

# Cyrus the Christ of God – Isaiah 44:24 – 45:25

**Introduction** – We come to one of the pinnacles of this section if not the entire book. The future deliverer of Israel is named. He is Cyrus the Persian king. God is certainly planning to do new and shocking things. The fulfillment of this prophecy proves God's complete sovereignty over all the affairs of the world. It points to the future Messiah who would deliver His people from their greatest bondage – their own sin. It also confirms an optimistic view of the gospel going forth to the entire world in victory.

**The Lord Your Redeemer** (44:24-28) – If God says He is Israel's Redeemer, then He is and nothing can stop Him. After all, He formed Israel and He is the One who created all the heavens and the earth (v24). His sovereignty is such that He frustrates the prognosticators, pollsters and fortune-tellers (because He is sovereign and separate from all His creation, nothing He ordains is constricted to His creation – v25). And He has declared that He will bring forth a new exodus (vv26-27). Israel shall have a new shepherd that will free them and his name is Cyrus (v28). He will free them to go rebuild Jerusalem and the temple.

**The Lord's Chosen Messiah** (45:1-13) – Cyrus is declared to be the LORD's Messiah (in Greek, "Christ"), translated here "anointed." This title was normally reserved for Israelite kings or priests and not for outsiders. It refers to the one hand-chosen by the LORD to direct His purposes for his people. While Cyrus would conquer nations in order to be the one setting Israel free, it would be the LORD who would be doing this through and for him (vv1-3) and he would be doing so for Israel's sake (v4) in such a way to reveal that there is no other God besides the LORD (vv5-7). Verse 6 hints that God will do this for another reason: that the entire world would know that He is LORD.

**Rain Down Salvation and Justice** (v8) – This has its first fulfillment in the return from exile, but certainly God is projecting to something even greater. Notice that true salvation and true justice (righteousness) are as dependent as gifts from heaven as plants are dependent on rain.

**Uppity Pots** (vv9-13) – With language Paul will pick up as he discusses God's exhaustive sovereignty in salvation (Rom 9:20-21), Isaiah likens any backtalk from God's creation to a pot arguing with the potter or a newborn complaining to its mother (vv9-10). This may even be backtalk from Israel over using a pagan king as their messiah. But this is the God of scripture. He forms light and darkness, He brings forth peace and calamity, He is Lord over all of Israel and all the Gentiles as well. He can declare the movements of kings who do not even know Him – and He does. There is no room in Christian theology for a God who has not predestined everything that comes to pass (Eph 1:11, 2:10). But this is not scary for those who are in His favor (or those who would humble themselves before Him) because what He declares is their salvation and their victory. In fact, for those in His favor, it provides great comfort in the midst of the storms of life.

**The Lord, the Only Savior for the World** (45:14-19) – This Shepherd, Redeemer, Messiah is promised that he will have the subjection of Gentile nations (v14). While Israel had no God in idol-form (v15) the other nations will be the ones ashamed as Israel's God brings forth an everlasting salvation (vv16-17). It becomes less and less clear if we are talking about Cyrus or Israel at this point. In any event we are talking about the God Who raised up the Messiah and the people that He will establish to rule the world. God has declared this openly and publicly (vv18-19) as He would do with Jesus the Messiah.

**The Lord Who Will Save the World** (45:20-25) – Never has God done anything to or with Israel that was only about that little nation. He promised Abraham that through him the families/nations would be blessed (Gen 12:1-3). And so Isaiah calls them now, Israel (vv20-21) and the ends of the earth (vv22-25).

**Cyrus the Christ of God** – When Cyrus was raised up by the LORD, Cyrus knew that all the kingdoms of the earth had been given to him and he commanded God's disciples to go and build a new Jerusalem (2 Chron 36:22-23). But this was simply a foreshadowing of the Final Messiah, Jesus the Christ, to Whom God gave authority over the heavens and earth (Matt 28:18-20) to build a New Jerusalem and a new temple on earth – by discipling nations.

The people scorned God's challenge of full sovereignty (Isaiah 45:9-10) but even the disobedience of Jewish and Gentile kings would only accomplish all God had predestined (Acts 4:27-28). God has created all things and is writing His story (Rom 9:22-24) and He has told us the outcome (Rom 11:11-12, 25-27).

"Look to Me and be saved" (Isaiah 45:22), and that is just what Jesus promised (John 3:14-17). Every knee will bow to the God of Cyrus (Isaiah 45:23) but it turns out that this is foreshadowing the True Conqueror of all Nations (Phil 2:9-11).