

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 76

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.

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.

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 that He promised that 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,	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.	Isaiah 45:1-13
--------------------------	-------	---	-----------------------

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.

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

The plain inference is that some people of Israel were quarreling with the Lord.

This was a favorite pastime of the nation of Israel. The tradition extended all the way back to their years in the wilderness, and a place called Meribah. **See Exodus 17:1-10; Psalm 95:6-11**.

Now, however, they were upset at the idea that they would be in bondage to another pagan king. They had hoped to be restored as a nation under the rule of a Messianic king of the line of David.

They were questioning the work of the Lord's hands: the way He was working out historical events for them.

They were even questioning His fatherhood ! Do you know what You are doing in bringing forth the rebirth of the nation?

So now Isaiah declares two woes to them.

1. Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker. (verse 9)
2. Woe to him who says to a father: "What are you begetting?" (verse 10)

In verse 9, Isaiah compares the relationship between the Lord and Israel to the image of the potter and the clay.

How outrageous and ridiculous would it be if common clay started asking the potter "What are you doing?!"

This figure of the potter and the clay is used in the Bible for situations where Israel needed to be put in her place:
Rom 9:19-20; Isa 29:15-16; 64:8; Jer 18:1-12.