

Commentary on Isaiah chapter 45, by Chuck Smith 9.27.23

Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471

Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399

Web site todbc.org email us at opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org

September memory verse Isaiah 40:8 (NKJV) The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."

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Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings ([Isa 45:1](#)),

You remember I told you he prophesied that Nebuchadnezzar's knees will be smited together. "His loins were loose," the Bible says, "his knees smote one against another" ([Daniel 5:6](#)). And God here predicted, "I'm going to loose the loins of the kings." It happened to be Belshazzar.

to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut ([Isa 45:1](#));

Now, in the city of Babylon, which, of course, was considered to be impregnable against his enemies, had walls 300 feet high, eighty feet thick, that encircled the city fifteen miles square, the outer wall, the moats, the river Euphrates flowing through the midst of the city, the big wide thoroughfares going from one end of the city to the other, blocking it off into the fifteen major square mile areas. And where the walls, where the river Euphrates flowed through, they built walls along the upper bank of the river Euphrates. And they had at these fifteen major intersections where these roads crossed the river Euphrates, they had built these bridges across the river Euphrates and they had these great gates in the wall that they would open for the concourse of the people through the streets of Babylon. But at night, the gates would be shut and barred.

Now when Cyrus came with the Medo-Persian army and began his siege of Babylon, Belshazzar felt so secure within the city that in more or less defiance against Cyrus and the Medo-Persian army, he ordered this great feast, where for months they were feasting, drinking, partying because they felt so secure within this great fortress of the city of Babylon. Now Cyrus in studying the situation realized that there was no way that they could assault the walls, 300 feet high. No way could these walls be assaulted. So he devised upon a scheme of building diversion channels for the river Euphrates. And they went upriver to divert the channels or divert the river Euphrates into these channels. And then on this particular night, which so happened to be the night that Belshazzar ordered the golden vessels that his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, on this night they turned the river Euphrates into the channels and the soldiers came through on the banks of the river under the wall. But then they had the problem of these great gates and the wall that was there along the

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river Euphrates. But for some reason, probably because the soldiers were so drunk from the parties, they had not locked the gates to these walls that night. And so the troops of Cyrus were able to come through these gates that were open and were able, of course, to conquer the city of Babylon that evening.

Now, again, notice what God said concerning Cyrus, "I will loose the loins of the kings to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut." That was 200 years or not quite, a hundred and eighty years, hundred and ninety years before the event took place, God speaks of it, naming Cyrus as the king that would be involved. Calling him by his name.

I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, I will cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places ([Isa 45:2-3](#)),

Of course, he gained the tremendous wealth of the Babylonian Empire.

that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name ([Isa 45:3](#)),

Now God's bragging a little bit. "I've called you by your name."

am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though you have not known me ([Isa 45:3-4](#)).

Interesting indeed that God names the king who will give the decree for the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem after their Babylonian captivity. God calls him, "My shepherd." And, "You're the one that is going to release My people from their captivity. I've subdued the nations before you. I will open the gates, the leaved gates," and so forth. And God calls him by name and gives out the detail. That's why God said, "Hey, if you're gods, tell us something before it happens so that when it happens we'll really know that you may know that I am God. There is none like me; I am the Lord. I frustrate the tokens and so forth. I confirm the word. And I say of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd and will perform My pleasure.'"

No way, no way could this be written except by divine inspiration of God. No way Isaiah could know this. No way Isaiah could call the guy by his name except God who dwells outside of our time domain, looking into the time domain, speaks to a man within the time domain because He knows outside of the time domain the things that are going to be. He is able to tell him what is going to be the names of the people and the events and how they are going to transpire. And so we have here a message from an extraterrestrial source that is outside of our time domain. God speaking to man. The eternal God declaring things before they happen that we might know that He is God when we see them happen. Marvelous prophecy.

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And, of course, the Bible critics when they get again something like this they just say, "Well, there were two Isaiahs and this one was written after the event. Quite obvious."

I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though you have not known me: 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. I form the light, I create darkness: I make peace, I create evil ([Isa 45:5-7](#)):

Now this verse has caused a lot of problems to people where God said, "I create evil." And the problem is caused probably in the translation of the Greek of the Hebrew word *ra*, which word in Hebrew means sorrow or wretchedness or adversity or calamities or afflictions. Now it was unfortunately translated evil, but we know that God did not create evil. But He did create the calamities and the afflictions that would come upon those who did evil. So it's just an unfortunate translation. The Hebrew word is *ra*, which means sorrow or wretchedness or calamity or adversity or affliction. It has never been translated sin.

I the LORD do all these things. 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. Woe unto him who strives with his Maker! ([Isa 45:7-9](#))

Now, God has told us all that He has done, all that He is. And then He says, "Woe." Isaiah says, "Woe unto the man who strives with his Maker." Man, to strive with God has to be the height of folly. Woe unto the man who is striving with God. And yet, how many people do strive with God. They fight with God. They run against God. They try to run away from God. "Woe unto him who strives with his Maker."

Why would a man strive with God? Because he has the wrong concept of God. That's the only reason I can conceive a man striving with God, because he has the wrong concept of God. If you had a true concept of God, you wouldn't want to strive with Him because you know that what God has for your life is the very best that could ever happen to you. Why fight it? God said, "My purposes towards thee are good, not evil" ([Jeremiah 29:11](#)). Why fight it? But woe unto him who is fighting with God, because he is fighting against his own good. And there are people who do strive with God. But if they win, then they've really lost. God says, "My Spirit will not always strive with man" ([Genesis 6:3](#)). But people strive against the Spirit of God and the work of God's Spirit in our hearts, in the rejecting and the refusing of Jesus Christ. "Woe unto that man who strives with his Maker." The woe of God's judgment will come upon the man who wins in that strife. If you refuse God, if you refuse to submit your life to God, oh, what judgment and woe is destined upon your life. But how foolish it is to fight with God. "Woe to him who strives with his Maker."

Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What are you making? or to thy work, He has no hands? ([Isa 45:9](#))

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Here's a bit of clay on the table and it's spinning. The potter's getting ready to shape it. And so he begins to mold and the clay begins to, "Hey, what are you making out of me?" You see, the clay has no power over its own destiny. It's in the hand of the potter what the clay is to be. And in the same token, we really have no power over our destiny. Our lives are as clay in the hand of God. He has the capacity to form of us whatever He wants. But woe unto the man who strives with his Maker, who begins to challenge the work of God in his life. "I don't want to be that. I don't want to do that. Why are You doing that?" You see, God has a purpose and a plan for you that you can only discover by yielding to God. The potter has in his mind that which he wants this bit of clay to become. The clay of itself is pretty worthless. It's so common, one of the most common elements in the earth today-clay. But the clay has the capacity for infinite value according to the ability of the potter.

Now if the potter is capable, he can take a worthless bit of clay and make it into something of great worth and great value. Now who can deny the ability of God, the Master Potter, to take our lives which are so common, and yet to make something uncommon of us. Something of great value and worth as He makes me a vessel that He might use for His purpose. So God has in mind that which He wants my life to be. I can only discover what God has in His mind by yielding my life to God. But He shows the folly of the clay objecting to the potter or trying to direct the potter.

Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What have you begotten? or to the woman, What have you brought forth? 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. For 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. I have raised him up in righteousness [talking of Cyrus], and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for a price or for a reward, saith the LORD of hosts ([Isa 45:10-13](#)).

He's going to do it. Not for a price, not for reward, not for bribery, but I've raised him up for that purpose. God formed him for that purpose.

Now the Lord in verse 11 challenges us to ask Him concerning things to come. "Command ye the work of My hands, concerning the work of My hands, command ye Me." Now this doesn't mean as it has been interpreted by men today that we have the power to command God to do things that we want done upon the earth, that through prayer we can command God to perform certain things. To consider God as a glorified Santa Claus in the sky is a wrong concept of God completely. And to think of prayer as an agency to get my will done is the wrong concept of prayer completely. The real purpose and thrust of prayer is to get God's will done. You see, if I use prayer to get my will done, then I would be governing the universe. I would be guiding and directing the affairs of my life and the lives of men around me. I would be in control. The clay would be determining its own destiny. That's not what it's all about. The real purpose of prayer is to get God's will done and to submit my life to God and to come into harmony with His purposes for me, because His plans for me are far wiser than mine could ever be. His

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knowledge of the situation is far greater than mine. And it would be sheer folly for me to try to command God to do things as I see and as I think they ought to be done. I could botch up this whole world in ten minutes with that kind of prayer. Not to get my will done, to do the work of the Father.

So God declares to Cyrus, "I've raised him up."

Thus saith the LORD, The labor of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabaeans, 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 [beside yours]. Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go into confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end ([Isa 45:14-17](#)).

God going to cast off Israel? Never! World without end, God is going to be dealing with them. The everlasting work of God and salvation of God to these people. You say, "But I don't like the Jews." That's tough. God does. And God has promised to work with them.

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 45:18](#)).

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 the things that are right. 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 ([Isa 45:19-20](#)).

People are ignorant that do these things.

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; and there is none beside me ([Isa 45:21](#)).

Now, the Bible is a revelation of God. Men may develop their concepts of God, but they're wrong. Because men in developing his concept of God makes a god after his own image, after his own likeness. He has an anthropomorphic concept of God. But God has declared Himself, God has revealed Himself and the Bible is God's revelation. And here we have this glorious, awesome description of God as He declares Himself to us. He said, "Look unto Me," for He said, "I'm a Savior; there is none like Me. I'm a just God."

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Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and it shall not return ([Isa 45:22-23](#)).

God said I have sworn this, the word is gone out, it's not going to return. It's going to happen. Why?

every knee is going to bow, every tongue shall swear ([Isa 45:23](#)).

Now Paul tells us in Philippians, "Let this mind be also in you, which was in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, and thought it not something to be grasped to be equal with God, humbled Himself or emptied Himself and took on the form of a man and came in likeness as His servant. Was obedient even unto death, the death of the cross. Wherefore God has also highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father" ([Philippians 2:5-11](#)). God said, "I have declared it. I've sworn by Myself."

Now in Hebrews it says because God can't swear by any higher; He has to swear by Himself. Now, he says when a man takes an oath he takes an oath by something greater. But when God takes an oath, God wants to declare a truth, He can't swear by anything greater so He has to swear by Himself. But in order that it might be confirmed by an oath that shall not be broken, God does swear by Himself. And whenever you get this in the scripture, you know you're getting into something that is more positive than anything else in life or in the world. It shall be. It cannot be broken. It shall come to pass. The day will come when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of God the Father. But for many, that day will be too late for their own salvation, tragically. They may curse Him now. They may swear by His name now in a profane way, but the day will come when every knee shall bow. God said, "I have sworn it."

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 45:24](#)).

Oh, what a shame for those who have spoken against Jesus Christ in that day. Heavy, heavy.

In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory ([Isa 45:25](#)).

Powerful, powerful, powerful stuff.