

“Look to Me and Be Saved, All You Ends of the Earth!”

Isaiah 44:24 – 46:13

Halifax: 19 September 2010

Introduction

Last week,

- We saw in Isaiah 44:6-23 how foolish it is to worship idols.
 - An idol is anything that men worship in the place that belongs to God...
 - We saw three forms that idolatry can take:
 - First, it can be an idol that is your own version of the true God...
 - When you say, “I do not think God would ever send anyone to hell...”
 - Or, “I don’t think God minds it if I sleep with my girlfriend—as long as we really love each other...”
 - Second, it can be an idol that you embrace in addition to the true God...
 - Israel fell into this kind of idolatry after they settled into the Promised Land and they said,
 - The LORD was fine for bringing us out of Egypt and overthrowing our enemies, but we need rain for our crops...
 - The LORD is not sending us rain, but Baal is the God who does that.
 - This is what you do when you worship God on Sunday, but then turn to the world’s philosophy for your social life, or for your business,
 - because “the Lord cannot help me with these”... His ways do not work in business or in today’s social scene.
 - Or third, it can be an idol that you embrace instead of God...
 - As when a person turns to Islam or Atheism or some other false religion that men have come up with.
 - Isaiah showed us how ridiculous idolatry is!
 - The very idea that men should make a God and then worship it!
 - This is the height of stupidity! How can a God you make be a god?
 - It is *such* stupidity that the only way it can happen is when God has blinded you as a judgement against you—for your ingratitude...
 - You know, like it says in Romans 1:28—
 - Rom 1:28: And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting
 - I showed you that we turn to idols because we are offended with the true God.

- We are offended with Him because He shows us that we are sinners who are unacceptable to Him...
 - not just a wee bit unacceptable, but totally unacceptable.
 - All through scripture, He reveals us as a people who need radical redemption—nothing less than the cross of Jesus to atone for our sins!
- Men cannot tolerate this.
 - So they make up their own versions of God—of truth—and they live by these idols.
 - In every case, idolatry diminishes the desperate state that man is in as a sinner.
 - In every case it lessens his need for a crucified Saviour.
- But it is so foolish to think you can make up your own God or change the true God!
 - He is what He is, and you must accept His self-revelation!

You all need to realise this!

- The true God, the God who made you,
 - is up to something in this fallen sinful world—something in particular that He reveals from Genesis to Revelation...
 - He is redeeming a people out of this world for Himself, and establishing them in His glorious kingdom of righteousness!
 - This is the primary way that He is revealed...
 - as the God who redeems sinners!
 - This is how He wishes to be known!
- We saw at the end of our text last week...
 - in verses 21-23...
 - There He shows Himself to be the one who pursues His people with His grace and who blots out their transgressions... like a dark cloud...
 - Their sins are like a big dark cloud that you cannot miss...
 - but He completely removes them from their record by His grace.
 - The LORD was encouraging His people that even though they had sinned against Him and were going into exile because of their sin,
 - He had not forgotten them!
 - His purpose to save them still stood—it stands forever!

But this week, we see something even greater!

- We see that His will to redeem, though it began with Israel,
 - extends to the whole world!

- He will redeem the whole world!
 - Every nation will be gathered to Him before He returns.
 - The whole world is called to turn to Him and to embrace His mercy.
 - And by the end, everyone will be brought to confess that He is LORD...
 - Some will do this with bitter shame, but many from all nations will do it with great rejoicing!

We have a long passage this week...

- But the core of my sermon is found at the end... in Isaiah 45:22-25,
 - and the core of the core—the telos or purpose of the whole passage, is found in verse 22 where the LORD says,

Telos: Look to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth

- This is a very simple summons...
 - This is His revealed will for you...
 - and for every single person in the earth...
 - If any will truly obey it,
 - If any one will truly look to the LORD, you will be saved.

A. The word “look” in the original Hebrew carries the idea of turning around in order to look...

1. It is what we might call, “turning to God.”

- When you are in need, you turn to various things to help you...you *look* to them...
 - In 1 Thess 1:9, Paul tells us that the Thessalonians turned from idols to serve the living and true God.
 - That is exactly what the LORD is telling you to do here when He says, “Look to me and be saved.”
- It is the same thing that Israel was called to do in the wilderness when they were bitten by the venomous serpents (Num 21:8-9)...
 - They were dying, but the Lord instructed Moses to set up bronze serpent on a pole and command the people to look to it...
 - When they did, they were saved and did not die.
 - In John 3, this is used to refer to Jesus, lifted up on the cross...
 - All the ends of the earth must look to Him to be saved from their sin,
 - for sin brings death and death brings everlasting punishment.
 - but Jesus’ death brings eternal life to all who look to Him.

