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I Will Rise Up Cyrus in My Righteousness, I Will Make All His Ways Straight 45: 9-17

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DIG: Evidently, some people objected to the prophet's declaration that God would use a pagan as the means of deliverance. How does God refute that objection? How does the LORD reassure the Israelites that they indeed have a future and have not merely been swallowed up in a Gentile take-over of the world?

REFLECT: Do you have any outstanding quarrels with your Maker? What are they? What should you do to resolve them? Is there anything you are worshiping right now that causes you to feel ashamed or disgraced? How did Isra'el overcome that tendency? How can you overcome it? Why does the fact that Isra'el is saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation good news for you?



This is **an address apparently directed to those who questioned the propriety of the selection of Cyrus, rather than a descendant of the house of David, as the liberator of Isra'el.** When we put ourselves into the position of **the Hebrew people**, it is not hard to realize how difficult it would be for them to accept **Cyrus** as **God's shepherd**, or **His anointed**. When **they** thought of returning from the **Babylonian** exile, they must had thought of a second exodus,

manna from heaven, water from rocks, and another Moses. It was shocking for **them** to hear that **their** deliverer would be a pagan who did not even know **God**. **They** wondered out loud why **ADONAI** would have to use **a** Gentile **king** and an idolater like **Cyrus** as a means of accomplishing **His** plan. Therefore, **God** was being criticized for it here by some **Jews** of that day. These verses are a rebuke of those critics. Two points are made.

First, we see the absurdity of the criticism and the critics themselves. **Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a** broken, discarded piece of pottery, or a **potsherd, among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, "What are you making?" Does your work say, "He has no hands" (45:9)?** It is like **clay** talking back **to the potter**. The **clay** never does that. It would be absurd. That is how **God** pictures these critics. **ADONAI** is **the Creator** of the entire world. **He** knows how best to work out **His** own plan. Who are these critics to criticize **Him**?

Secondly, nor do children have the right to question why their parents brought them into the world. **Woe to him who says to his father, "What have you begotten?" Or to his mother, "What have you brought to birth" (45:10)?** It is like a fetus in the womb complaining and demanding to know what is happening. Fetuses don't do that (although they may complain after they get out) ! In the same way, **Isra'el** has no right to question **God, her Maker**.

Next, **God** defends **His** own sovereignty to do as **He** pleases. **This is what the LORD says - the Holy One of Isra'el, and its Maker. Concerning things to come, do you question Me about My children, or give Me orders about the work of My hands? The LORD** points out that no one can command **God** as to how **He** should accomplish **His** plan. It is **His** program and no mortal finite human can possibly command an immortal infinite **God**. **ADONAI** is the **Maker** of all that exists and **He** can do with it as **He** chooses. To emphasize this point **He** declares: **I Am the One who made the earth, and created mankind upon it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I organized their starry skies** (see the commentary on **Genesis, to see link click [Lw](#) - The Witness of the Stars**). All we have has been given to us, but it isn't ours. It belongs to our **God** who created it. We care for it on **His** behalf. So, we need to serve **Him** with gladness and thank **Him** for **His** good gifts (45:11-12).

Then **ADONAI** reaffirms and restates **His** current purpose with **a near historical prophecy**. Speaking through **His prophet, He** said: **I will rise up Cyrus in My**

righteousness; I will make all his ways straight. Cyrus is going to be raised **up** to carry out the program of **righteousness**. Now **he** was not **righteous himself**, but **God's** program is a **righteous** program. And part of carrying out **His righteous** program is using **Cyrus** as an instrument of **His** will. **He will rebuild My City and set My exiles free, but not for a price or reward, says the LORD of heaven's armies (45:13)**. As a result, **Cyrus** will **set the Jewish** exiles **free** to **rebuild Jerusalem**.

