

ONLY GOD IS RIGHTEOUS AND SAVIOR**Isaiah 45:15-25**

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I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND BIBLICAL CONTEXT**A. Historical Background**

As has been highlighted abundantly in the Old Testament, God made it absolutely clear to the Israelites (a) that He **hates idols and idol worship** and (b) that He will *punish them if they bow down to idols* of any kind. Unfortunately, throughout their history, the Israelites *gravitated* to the various idols of their neighboring nations and suffered the consequences of their unfaithfulness and disobedience to God. As we read and study the Scriptures, we realize that the Israelites *failed to learn from their mistakes* and continued to find themselves being *defeated, exiled and oppressed* by the very nations whose gods they admired and bowed down to!

B. Biblical Context

Both in the OT and NT, the Scriptures *consistently reveal* that the **Sovereign God** is Gracious, Merciful and Loving to His creations, especially His chosen people. God *demonstrated His Grace, Mercy and Love* to the Israelites by being patient with them, giving them many opportunities to *repent* of their sins and *return* to Him. In addition, the Bible *reveals* that God remains Faithful despite the unfaithfulness of the Israelites because He keeps the Promises that He made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David! However, **God's Righteousness demands** that the unfaithful and disobedient Israelites cannot get away with their awful behavior and repeated offenses without punishment. **SIN had to be dealt with!**

In Isaiah chapter 45, God declares *several times* that He is **The Sovereign God** who created everything and that there is no other beside Him! His **tone** expresses His *displeasure* about the Israelites who *continually turn to idols* made by human hands, **idols that cannot hear, see and speak!** God sent Isaiah to remind the unfaithful Israelites that **salvation** can *only* be found in The Sovereign LORD! That God is the only one who can deliver them from their *exilic existence* and return them back to Jerusalem! That The Sovereign God will even raise up Cyrus to do His Will! **If only they repent and turn back to Him who is gracious, merciful and loving Savior!**

II. THE LESSON: ONLY GOD IS RIGHTEOUS AND SAVIOR

As I was preparing this Lesson, I realized for most of us who consistently attend Sunday Worship Service, Sunday Morning Bible Study and Wednesday Bible Study, perhaps the *major doctrines* in Isaiah chapter 45 are familiar. We know **God is Sovereign**. We know only God is **Holy and Righteous**. We know only God is **The Savior**. *However, all of us need reminders.* We all need to **hear the assurances these doctrines convey** because of the times we live in! *Besides, God's Word always has a way of strengthening, comforting and healing no matter how many times we hear it!*

1. **vv. 15-17: When God Reveals the Savior, All Makers of Idols will be put to Shame!**

To properly understand these verses, we need to keep in mind two things: (a) the entire Book of Isaiah contains **prophecies** that will be **fulfilled** in the *near future* (when God saves them from the Assyrians, Babylonians, etc.) as well as in the *far distant future* (when Christ, The Messiah is revealed) and (b) “**Everlasting Salvation**” refers to the Messiah who will seat on **the Throne of David for eternity** according to God's promises in **2 Samuel 7:1-16**. When the Sovereign God brings to fruition all the prophecies, “**All the makers of idols will be put to shame and disgraced.**” At the time, to those Israelites/the Remnants who were in exile, these words *light up* their hopes, *encouraged* their hearts and *invigorated* their faith! For those who were on the verge of giving up, these divine words *awakened* their minds, *revived* their spirits and gave them assurance to keep on living! For those of us who believe and understand that most of the prophecies have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, these revelations *assure us* that the ongoing wars, rumors of wars, threats and fear mongering will be *silenced* by the Sovereign God!

2. **vv. 18-19. The Righteous God Always Speaks The Truth!**

God has always spoken the **Truth** because He is **The Truth!** *God's Word is The Truth!* **We know that The Word is Jesus Christ** (John 1:1-4) **and He is the Eternal Truth** (John 3:31-36). *That is why God's Word is everlasting!* The Bible says, “... The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever” (Isaiah 40:6-8).

a) Verse 18. “**I am the LORD, and there is no other.**”

To the Israelites who don't seem to get it, God *emphasizes in His declaration that He who speaks through Isaiah is “The LORD, who created the heavens, ... He who fashioned and made the earth, ...”* Didn't I create Adame and Eve and

multiplied them to inhabit the earth? Don't you get it!? "I am the LORD, and there is no other!"

