

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ISAIAH Chapters 44 and 45 – God Called Cyrus the Great for His Purpose

Introduction

This study takes a look at Cyrus the Great not because he is such an outstanding figure of history, but because God raised him up for his purpose. For me, this settles any lingering doubt whether God prospers and uses whomever he pleases. You see Cyrus was not of the covenant of Israel; yet God identified him through the prophet Isaiah, even calling him by name, as the anointed of God more than a hundred years before Cyrus was born. The anointing and purpose of Cyrus the Great was how God chose to open the way for returning Judah of Israel to their homeland again after 70 years of captivity.

Previous to the time of Cyrus, about 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon had destroyed the Temple and City at Jerusalem and carried the people off as Babylonian slaves. Now years later, during the reign of Cyrus, God put upon the heart of Cyrus to decree the permission that would allow Judah of Israel to return to the land God had given them.

Jeremiah the prophet, who was certainly dead by the time of Cyrus, prophesied that it would be 70 years before God would allow the people to return to the land (Jeremiah 25:1 through 25:11).

Thus, Cyrus the Great was not great because of the greatness of Cyrus the Great, but he was great because the LORD God made him so for His purpose. One may say, “But he (Cyrus) did so many other great and noble things than what you say was the purpose of God for him.” Yes, and while that could very well be seen as true, I would argue that the greatness came with the package of the purpose of God for him (Cyrus the Great). And again, perhaps, all unbelievers in God will probably say something like, “yeah, right! Do you really believe that??” My answer certainly would be, YES! But for the benefit of those that wish to hear more, let’s just take a look at Isaiah’s prophecy concerning, “this great ruler of the Persian Empire, Cyrus the Great:”

Isaiah’s prophecy ceased about the time king Hezekiah’s reign ended over Judah, which was approximately 698 B.C. But Cyrus the Great lived and ruled Persia from about 576 – 530 B.C.; many decades later.

Unbelievers and critics of the Bible want to make a case for the idea that someone edited this prophecy of Isaiah after the reign of Cyrus, because they do not believe such accuracy could have been accomplished otherwise.

My thinking on this is that if anyone is really searching for truth, and has not dismissed such a “dead end conclusion” as abandoning their search for God: Then good luck with that approach!! I’ll not bother to argue the point.

But for those who are interested, just look at the historic record for a moment.

Since the discovery of the “Dead Sea Scrolls” it is next to impossible to force history to say that the text for any of the prophecies that follow were finished after 450 B.C.!!! One piece of evidence for this is that the language style of some of the writings was estimated to have been discontinued about the 5th century B.C.

The LORD gave Isaiah and other men of God prophetic information of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and how he would be rejected by the ruling authority of his day, crucified, buried, and resurrected. This prophecy was fulfilled about 32 A.D. when the Romans crucified Jesus.

The LORD also gave Isaiah prophetic information of how he would send wars upon all the house of Israel, scatter them among the nations of history as part of his judgment upon them for their idolatry and iniquity. And then he would collect some of them (a remnant) again into the land of their fathers. Present day Israel, plus those territories King David reigned over, is that land!!! This prophecy has been continuously unfolding and fulfilled since the Assyrians destroyed Samaria, or Northern Israel in 722 B.C., and it is continuing in progress before our very eyes today, in 2013.

Also, how would one without the help of God, be timely enough, not to mention smart enough to edit the prophecies of Daniel to agree with Isaiah such that they could identify the four major world powers (Babylon (605 B.C.), Persian Empire (539 B.C.), Empire of Alexander the Great (325 B.C.), and the Roman Empire (50 B.C.)) in the correct order they would appear on the world stage to reign over what was then the known world. Remember, since the discovery of the “Dead Sea Scrolls” it is next to impossible to force history to say that the text for any of these prophecies to have been finished after 450 B.C.!!!

Or, again who would be smart enough, without the help of God, to edit Daniel Chapter 9:24 through 9:27 to say with such accuracy when Messiah, Jesus would come and that his purpose would be to die (be cutoff, but not for himself). This prophecy was fulfilled about 32 A.D.

Then, can someone please explain why it would be such a hard task for the LORD GOD to give Isaiah prophetic information of King Cyrus????