2. We have seen that the LORD is, first and foremost, revealed in this world as a redeemer—
 - And that a redeemer is one who saves helpless people who are completely unable to save themselves.
 - God’s primarily revelation is in His Son who came in history, born of a virgin in true human flesh, to redeem us.
 - The thing that defines this world is that it is a fallen world...
 - And the way that God reveals Himself is as the One who redeems a people out of this fallen world to be His own.
 - That is what Noah’s ark teaches us...
 - God redeems the world in the ark so that it does not perish!
 - That is what Abraham shows us... after Babel.
 - The world is scattered and the LORD comes to Abram as a redeemer, promising to bless all nations through his seed.
 - To gather them back to Himself, beginning with Abraham.
 - That is what all the ceremonies of the Old Testament show us...
 - God is holy and the people cannot approach Him because they are not holy...
 - Yet, He reveals Himself as a redeemer to them who receives them on the basis of sacrifices offered for their sins—all in pictures, but promised in reality.
 - And then when Jesus comes, it is as the redeemer who fulfills all that was promised...
 - Sinners are reconciled to God through His blood.
 - He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world so that those who were cut off from God are redeemed.
 - The Jews did not like this revelation... but...
 - The good news is to be preached in the all the world...that whosoever believes in Him—whoever looks to Him—will be saved...
 - That is the message, “Look to me and saved, all you ends of the earth.”

B. And we must see here to whom this summons is addressed...

1. To all the ends of the earth!
 - The “ends of the earth” refers to the entire world without exception.
 - It is not just the ends of the earth, but “*all*” the ends of the earth!

- The Gentiles might have thought that they were excluded because they had been condemned for worshipping idols (v. 16).
 - But not so!
 - All the ends of the earth are summoned...
 - It doesn't matter what you may have done or what your parents may have done
 - You are called to Look to the Lord and be saved.
 - There is nothing else that they have to do but turn to Him, look to Him, and be saved.

TRANS> This is a universal call to all the ends of the earth,

- But it is not just a general call...

2. It is also an individual call to each and every person.

- Each one of you is personally called and each one of you must personally obey if you would be saved...
 - You yourself must look to the LORD and be saved or you will not be saved.

C. And this salvation is that complete redemption that we have seen elsewhere in Isaiah...

1. We have seen that this redemption is three-fold...

- a. If you com to Him, He will save you from bondage to Satan and Babylon...
 - so that you can live in His courts.
- b. If you come to Him, He will save you from the guilt of sin,
 - cleansing you by the blood of Jesus Christ and crediting you with His righteousness for sinners,
 - blotting out all your transgressions as if they never happened.
- c. Is you come to Him, He will save you from the presence of sin,
 - so that you will be conformed to the image of His Son,
 - to love as He loves and to be holy as He is holy!

2. The salvation here is nothing less than this complete salvation that Isaiah has been talking about all along!

- It is a salvation that leaves nothing to be desired!

TRANS> "Look to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth"

- And now I want to show you three reasons why this is the thing to do.
- You would think that we would need no reasons to come for so great a salvation...
 - But we are stubborn in our sin and rebellion and our gracious God pursues us relentlessly.

I. First, look to Him and be saved because the LORD is the only God.

- That is just what the Lord says in the rest of verse 22...
 - The whole verse reads:
 - Isa 45:22: "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

A. "I am God and there is no other!"

- This has been declared again and again in Isaiah.
- 1. First we see that He is the only true God because He alone is the creator...
 - In Isaiah 44:24, He says,
 - Isa 44:24: "I am the LORD who makes all things, who stretches out the heavens all alone, who spreads abroad the earth by myself."
 - The Triune God had no assistance when He made the world.
 - The idols that men have made certainly were not there to help Him!
 - There was *no one* to assist Him because all things were created by Him and nothing that is made was made apart from Him.
 - He is the only God because He is the only creator.
 - This is something that all men ought to know, and the only reason they don't know it is because they run from the light into the darkness.

2. Secondly, we see that He is the only true God because He controls the world

a. Look at Isaiah 45:5-7.