As believers, we need to be careful not to fall into the same trap that those **Jews** did during the life of **Isaiah** and that the Pharisees did during the life of **Christ**. Both generations put **ADONAI** in a box. Some of **the Jews** of **Isaiah's** generation could not accept the fact that **God** could use a Gentile **king** and an idolater like **Cyrus** to accomplish **His** plan. Most of the Pharisees of **Messiah's** generation could not accept that **He** did not believe in nor follow, the Oral Law (see **The Life of Christ - [Ei The Oral Law](#)**), or **the tradition of the elders (Matthew 15:2)**. It was people who zealously studied the Scriptures who could not believe that **Jesus** could be **the** promised **Messiah**. It was people who wanted to please **God** who could not accept **His** friendship with notorious sinners. It was people who had almost made a life's work of studying **God's** ways who could not allow **Yeshua** to deliver people in ways that seemed to violate how **ADONAI** was supposed to act. Both generations were wrong, and both suffered tragic results. We need to be careful that we do not put **the LORD** in a box. Just when we think we have **Him** all figured out, **He** surprises us. **He** is **God** and we are not.

The rise of **Cyrus** will not only signal **the Jewish** return to **the Promised Land**, but also the eventual birth of **the Messiah** and the fulfillment of **His** will for both **Jews** and **Gentiles**. **Isaiah** clearly telescopes the entire period between the return from exile to the coming **Messiah** by giving **a far eschatological prophecy** about the Millennial Kingdom (**Revelation 20:1-6**) and the submission of the **Gentile** nations to **Isra'el** (see the commentary on **Revelation [Fk](#) - Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom**). **The Israelites** did not need to worry. **ADONAI's** promises to David were not swallowed up in, what seemed to be at the time of the exile, a **Gentile** take-over of the world. **The LORD** had promised David that he would rule the nations (**Isaiah 9:7, 11:12-16; Psalm 2:7-12**) and that they would submit to him (**Isaiah 7:23; Psalm 72:8-12**). As strange as it sounded to them at the time, the rise of **Cyrus** to power would start that process.

At the time of this prophecy, **the Jews** were living in **Judah** and thought **Isaiah** was a fool. But **the LORD** knew that about 200 years later, when they were in **Babylon**

and in the midst of depression from their departure from the Temple and **the Land**, that **they** would need hope. In a corporate lament, **the Psalmist** would write: **By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion (Psalm 137:1-9)**. So here **Isaiah** continues **his** message of **comfort (40:1-11)** and tells **them** that not only would **they** come back from the captivity, but one day the **Gentile** nations would be subject to **them**! Hence, **ADONAI** describes the submission of the **Gentiles** to **the people of Israel** as we also see in **49:23** and **60:4-9**.

Isaiah then describes the submission of three **Gentile** nations. **This is what ADONAI** says: **The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush** (Ethiopia), **and those of the Sabeans** (a tribe in Upper **Egypt** lying between **Egypt** and the Ethiopians) - **they will come over to you and will be yours; they will trudge behind you** willingly, as if **in chains**. By coming to **Israel's Messiah**, the **Gentiles** will come to **Isra'el**.

They will bow down before you and plead with you, saying: **Surely God is with you, and there is no other, there is no other god (45:14)**. **He** is essentially dealing with the Northeast countries of Africa. These are the very enemies of **Isra'el** today. Yet someday they will submit themselves to **the people of Isra'el**. The reason they will come is that **they** will recognize that **God is with** them. In fact, this is a summary statement of **Chapter 19**, which details the submission of **Egypt** to **the people of Isra'el**. It is also a summation of **Chapters 17** and **20**, which deal with the submission of Ethiopia to **the people of Isra'el**. So, ultimately the Muslims are going to confess that **ADONAI, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**, is the one true **God**. At that time, they will know and experience the grace of **Jesus Christ**.