b) **Verse 19a. "I, have not spoken in secret."**

*Everything God said is for us to hear, know and understand. All the things God did is for us to see, smell, touch, eat, use and enjoy! Nothing He said and did is secret! **All of it is in the open displaying His Power and Glory!** The Bible abundantly shows that God has always spoken *clearly, publicly and truthfully*. **God's Word has the Power to Resurrect the dead!** Such Truth has been manifested many times both in Old Testament era as well as New Testament era! **God's Word also redeems, heals, restores and transforms!** We too are Witnesses in this generation! God revealed Himself to the forefathers and foremothers of the Israelites **to whom** He spoke directly and **for whom** He performed numerous miracles about which even other nations testified about! That is why God said, **"I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness."***

c) **Verse 19b. "I didn't tell Jacob's descendants 'Seek Me in Vain.'"**

God was saying to the Israelites in exile who were the descendants of Jacob, if they **seek** Him in spirit and truth (instead of the idols), He will be found! Even King Solomon in his prayer during the dedication of the Jerusalem Temple petitioned God about that Truth! (2 Chronicles 6:12-42). In other words, the Israelites as descendants of Jacob should have known about such things! God was affirming to them that if they "seek Him" with **a repentant heart**, He will be found! *God is saying the same thing today to the Christians who have lost their way and find themselves in "exile" outside of the churches!! **They need to Repent and Seek The Savior!** God is patiently waiting!*

d) **Verse 19c. "I, the LORD, speak the Truth; I declare what is right."**

God's Word has proven itself generation after generation that He is the Truth and that He is always Right! *People just need to believe God and seek Him in Truth! **The whole Bible is God's Truth! God's Word in its entirety is Right because He is Holy and Righteous!** Hallelujah! In today's world where lies are taken as truth, doing wrong is right, we need God's Word! The churches need to hear God's Truth and Righteousness every week to maintain their faith! Christians who lost their ways need to hear God's Truth for their spirits to *awaken* and their hearts to *yearn* for the Savior! God's Truth shall set them free! It doesn't matter **how far** they have strayed and how deep they have sunk in their sins! God's Word has the Power to *soften* stoney hearts, *restore**

troubled minds and *heal* wicked spirits to save lost souls! Only God who created the universe can save!

3. vv. 20-22: Only God is Righteous and Savior!

Once again, in verse 21, the LORD highlights how *absurd* and *ignorant* it is for the Israelites to pray to wooden idols made by human hands to save them from their ***exilic existence!*** God invites the exiles to call a meeting, pray to their wooden idols, consult each other and predict their future! **In Isaiah chapter 45, God in so many ways is calling their attention to how wicked their thinking and futile their efforts were!** Recall it was the Sovereign God who delivered the Israelites into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in the first place! **And God was Right in handing them over to the Babylonians!** God had already foretold what would happen to the Israelites if they worshipped idols under the terms of The Covenant (Deuteronomy 30). That is why God said, “Who foretold this long ago, who declared from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from Me, a Righteous God and a Savior; there is none but Me” (v. 21). **God is a Righteous God and His Judgement is always Right!** Furthermore, they should have realized the future of the Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians as well as theirs was in the Hands of the Sovereign God! **Therefore, only God can save them! The Divine Invitation still stands: “Turn to Me and be Saved.”**

4. vv. 23-25. “By Myself I Have Sworn a Word that Cannot be Revoked!”

There are references in the OT that God **swore by His Own Holy Name**, for example, when He promised Abram what He will do for him and his descendants (Genesis 24:6-9). What He had promised on oath, the LORD kept (Deut. 28:9-14). Since there is no one greater, God swore on His Own Self to guarantee His Word given to the Israelites under the Covenant. God of course kept His Word which cannot be revoked thereby maintaining His integrity for eternity! In verse 20, the Bible says, “By Myself I have sworn, My mouth has uttered in all integrity: Before Me every knee will bow; by Me every tongue will swear. They will say of Me, ‘In the LORD alone are righteousness and strength. ...’ **And so it has been and so it shall be in the future because God’s Word is True and Eternal!**”

III. CONCLUSION

In Philippians chapter 2, the Word of God declares that “... at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (verses 9-11).