- See how He stresses that He alone is God...
 - Isa 45:5-7: "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*."
- Not only did He create all things, He all brings about all things...
 - He is the author of history—it is His plan that unfolds...
 - Even the troubles that we have are all from His hand, sent by Him as a righteous judge because of our sins...

b. The context here has to do with Cyrus.

- Cyrus is the one that God girds even though Cyrus does not know Him.
- Here the LORD is making a remarkable prophecy about Cyrus that makes the heads of idolaters spin—that drives them batty...

- In verse 44:28, He calls Him His shepherd that He is raising up to put into action His plan to rebuild Jerusalem.
 - You see, Cyrus had this idea that he could best gain the favour of all the gods by allowing their people to worship them in their various places...
 - That is why he allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and even provided money for them to rebuild the temple!

- But what is so remarkable about all this is the fact that Isaiah wrote this prophecy 150 years before it happened!
 - He showed that Cyrus would be His instrument to restore Israel to Jerusalem in the future.

 - When this prophecy was made by Isaiah,
 - Babylon had not even taken dominion yet,
 - and Judah had not even gone into exile...

 - But Isaiah has told them that they will go into exile...
 - And now he tells them that the LORD will raise up a chap named Cyrus who will conquer Babylon and then release them from exile so they can rebuild Jerusalem!
 - He doesn't even tell them what country Cyrus will be from, just that a ruler named Cyrus will do this!

 - All this, 150 years before it happened!
 - That would be like a prophet in Abraham Lincoln's day naming an individual who would conquer the world in our day,
 - and telling what that individual would do to further the advance of God's kingdom.
 - Just think of it!

- And notice how the LORD shows that He is the one who will give Cyrus his remarkable success...
 - In Isa 45:1 it says:
 - Isa 45:1: Thus says the LORD to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held—
 - God is the one who is giving Cyrus is success...even though he gave praise to Marduk.

 - Isa 45, continuing with verse 1:
 - 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,

- The LORD is the one who makes the way for him so that he has great success—
 - even the nations said of Cyrus that he obviously had the favour of the gods when they saw his success.
 - Isaiah explains where that success originated!
- c. And you can see here that the LORD announces all this in order that Cyrus and His people and everyone else might know that He alone is Lord.
 - Isa 45, picking up in the middle of verse 3:
 - Isa 45:3: That you may know that I, the LORD, Who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel. 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.
 - The LORD, by naming Cyrus and announcing all this in advance, is showing us that He is God!
 - And in particular that He is the God of Israel...
 - That the true God is the God who is working out His great plan of world-wide redemption through this little nation that seemed so insignificant on the world scene!
 - By showing all this in advance, the Lord drives all the priests and wise men in the world batty!
 - Isa 44:25 states this of the LORD:
 - Isa 44:25: "Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, And drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, And makes their knowledge foolishness;"
 - His prophecies always come true, and their wisdom and their prophecies are shattered...
 - The unbelieving Bible scholars and commentators and pastors of our day can't stand this passage!
 - They want to deny that the LORD is the only God, so they argue that this *had* to have been written after Cyrus have acted...
 - And they bring forth many foolish arguments to try to prove it.
 - Some of them say that God never operates in this way of naming someone who had not been born...
 - but that is only in the world of their little idol gods.
 - The LORD does that here and He does it in 1 Kings 13:2 where a prophet said:

- 1 Kings 13:2: "O altar altar! [about the altar that Jereboam built] Thus says the LORD: Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you..."
- And then years later in 2 Kings 23, after the prophet is long gone,
 - Josiah does this and seeing the tomb of that prophet, he asks whose tomb it is, and the men of city reply:
 - 2 Kings 23:17: "It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel."
- Isaiah's words about Cyrus in this passage are absurd if they were written after the fact!
 - The whole point is that God is showing Himself to be the one who rules in history by declaring in advance what He will do!
 - He has already challenged the idols to make such predictions,
 - Now He is making such predictions and the idol worshippers can't deal with it.
 - They could not deal with it in Isaiah's day, and they cannot deal with it now.
 - Look at Isa 45:5-7:
 - Isa 45:5-7: 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.'
 - Look also at 45:11-13:
 - Isa 45:11-13: Thus says 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, you command Me. I have made the earth, And created man on it. I—My hands—stretched out the heavens, And all their host I have commanded. I have raised him up in righteousness, And I will direct all his ways; He shall build My city And let My exiles go free, Not for price nor reward," Says the LORD of hosts.
 - The whole point is that the LORD proves that He is LORD by announcing what He is going to do in advance and then doing it.
 - He is the LORD and He does whatsoever He pleases.

