaks **righteousness**. His **word** has gone forth from His mouth in righteousness.

The LORD's desire is for righteousness to fill the earth, and for all the ends of the earth to see His salvation (**Isaiah 52:10**).

What the LORD desires He will bring to fruition, **Isaiah 59:16.**

Recall that in verses 4-6, the LORD's purposes pertained to both His people in particular, and the people of the whole earth in general.

In **Isaiah 45:25**, we learn that **all of the offspring of Israel** -referring to the remnant of believers - will be justified and will glory.

In **Isaiah 33:5**, the LORD declared that He has filled **Zion** with justice and righteousness. This is a prophecy that points to the Messianic Kingdom.

The LORD declares that His people are the branch of His planting, the work of His hands. One day, "**all your people will be righteous**". **Isaiah 60:16-22.**

And in **Isaiah 61:11**, the LORD God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before **all nations**.

To sum up, then, Isaiah 45:8 speaks of blessings and prosperity in the Messianic Kingdom, when salvation will prevail, and all the earth will be showered with righteousness.