

Isaiah 45:1-7

- ¹ “Thus says the LORD to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held— To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut:
- ² ‘I will go before you And make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron.
- ³ I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden riches of secret places, That you may know that I, the LORD, Who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel.
- ⁴ For Jacob My servant’s sake, And Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me.
- ⁵ I am the LORD, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me,
- ⁶ That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting That there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other;
- ⁷ I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things.’

That You Might Know that I am the LORD
Isaiah 45:1-7

INTRO:

We used to teach our children to sing, *“My God is so big/ so strong and so mighty/ there's nothing my God cannot do.”* While we profess and proclaim with great zeal we believe this truth, far too often we live a different reality, a reality that if committed to song would sound like: *“My God is so small/ so weak and so puny/ there's little that my God can do.”* We fall into the category described by the title of JB Phillips little book, *Your God is too Small.*

When we tumble into this thinking, it is time to take a mega-dose of the Old Testament and see how really big our God actually is. Today let us take a glimpse at our God as He reveals Himself to us through the eyes of Isaiah the Prophet. Isaiah showed us two realities about God.

- I. God is Sovereignty (v. 1-3)***
II. God has a Purpose (v. 4-7)

I. God is Sovereignty (v. 1-3)

Isaiah 45:1-3 *“Thus says the LORD to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held— To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut: ‘I will go before you And make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden riches of secret places, That you may know that I, the LORD, Who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel.”*

A. Before we can fully appreciate what we are reading here we need a little bit of historical background. Chapter 44 closes with this amazing statement.

Isaiah 44:28 *“[Yahweh] says of Cyrus, He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, ‘You shall be built,’ And to the temple, ‘Your foundation shall be laid.’”*

If we were just reading this, we might think this Cyrus character as someone everyone knew. In reality, Cyrus was a Persian king who would not arrive on the scene for about 150 years after this prophecy. This was Cyrus, the King of Persia, who conquered the Babylonian Empire and would issue the decree to send Israel home from exile.

B. In Isaiah 45, Yahweh outlined everything He is going to do for this pagan king. Once again, we find grace in the Old Testament. Does Cyrus deserve any of this blessing? Not one iota of it. Still, the LORD chose to shower these blessing upon him,

1. The Lord Calls Cyrus ***“His anointed.”*** This is shocking to our system because this phrase is the title eventually given to Jesus. Our Lord called Cyrus by this title to make His people recognize that in this limited capacity, Cyrus is God's chosen one.

2. The Lord Promised To Hold His Right Hand. Doesn't this paint an image to you? When my children were small they had to hold a hand when we crossed a street or a parking lot. Our children needed help. Cyrus will accomplish much but not because he himself is great. Rather, Cyrus will do it because God helped him and guided him. If our God is big enough to conquer nations for a pagan king so His plan can advance, how much more can He do if we will put our lives in His hands?

3. God will give him the Babylonian Empire. I understand that double brass gates were found only on the gates of Babylon. According to some historical records the gates were mistakenly left open the night Cyrus marched in and took over the empire. Daniel was correct in his praise song in **Daniel 2:20-22**;

“Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings.”

History is the story of God working in the affairs of men.

C. Our Lord has done even greater things for us than He did for Cyrus.

1. He Saved Us By His Grace. We need to rejoice that God saved us to be His children. He saved us so we can enjoy God's providential blessings, not just to accomplish a specific task, but so we can spend eternity with Him.

Ephesians 2:8-9 “For by Grace are you saved through grace and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God not of works lest anyone should boast.”

2. He also has promised to hold us in His right hand.

Isaiah 41:10 “Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”

God is always there to help us through the issues of life.

II. God has a Purpose (v. 4-7)

Isaiah 45:4-7 “For Jacob My servant’s sake, And Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me, that they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting That there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things.”

A. Why would God give such blessing to a king who does not know Him? God has His reasons and He tells us some of them right here in this text. First, He did this for Israel's sake.

(v.4) “For Jacob My servant’s sake, And Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me.”

God did this so Cyrus would be in the place to issue the decree that he did to send Israel back to the land. God will alter history for His people's sake. God also changes history for us!

B. The Primary purpose in all of this is that He might be glorified. This is the primary purpose in all that God does. He says this in several different ways in these verses.

1. He did this so Cyrus would know, even though he did not know the LORD himself. Contrary to his idolatrous upbringing, Yahweh is God and there is no other God beside Him.

(v.5) “*Though you have not known Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me.*”

2. He also did it so that all men everywhere would know Yahweh is God

(v.6) “*That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting That there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things.*”

Unlike those who believed that good and bad things come from two gods. Yahweh the true and living God is the sovereign controller of all things.

How big is our God? Do we recognize that He is living and working today? Do we understand that nothing bad can happen on the world scene or in our lives that He does not know about and controls? Do we consciously recognize that ***“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us”***(Ephesians 3:20).