B. Do you see the implications here?

1. The whole world ought to look to Him to be saved because He is the only true God.
 - He is the one whose plan and purposes will be fully carried out!
 - The future is totally in His hands!
 - It is not in anyone else's hands.
 - He is the God who works out His plan of redemption in history...
 - beginning with Israel—
 - and then extending His mercy to the whole world!
2. You live in a fallen world and God is the only redeemer...for all the ends of the earth.
 - It doesn't matter what nation you are from or what religion they may have.
 - He is the only redeemer there is for you and for me.
 - There is only one God who made this world...
 - And His plan of redemption began with Israel and extends from them to the ends of the earth.
 - His plan of redemption will be fully carried out because He alone is God.
 - There is no other Saviour in all the earth.
 - So He says to you, whoever you may be...
 - "Look to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God and there is no other."

TRANS> That is the first reason to look to Him and no where else...

- Now consider secondly that you ought to...

II. Look to Him and be saved because He has made a sure covenant.

A. He has told us with an oath that the whole world will acknowledge that He is LORD.

1. This is declared in verse 23:
 - Isa 45:23: I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath.
 - In Hebrews 6:13, we are told that the LORD swears for our sake—because of our weakness... to make His word certain to us.
 - He says things that are so remarkable—and that seem so amazing to us—that we can hardly believe it.
 - But in order to remove all doubt, He confirms it with an oath.

- He stresses that it is a certain word—a righteous word that will not return.
 - It is not a lie, it is not an empty promise...
 - Nor is not like a messenger that returns because he is not able to do what he is sent to do.

TRANS> He makes the word sure to us in our weakness...

2. He did this when He first made this promise to Abraham...

- He told Abram that he and his barren wife would have a son, and that in his seed, all the nations of the earth would be blessed—with salvation!
 - And now we see what that promise entails—
 - that every knee (what better way to make it clear that no individual is excluded) shall bow and that every tongue (again, every individual is included) will take an oath (swear or confess) the He is God.
- Because there is no one greater for Him to swear by, He swears by His own name.
 - As we have seen in our study of the third commandment, all oaths ultimately refer to God.
 - Even if His name is not used,
 - He is the only one who can witness to our sincerity and bring us to account for our insincerity when we swear...
 - So God swears by His own name that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess...

3. With these words, He tells where all of history is headed.

- a. We have already seen that He is the creator and His purposes will be accomplished...
 - He has used Cyrus as an example to prove that His plan prevails in the earth.
- b. And now He swears to us that that plan will culminate in world-wide acknowledgement of Him as LORD.
 - Every knee will bow and every tongue will take an oath...
 - We not yet see this...
 - To use Calvin's words,
 - “many still oppose and boldly despise him; Satan contrives many schemes and incessantly carries on war with him; and therefore we are at a great distance from the full accomplishment of this prophecy.”

- As we are told in Hebrews,
 - we do not yet see all things put under His feet.
- There are so many times in the history of the world when it seems preposterous to think that this even could occur...
 - The people of God are times very obscure, even as they were in Babylon...
 - Just one of many nations...
 - We are like Israel when they were called to conquer the cities of Canaan and thought it to be so impossible!
 - How can the gospel conquer the earth?

B. But just what is in view here when it says that every knee shall bow and every tongue take an oath?

1. It is the all humanity will come to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Lord.
 - The day is coming when they will no longer be able to deny it.
 - Every person will believe that He is LORD,
 - Some will wish it were not so! but all will know that it is so.
 - Some will love that He is finally revealed as LORD, and others will hate it.
 - But eventually they will all confess that it is so.
2. And we are shown in Philippians 2:9-11 that it will be Jesus whom the whole world will acknowledge to be LORD.
 - Phil 2:9-11: “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
 - With these words,
 - the Apostle Paul shows us very clearly that God’s oath will be fulfilled in the acknowledgement of *Jesus Christ* as LORD.
 - The focus will be on Jesus as LORD.
 - The only true God will be acknowledged to be the God whose Son is Jesus Christ and whose Son came into the world to die for His people’s sins.
 - The world will bow to the one that they mocked and despised because His cross exposed their sin and showed that the whole world was wretched and cut off from God...
 - and that the only way to be reconciled was through the death of the one who is very God of very God, Jesus the crucified.
 - God will be seen as the holy God that He is when this confession is made.

