

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation

Part LII: God's Work To Handle His Servant's Foes

(Isaiah 45:14-25)

I. Introduction

- A. When the Lord directs one to serve Him, but foes disrespect and mistreat His servant, blocking his effort to fulfill God's call, the Lord counters His servant's foes and makes them respect the servant and Himself.
- B. This lesson is pointedly taught in Isaiah 45:14-25 with important application for us (as follows):

II. God's Work To Handle His Servant's Foes, Isaiah 45:14-25.

- A. Isaiah 45:14-25 in the context of Isaiah 45:4 clarifies that Israel was God's servant, and Genesis 12:1-3 reveals that Israel was appointed of the Lord as His servant to be a witness for God to the Gentile nations.
- B. However, due to God's use of Gentiles to punish Israel for sin (Deuteronomy 28:15, 49-51, 64-68), Israel went into captivity in Babylon and was mistreated, not respected, nor did she gain respect for God from the nations.
- C. Isaiah 45:14-25 presented God's solution to this situation (as follows):
 - 1. The Lord promised captive Israel in Babylon that in the coming Messianic Kingdom, the products of Egypt, the merchandise of Cush (Africa) and the tall Sabeans of Southern Arabia (Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., v. Five, p. 190-191) would come over to Israel and be possessed by her, that the Sabeans would bow and confess that God is with Israel, and that there was no other deity, Isaiah 45:14.
 - 2. Israel's God was very great, so His prophet explained that what appeared to be current weakness in God due to His not helping Israel fend off her foes was caused by His having hidden His great power and glory, Isaiah 45:15. Isaiah thus implied the time was coming when God would reveal Himself to the nations.
 - 3. Indeed, the Messianic Kingdom would arrive when all the idol makers would be disgraced as God made Himself known to the world (Isaiah 45:16), and Israel would be saved with everlasting salvation, never to be disgraced like the pagan, idolatrous world would be shamed in the end, Isaiah 45:17.
 - 4. Referring to Himself again as the Sovereign Creator Who fashioned and formed the earth not to be empty, but inhabited (Isaiah 45:18), God announced that He and no other entity was Lord, that He had thus not spoken His prophecy about Cyrus (cf. Isaiah 45:1-8 in the preceding context) in secret as if He were a vain pagan deity or idol, but that He spoke the truth openly as the True God, Isaiah 45:19 NIV.
 - 5. Summoning the pagan Gentile nations Israel then dreaded, the Lord stated they were ignorant who sought vain idols as gods (Isaiah 45:20), for He alone had accurately predicted the future concerning Cyrus's rise and help to Israel, for He was a God Who was righteous and a Savior to Israel, Isaiah 45:21.
 - 6. Then, in one of the most evangelistic verses in all of Scripture, God called all the ends of the earth to turn to Him to be saved as He would save Israel, Isaiah 45:22. The verb is plural, and with "ends of the earth" as its subject, God called all individuals to turn to Him to be saved, for all individuals in the world are sinners and stand in need of His salvation, Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 1974, v. III, p. 215-216.
 - 7. God added that in all truth and integrity, He spoke words that would not be revoked, and one day every knee would bow and every tongue confess that in Him alone was righteousness and strength, 45:23-24a.
 - 8. In fact, all pagans who raged against the Lord would one day come and be put to shame, but in the Lord, all the descendants of Israel would be found to be righteous, and exult in triumphant joy, Isaiah 45:24b-25.

Lesson: (1) *Israel's pagan, idolatrous foes who raged against her and her God would one day recognize that her God alone is the One, True, Almighty Creator Who was righteous and had salvation, that they would be shamed opposite Israel who would exult triumphantly in joy in God's salvation and in His righteousness.* (2) *Accordingly, God called all the ends of the earth, all the pagan Gentiles, themselves to look unto Him alone as God to be saved.*

Application: (1) *If God has called us like He called Israel to serve Him with a specific assignment, and godless foes obstruct that divine calling in some way so that we cannot fulfill God's assignment, the Lord Himself gets involved to counter those foes so that we can fulfill His assignment.* (2) *Thus, if opposed by godless foes in our calling, may we simply wait on the Lord to handle our foes that we might fulfill His will.* (3) *In particular, if our reputation has been wrongly undermined so that we suffer unjust disgrace, and if it obstructs our fulfilling God's assignment for us, may we rely on God to intervene to correct the problem that we might do His will. (Note how God similarly intervened in Paul's behalf in our current dispensation in Acts 16:19-40 and 19:8-20.)* (4) *May we never dishonor anyone else, even if they are unsaved, for God calls us to honor all men in 1 Peter 2:17a.*