

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

Part LI: God's Stated Sovereignty As Creator In Using Pagan Cyrus (Isaiah 45:9-13)

I. Introduction

- A. God's prediction of raising up pagan king Cyrus who would not even know Him to use in delivering Israel from Babylon was a plan that Israel's people would never consider, and which they might criticize!
- B. However, objecting to God's plan and will is insubordination toward the Creator, what no created person has a right to do, and Isaiah 45:9-13 provides this truth in a lesson of great importance for our era (as follows):

II. God's Stated Sovereignty As Creator In Using Pagan Cyrus, Isaiah 45:9-13.

- A. As we learned in our last lesson, after predicting He would raise up pagan king Cyrus who would not even know Him to deliver Israel from Babylon (cf. Isaiah 45:1-8), God anticipated criticism on the part of His people to God's having such a plan that involved a pagan Gentile king to help Israel this way.
- B. Accordingly, the Lord pronounced a "Woe" of judgment to him who "strives against; complains" (*rib*, B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 936) about the One who "formed" (*yasar*, Ibid., p. 427-428) him, the word *yasar* also being often used of a potter's work, Ibid.; Isaiah 45:9a.
- C. In highlighting the error of such criticism, Isaiah 45:9b ESV added, "a pot among earthen pots," showing how foolish it was for a man like a formed pottery vessel to complain about His Potter-Creator, the Lord!
- D. Isaiah 45:9c then asked, "Shall clay say to its former, 'What does thou?' and the work, 'He has no hands?'" as if to say the potter "cannot make anything, a statement whose absurdity is obvious," Edward J. Young, The Book Of Isaiah, 1974, v. III, p. 204.
- E. Changing the illustration from a potter and his clay to parents and their child, Isaiah gave a woe to him who says to his father, "What are you begetting?" or to a woman, "With what are you in labor?" (Isa. 45:10) No one has a right to question his Creator God about what he makes just as he has no right to question his parents for bringing him into the world, a question that disrespects one's parents in violation of the Law, Ex. 20:12.
- F. In application, God through Isaiah challenged Israel as her Creator Who had formed her to ask of Him things to come, and objected to her commanding Him concerning His children and the work of His hands, Isa. 45:11.
- G. After all, He was the Creator God Who had made the earth and created man on it, it was His hands that had stretched out the immense heavens and commanded all their starry host to exist, Isaiah 45:12! [In view of the immensity of the stellar universe and the stellar bodies, we note the huge greatness of God in this thought!]
- H. Accordingly, this Great Creator has predicted that He will stir up Cyrus in righteousness, make all of his ways level, and that Cyrus would build His city of Jerusalem and release His captive people from Babylon not even for a price or a reward, Isaiah 45:13! This claim comes from the Lord of Hosts, One Who is utterly sovereign over all men, including the coming pagan king Cyrus and the nations under his power!

Lesson: By way of the illustration first of a potter over the earthen vessels he forms, then of parents relative to the children they produce, God claimed that He as Creator God had every right and power over what He created not to be questioned by what He had created or for what He had done. Then, God applied this truth to Israel's people, directing them not to question His plan to raise up the pagan king Cyrus to deliver Israel from her Babylonian Captivity, to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and to set His exiled people free without price or reward.

Application: (1) May we not question what God does, makes or assigns relative to anything in our lives, but yield to His perfect will in all aspects of our existence. (2) In application, (a) may we not question the gender we have, or seek to change our gender or to function as if we were of the opposite gender in which we were born, for such action repudiates the assigned gender God has assigned us as our Creator! (b) May we also not question the race, nationality, ethnicity or family into which we have been born, but accept each of these assignments as God's plan for us in this life! (c) As believers, may we not question the spiritual gift we have for Christian service, but accept it as God's assignment for us to be used in God's way and for His glory, cf. 1 Corinthians 12:11. (d) Also, may we believers not question the occupation we have been assigned in God's permissive will, but in accord with James 4:13-17 yield to His revealed will to perform in it as we should for the Lord's glory. (e) May we accept our physical or mental limitations due to genetics, age, dietary history, etc., doing our best to function reasonably well in view of them in accord with the perfect will of God. (f) May we finally accept how God has created OTHERS the way He has, realizing that they were made and assigned the roles they possess by God's will and for His glory!