- To the shame of some and to the delight of others!
 - All will come to see who He is!

- 3. The great question of eschatology (the study of end times) is this...
 - a. Will He so work in the world that He will bring the whole world to this confession before Jesus returns?
 - or will this confession not be made until the day of judgement,
 - when the dead are raised up and brought before Him and the living are called together to behold His glory?
 - We know that this confession will be made on that great day of judgement.
 - Paul makes it clear that all in heaven and all in earth and all under the earth will make this confession.
 - Even the dead will be called from the graves to confess that Jesus is Lord.
 - But when the scripture says that He must reign until all His enemies are brought under His feet,
 - does this mean that He will reign at God's right hand (as He is now) until this confession is made in the earth—
 - before His physical return?
 - Does this mean that there will come a day when the gospel will so fill the earth that all who are then living on earth will confess Him?
 - Some with reluctance, and some with joy?
 - It seems that the language of many prophecies suggests that this will indeed be the case...
 - We are called to go forth with the gospel with the expectation that the gospel will spread into all the world
 - We are to go into the world until all men confess Him.
 - b. But whether this is so or not,
 - the great motivation for every person as to why you ought to look to the LORD and be saved is in that you are going to confess Him as LORD.
 - If you have not confessed it, it is because you are in denial of it...
 - And you are being told that you will not always be able to deny it!
 - You hate the true God and you do not want to acknowledge His Son, but the day is coming when you will have to acknowledge Him.
 - Your ignorance is a hypocritical ignorance...

- You chose to be deceived by the empty flatteries of idolatry rather than to go straight to God.
 - Even though your nature is fallen and you cannot come to God,
 - even though you, as Calvin so well stated it,
 - sucked in with your milk the very superstitions by which you are now blinded,
 - God justly reproaches you for your wicked contempt of His grace and you need to repent and look to Him.
 - Don't keep fighting Him!
- c. What, do you think that the living God has made this promise of redemption to His people in vain?
- Do you think He has given them an empty promise that will not come to fulfillment?
 - Do you think He swore falsely to Abraham when He told him that all the nations of the earth would be blessed in His seed?
 - Do you think this promise is empty even after all that has happened in the history of the world to move toward its fulfillment?
 - Even though God did multiply Abraham into a great nation?
 - Even though He did bring Israel out of Egypt, just as He said.
 - Even though He did give them the land of Canaan, an impossible feat for them to pull off but by His power.
 - Even though He did deliver them from Assyria by miraculous power, just as He promised.
 - Even though He did deliver them into exile, just as he announced long before hand,
 - And even though He did deliver them out by the hand of Cyrus.
 - And even though He did raise up the nations spoken of by Daniel and then sent His Son at the appointed time.
 - And even though He did raise His Son from the dead and began from that day to gather the nations to Himself that had before been in darkness...
 - Even though everything is moving toward what He has promised, do you still think His promise is false?
 - It is only because you are blinded by your own stubborn will.
 - You do not want to come to God to be saved.
 - You are not ignorant so much as you are hardened.
 - In 45:18-19 the LORD makes it clear that He has not exhorted His people to seek Him in vain.

- It is not His promised, but idolatry that is empty!
 - Look at what He says about this in 45:18-19:
 - Isa 45:18-19: For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: “I *am* the LORD, and *there is* no other. I have not spoken in secret, In a dark place of the earth; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, ‘Seek Me in vain’; I, the LORD, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.”
 - He is not a God who tells His people to seek Him in vain!
 - The salvation He promises will come.
 - He is the only God and He is the redeemer and you are going to serve idols?
 - versions of god that you have made? when the redeemer has been revealed?
 - What are you doing?
 - God calls you to come and explain yourself...
 - Look at Isaiah 45:20-21!
 - ““Assemble yourselves and come; Draw near together, You *who have* escaped from the nations. They have no knowledge, Who carry the wood of their carved image, And pray to a god *that* cannot save. Tell and bring forth your case; Yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, A just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me.
 - What reasons do you have for doing this?
 - Not a lack of evidence—surely...
 - Look to Him and be saved, all you ends of the earth!

TRANS> This brings us to the third reason for doing this...