When **Isaiah** saw this future prophecy, **he** broke out in song: **Truly you are a God who hides Himself, O God and Savior of Isra'el (45:15)**. When **Isaiah** says that **God hides Himself**, **he** doesn't mean that **God** is being secretive. **God hides Himself** in the sense that **His** program is a **mystery**. When the Bible uses the term **mystery**, it means *something that was once hidden, but has now been revealed*. In other words, when **Isaiah** is given all this revelation about **ADONAI's** program **he** breaks into song about how the ways of **the LORD** are being revealed at that time. No false god, no phony prophet could come up with such a fantastic plan. We see the same thing in **Romans 9, 10, and 11** where **ADONAI** deals with **His** program with **Isra'el**. And much of what Paul writes about in the book of **Romans** has its seeds in the book of **Isaiah**, which he quotes rather heavily throughout. In **Chapter**

9 he points out the fact that **Isra'el's** unbelief in **the Messiah** did not take **Ha'Shem** by surprise at all. **He** knew **she** would do so and used **her** disobedience for **His** ultimate plan. So that in **Romans 10**, opportunity might be given to the **Gentiles** to come to a saving knowledge of **ADONAI**.

Furthermore, in **Romans 11** Paul says that not all **Jews** have rejected **the Messiah**, so throughout this present dispensation there is always going to be a believing remnant of **Jews** who will believe in **Yeshua Messiah**. At the end of **Romans 11:25-32**, Paul declares that **ADONAI's** program with **Isra'el** will ultimately be fulfilled. **He** says the day is coming when **all Isra'el will be saved (Romans 11:26)**. After Paul reveals this information about **God's** program, he too breaks out in song in **Romans 11:33-36**. So, both **Isaiah** and Paul declare that **the LORD's** ways are thoroughly unsearchable. It is a plan that is magnificent. It is **ADONAI's** plan, and no one, on their own, cannot discover it. It has to come by revelation.

The last two verses in this section are commentary on the previous statements, and are in the context of the millennial Kingdom. **All the makers of idols will be put to shame and disgraced; they will go off into disgrace together (45:16)**. During the Great Tribulation, the occult will reign freely as the restraining influence of **the Spirit of God** will have been removed from the earth. Any unbelieving **Gentiles** who are born during and live in the Millennial Kingdom **will be put to shame and disgrace** because of **the idols they** have trusted in. **They** will not be ashamed of **themselves** for trusting in idols because **they** still have unrepentant hearts, but nevertheless, **they will go into disgrace together**. There is a play upon words in this verse. Notice the term **disgraced** or confused. The Hebrew word for confusion is *babel*. It is also the name for **Babylon**. The source of idolatry and occult worship, and therefore the source of **confusion**, ultimately goes back to the city of **Babylon**. But that will not be the case for believing **Isra'el**.

But Isra'el will be saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation. **Jeremiah** would later emphasize that **God** had said: **I have loved you with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3)**. **Jesus** would announce: **I tell you the truth, whoever believes [in Me] has everlasting life (John 6:47)**. In contrast to all the **Gentiles** who went through the Great Tribulation, **the LORD** said of **Isra'el**, **"You will never be put to shame or disgraced, to ages everlasting (45:17)**. The good news for believers, is that if **Isra'el** cannot lose **her** salvation because of **her** sin, neither can you lose your salvation because of your sin! The only kind of **salvation ADONAI** gives is **everlasting salvation** (see the commentary on **The**



Id - I Will Rise Up Cyrus in My Righteousness, I Will Make His
Ways Straight 45: 9-17 | 6

Life of Christ [Ms](#) - The Eternal Security of the Believer).

Isra'el, who used to be prone to the **idol** worship of the **Babylonian** gods, would **never be put to shame or disgraced** (confused) by **idols** again (**Isaiah 54:4; Romans 9:33, 10:11; First Peter 2:6**). Consequently, the righteous of the TaNaKh, and those who repented and accepted **Jesus** as **the Messiah** at the end of the Great Tribulation (see the commentary on **Revelation [Ev](#) - The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**), will enjoy **ADONAI's everlasting salvation**.