On second thought keep it to yourself and lend attention to this witness, because you are undoubtedly purposefully confused, and confusion is contagion that leads to doubt and unbelief:

Where GOD is concerned doubt and unbelief is not good; in fact it is disobedience that lead to destruction!!! Of course, if you are serious about seeking out the true God of creation, you probably already understand this.

*Heb_11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (*This is not negotiable, but do not panic*):*

*Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly,*

according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith (*I other words God has given everyone the necessary measure of faith to seek after Him, but we are required to exercise our willingness to search Him out. Thus, none of us have any excuse for being without God; except we willfully reject Him*).

God speaks to Cyrus through Isaiah as if he is speaking of Jesus; thus Cyrus is a type of Jesus, because the LORD God does nothing apart from Jesus:

Isa 44:24 Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee (*Cyrus*) from the womb, I *am* the LORD that maketh all *things*; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself (*in other words there was no one else there when He did these things, namely: stretched forth the heavens and spread abroad the earth*);

Isa 44:25 That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise *men* backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish;

Isa 44:26 That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof:

Isa 44:27 That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:

Isa 44:28 That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Isaiah Chapter 45

Beginning at Isaiah verse 44:28 above; Isaiah prophecies of Cyrus, who shall rule the second world empire (read Daniel Chapter 2, 5, 7, and 8) of Persia in about one hundred seventy years from the time of this, Isaiah's prophecy. The LORD God introduced Himself to Cyrus through Isaiah years before Cyrus was even born. Isaiah prophesied that Cyrus shall be anointed of the LORD to restore Judah of Israel to their land, after captivity by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar 70 years. This is saying that God raised up Cyrus for His purpose (Isaiah 45:1 through 45:7). Thus, when Cyrus read Isaiah's prophecies he knew that the God of creation had commanded him. And it is obvious that Isaiah prophesy of Cyrus as a type of Jesus. Is anything too hard for the LORD??? Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!!!!!!!!!!

Isa 45:1 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;

Isa 45:2 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:

Isa 45:3 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.

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Isa 45:4 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.

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Isa 45:5 I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

Isa 45:6 That they (*Israel, Judah, and the world*) 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 (*or no other God but me*).

Isa 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

Isa 45:8 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.

Isa 45:9 Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! *Let* the potsherd *strive* with the potsherds of the earth (*or let man strive with man, but not with Me; the only everlasting, true God*). Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? (*or can the clay pot say to the one that fashioned it, why did you make me so? What is the problem with your hands?*)

Isa 45:10 Woe unto him that saith unto *his* father, What begettest thou? or to the woman (*his mother*), What hast thou brought forth? (*Therefore, despise not your origins less you anger God of creation!!!*)

The LORD God permits Cyrus to ask questions and reason with Him

Isa 45:11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker (*the maker of Cyrus*), Ask me of things to come concerning my sons (*Abraham's children, Jesus, and you Cyrus*), and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.

Isa 45:12 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.

Cyrus is a type of Jesus, therefore, verses 11 through 14 are considered to be dual prophecies in the sense that they speak of attributes pertaining to King Cyrus in his time and the Lord Jesus Christ in his time; the first and second coming. Jesus will make the captive free when he is come.

Isa 45:13 I have raised him (*my Son*) 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.

Isa 45:14 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 (*my Son*), they (*Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Sabeans*) shall make supplication unto thee, *saying*, Surely God *is* in thee; and *there is* none else, *there is* no (*other*) God (*beside me saith the LORD*).

These verses are Isaiah responding to God in behalf of King Cyrus, who is not yet born

Isa 45:15 Verily thou *art* a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

Isa 45:16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together *that are* makers of idols.

Isa 45:17 *But* Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye (*Israel*) shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

There is no other God but he who has formed the earth and made all things

Isa 45:18 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.

Isa 45:19 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.

Isa 45:20 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 (*idols*), and pray unto a god *that* cannot save.

Isa 45:21 Tell ye (*the graven image*), and bring (*them*) near; yea, let them (*graven images*) take counsel together: (*and ask*) 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.

Isa 45:22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else.

Isa 45:23 I have sworn by myself (*because there is none higher*), 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.

Isa 45:24 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.

Isa 45:25 In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.