III. Look to the LORD and be saved because all who oppose Him will be greatly ashamed.

- A. You see from verse 24 that in the day of that great confession there will be two sorts of persons
1. There will be those who joyfully say:
 - “Surely in the LORD I have righteousness and strength.”
 - They will be thrilled with Him as their redeemer!
 - They will see the fullness of all that He had done in Jesus to accomplish their redemption

- a. They will see that they have righteousness because He Himself came to represent them...coming in human flesh...
 - And they will see that He not only obeyed God's law as Adam was called to do as our first father and representative,
 - but also that He suffered the penalty for God's law that had been violated—the full penalty.
 - They will rejoice that the Holy God they stand before accepted His sacrifice for them and showed this by raising Him from the dead...
 - and that this righteousness they have in the LORD is theirs forever and ever!
 - They are fully accepted in the beloved!

- b. And they will also see that He is their strength...
 - Not only their righteousness, but also their strength!
 - After they looked to Him to be saved, they found themselves to be still in a struggle with their own sin and with the world.
 - But in that day, they will see clearly that it is by His grace and strength that they came remained connected to Him in this world...
 - And they will see that His strength has come to full expression in them so that the very power that raised Jesus from the dead transforms them...
 - to live a life completely free of sin—even if temptations were all around them—
 - a life of the purest love for God for and others...
 - a life of holy joy and gratitude to their God whom they will delight in with all their heart and greatly adore!
 - Surely in the LORD I have righteousness and strength!
 - What a happy confession this will be for you if you are among those who obeyed His call to look to Him and be saved!

- 2. But it will be very different for you if you have continued in your angry rebellion...
 - If you have been among those who would not come to the one true God to be saved...
 - If you are among those who spurn His grace and resent that He is a holy God who rejects all men for their sins and saves only through the bloody death of His Son...
 - You will be among the all who are incensed against Him about which verse 24 says:

- “And all shall be ashamed who are incensed against Him.”
- It will be a day of great disappointment for you (that is what it means to be ashamed) when you must confess that this God who redeems through His Son is LORD.
 - You will be absolutely persuaded that it is true, and you will wish with all your heart that it was not true...
 - even as your knee bends and your tongue pours out the confession!
 - How stupid your idolatry will seem when it is exposed...
 - You worshipped what you made up instead of worshipping the God who made you!
 - What folly!
 - What a fool you have been!

TRANS> What a contrast there will be between you and those who looked to Him and were saved...

B. The contrast is also presented in verse 16 and 17:

- Isa 45:16-17: They shall be ashamed And also disgraced, all of them; They shall go in confusion together, Who are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved by the LORD With an everlasting salvation; You shall not be ashamed or disgraced Forever and ever.
1. But when it was stated here, it might have been supposed that only Israel according to the flesh (historical Israel) could be saved...
 - But after the call in verse 22,
 - “Look to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth.”
 - It is clear that God’s salvation is also extended to all the peoples of the earth!
 2. Therefore, when this chapter concludes with the great words of verse 25
 - In the LORD all the descendants of Israel Shall be justified, and shall glory.’”
 - We know that the descendants or seed of Israel here refers not to Israel according to the flesh...
 - But the spiritual Israel most clearly revealed in the New Testament where we are told the blessing of Abraham has come to the Gentiles!
 - The seed of Abraham does indeed refer to those who were born of him,
 - the natural descendents,
 - because it was in them that God’s salvation began...
 - They are the ones who received all the promises and carried them until the coming of Jesus Christ,

- and it was to them that He was born, as promised and was in them that His salvation began.
- But now all those from the nations who look to the LORD are saved...
 - Those who look to Him for salvation as He is revealed in Jesus Christ the redeemer.
 - The only true God is the God who redeems a people for Himself, and that people is Israel according to election,
 - and all who join themselves to this true Israel by faith in Jesus Christ becoming the people of God—
 - the one true Israel who is justified and who glories in the Lord for so great a salvation!
 - Hallelujah! Amen!

3. Do you see?

- The call is for you!
 - Look to Him and be saved, everyone of you!
 - If you do, you will be justified and you will glory!
- The living God will make good His promise.
 - The redemption He promised to Israel so long ago that would extend to all the nations of the earth is here...
 - And there is room at the table for you!
 - God's redemption is here for you if you will turn from your idols and look to Him and be saved.
 - If you will not, you will be greatly ashamed.
 - If you will, you will be justified with Israel and with them you will glory in your God and redeemer.