

## Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 263 – The Lord Saith To Cyrus Through Israel Justified (Isaiah 45:1-25)

### 1. Why did God help Cyrus subdue nations and gain riches?

For the sake of Israel: *“(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; (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: (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. (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”* (Isaiah 45:1-4).

- We closed the previous chapter with the fact that Cyrus would be doing the Lord’s will (**Isaiah 44:28**).
- God has used kings and nations for his bidding (**Jeremiah 27:6-7**).
- Subdue nations before Cyrus (**Jeremiah 51:11**).
- God would go before Cyrus clear the way for his victories as God had done in the past for His people Israel (**Exodus 23:22-33**, **Exodus 34:24**, and **II Samuel 5:21-25**).
- God said he would give Cyrus hidden treasures of darkness and hidden riches. God, as was His pattern, gave signs to prove He was behind this (cf. **Isaiah 38:4-8** and **Jeremiah 44:27-30**). Prior to the completion of the revealed word, signs were given to prove the messenger was really giving a message from God (**Mark 16:15-20**, **Acts 2:22**, **Acts 14:1-3**, **Romans 15:18-19**, and **Hebrews 2:1-4**).
- God did this for the sake of His people, not because Cyrus knew Him (**Isaiah 43:14** and **Jeremiah 50:17-20**).

### 2. Though Cyrus did not know the Lord, why did the Lord gird [equip] him?

That “they” might know there is no god but the God: *“(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) 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”* (**Isaiah 45:5-6**).

- There is none besides Him (**Deuteronomy 4:35-39**, **Deuteronomy 32:39**, **I Kings 8:22-23**, and **Joel 2:23-27**). \* We shall see this throughout this chapter (verses **14**, **18**, **21**, **22**) and again in the next two chapters (**Isaiah 46:9**; **47:8**; **47:10**).
- Again, God’s doing of this is that “they” might know about who He is (**I Samuel 17:46-47**, **Psalms 46:8-10**, and **Ezekiel 38:14-23**).
- From the rising of the sun... (**Malachi 1:6-11**).

3. Can it be said that light, darkness, evil, and righteousness are all from God?  
(Prepare to discuss how or if this is a contradiction of God's character.)

Yes: *"(7) I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. (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" (Isaiah 45:7-8).*

- In light of **Isaiah 5:20**, these two Scriptures pose a difficult question for us.
- However, we KNOW that there is no darkness in God (**I John 1:5**). Therefore, we MUST reason (**Acts 17:2**) that there is another point than what appears to be being made (i.e. **Jeremiah 13:10-16**).
- God has set before man a choice of evil and good (**Deuteronomy 30:15-20**).
- However, when you study this subject you begin to see that God is not the origin of evil. What He does is reward evildoers with what they have sown (**Isaiah 47:10-11**, **Jeremiah 2:19**, **Jeremiah 6:19**, and **Jeremiah 11:22-23**).
- One principle throughout the Scriptures is that you reap what you sow (**Job 4:8**, **Proverbs 12:14**, **Jeremiah 32:19**, **Hosea 8:7**, and **Galatians 6:7-8**).
- The context continues with a warning not to strive with God (**Isaiah 45:9-10**), which shows God saying he "creates evil" is a warning of harm to those who strive against Him.
- Then, following up the difficult statements He made, we read that God sends down from above righteousness (**Isaiah 61:11**, **Matthew 6:33**, and **Romans 1:17**) and salvation (**Exodus 15:2**, **Psalms 3:8**, and **Habakkuk 3:18**).

4. What should man be mindful of when thinking about challenging God?

That He is our Maker, our Creator: *"(9) Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? (10) Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth? (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) 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" (Isaiah 45:9-12).*

- Striving against our Maker would be stupid (**Job 33:13**, **Job 38:1-3**, **Job 40:1-8**, **Jeremiah 18:1-10**, **Romans 9:20-21**, and **I Corinthians 10:22**).
- It was a cursed person who would do such to his father or mother (**Deuteronomy 21:18-21**, **Deuteronomy 27:16**, and **Exodus 21:17**).
- God declared that He knows things concerning His children they do not know (**Jeremiah 33:3**).
- Then again, He issues a reminder that He is the Creator and by His hands He created the heavens and commands the host (**Genesis 2:1** and **Psalms 102:24**).

5. In a regard to the prophecy about Cyrus, should Israel have feared his coming?

No, but others sure should have: *“(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. (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) Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. (16) They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. (17) But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end” (Isaiah 45:13-17).*

- Raised him up in righteousness (**Psalms 65:5-8**).
- God was going to direct him, which we've discussed (**Isaiah 45:1-4**).
- He would build God's city (**II Chronicles 36:22-23**).
- When God empowered a king all fall before him and he will do good and be just (**Psalms 72:1-19**).
- In the sense that God “hides” can be taken Scripturally in more than one way:
  - When He does not hear the prayers of sinners (**Psalms 44:15-26** and **Isaiah 8:17**; cf. **Isaiah 59:1-3**).
  - When man does not understand Him (**Psalms 77:19**; cf. **Romans 11:33-36**).
- Those that make and trust in idols will be shamed (**Jeremiah 2:26-29**).
- Israel, on the other hand, would find salvation in an everlasting manner (**Luke 19:1-10**).

6. Did God intend for the earth to be uninhabited?

NO: *“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” (Isaiah 45:18).*

- **Genesis 9:1, Psalms 115:16, and Jeremiah 27:5.**

7. Did God want Israel to seek Him in vain?

No: *“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” (Isaiah 45:19).*

- It is not that God revealed everything (**Ephesians 3:1-11** and **I Peter 1:9-12**).
- He doesn't hide what's needed (**Deuteronomy 29:29** and **John 18:20**).
- He wanted to be sought (**Isaiah 55:6** and **Jeremiah 29:13**) and for a reason (**Amos 5:4**). Verse 22 shows He wants them to seek to be saved.
- God speaks righteousness (**Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalms 119:137-138, and Hebrews 5:13**).

8. Did God want them to realize that it was He, not their idols, that would justify His people?

*Sure: "(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) 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. (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 is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (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 shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory" (Isaiah 45:20-25).*

- There would be those that escaped (**Nehemiah 1:2** and **Jeremiah 51:6**).
- God's message to them is to seek Him rather than idols that cannot save (**Jeremiah 10:14-15**).
- Look unto Him (**II Chronicles 20:12-15**) for salvation (**Acts 4:10-12**).
- God spoke and wouldn't go back on His word (**Numbers 23:19**).
- Everyone will answer to Him (**Ecclesiastes 12:13-15** and **Romans 14:11-12**).
- Find righteousness and strength in the Lord (**Isaiah 54:17** and **Philippians 4:13**).
- Justification comes only through the Lord and was certainly a promise that looked forward to Christ (**Acts 13:38-39**, **Romans 3:24-25**, **Romans 3:28**, **Romans 4:25-5:1**, **Galatians 2:17**, and **James 2:14-26**; cf. **Hebrews 9:15-17**).