

ISAIAH

Chapter 45

Cyrus, God's Instrument

Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed: 2 “I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, 3 I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. 4 For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know me. 5 I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, 6 that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. 7 I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the LORD, who does all these things. 8 “Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit; let the earth cause them both to sprout; I the LORD have created it. 9 “Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ or ‘Your work has no handles?’ 10 Woe to him who says to a father, ‘What are you begetting?’ or to a woman, ‘With what are you in labor?’” 11 Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and the one who formed him: “Ask me of things to come; will you command me concerning my children and the work of my hands? 12 I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host. 13 I have stirred him up in righteousness, and I will make all his ways level; he shall build my city and set my exiles free, not for price or reward,” says the LORD of hosts.

Ch 45 Infinitely merciful and patient, God does not tire to repeat Himself. Again and again He promises to deliver His fallen creatures and goes to great lengths to persuade doubting and fainthearted souls to believe the proclamation of their liberation. (TLSB)

45:1-2 The messenger formula in this verse signals a new unit of discourse. In 44:24-28, Yahweh addresses the Israelites who will be exiled. Here he speaks to Cyrus in an oracle that, in some ways, can be compared to Psalms 2 and 110, where Yahweh speaks to his Christ, David’s Lord (cf. 2 Sam. 7; 1 Chron. 17; 1 Ki. 3). While Yahweh uses Assyria to be “the rod of [his] wrath” (Is. 10:5) and Median soldiers (13:17) as “the tools of his wrath” (13:5), in 45:-1-8 the scope of Cyrus’ mission is to rescue the Israelite captives from Babylon. How dare our God treat a pagan idol worshiper named Cyrus like one of his brightest and best! However, Yahweh’s ways are not our ways (55:8). (CC)

45:1 *anointed*. “Messiah” comes from the Hebrew for this word. Cyrus, a foreign emperor, is called “his anointed” just as he is called “my shepherd” (44:28), because God has appointed him to carry out a divine commission in his role as king. Nebuchadnezzar is similarly called “my servant” (Jer 25:9; 27:6; 43:10). The servant—Christ is called “the Anointed One” in Da 9:25–26 (CSB)

This translates into Greek as “Christ,” originally denoted one who had been appointed for a special task in God’s service by pouring oil on the head. The oil perhaps represented the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, who would enable the anointed one to carry out his role. However,

in the case of Cyrus, it seems unlikely that he was literally anointed. Probably the term is used in a general sense to describe him as a servant of God, as the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar was called (Jer 25:9). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 4)

right hand I have grasped. The Lord takes hold of Cyrus's right hand, as He did with Israel. (TLSB)

subdue nations – Cyrus' rise to power began in 550 B.C., when he dethroned Astyages to become the ruler of the Persian Empire. Babylon fell to him in 539 B.C. Thus God subdued nations before him or could also be said "beat down."). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 4)

The events unfolded as follows. By 555 BC, Cyrus had gained devotion from the Persian tribes with singular ease, and he successfully rebelled against Media in 55 BC. So remarkable was his military muscle that on one occasion he won a victory over the Lydians, whose horses ran away because they smelled Persian camels! In 539 BC Cyrus' general surrounded the city of Babylon, and the priests submitted dethroning Cyrus Marduk's chosen monarch. Then they opened up the city gates and allowed the Persians to walk in. (CC)

Familiar Davidic theme (Ps 2:8–12; 110). (TLSB)

loose the belts. Figurative. A man "girded up" his loins in preparation for battle and donned his weapon (Ps 45:3). The loosening would remove the weapons and make him unprepared to fight. The kings were to be deprived of power. (TLSB)

open doors before him – Remarkably fulfilled in the conquest of Babylon, the gates of the city having been left open during the night of feasting. (CB)

45:2–3 In 539 BC, when Cyrus surrounded the city of Babylon, the priests of Marduk submitted and declared him to be Marduk's chosen monarch. They then opened the city gates to allow him and his army to enter peacefully. Jesus is the ultimate Anointed One, who opens the gates of hell (Rv 1:18) and sets prisoners free (Jn 8:36). (TLSB)

45:2 *level the exalted places* – Means "swollen up places" or "hills." God promises to go before Cyrus, even as he preceded his covenant people during their wilderness wandering and conquest of Canaan. Note the parallel to Is 40:3-4, which describes the preparations for the coming of the Lord himself in Jesus Christ. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 4)

It is as though the Lord Himself personally took a hand in the issues involved, came down from heaven, led the way for Cyrus and cleared away the obstacles that towered in his path. (Leupold)

What Yahweh opens "no one can shut" (22:22). When guilt stands in the way, he promises, "though your sins are like scarlet, they will be as white as snow" (1:18). When gloom and doom are obstacles, he says, "The people walking in darkness has seen a great light" (9:2). When huge road blocks get in the way, he commands, "Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill made low. And the crooked ground will become level, and the rough places a plain" (40:4). When dryness and deadness are all around, Yahweh opens pools of water in the desert and springs in the parched ground (35:7). For Jacob, locked in his past, Yahweh opens up heaven (Gen. 28:11-22). For a nation surrounded by the enemy, Yahweh opens the waters of the Red Sea (Ex. 14-15). For the people who lament, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope has perished" (Ezek. 37:11), Yahweh brings life to dead bones (Ezek. 38:1-14). And with a loving gleam in his eye,

Yahweh promises to open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that his people will lack nothing (Mal. 3:10). (CC)

As Cyrus freed Israelite captives by defeating Babylon, all the more does the eternal Messiah, Jesus, free his people by his defeat of sin, death, and the devil. He sees how sin imprisons all people (e.g., Rom. 7:14-23). At his Baptism, heaven was opened (e.g. Mk.1:10). He proceeds to open eyes, ears, mouths, and hearts. Jesus even opens graves (John 11). But the grandest opening was yet to come. After Gethsemane, Gabbatha, and Golgotha he says, "I was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore! And I have keys of death and hell" (Rev. 1:18). Because Jesus is alive, the gates of hell will never prevail against his church (Mt. 16:18). He gives pastors the office of the Keys (Jn. 20:22-23), and they administer his mercy and forgiveness through the Sacraments, absolution, and the preached Gospel. The message is clear. "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!" (Jn. 8:36). (CC)

doors of bronze ... bars of iron. Normally the doors of city gates were made of wood, and the bars were metal. (CSB)

The Lord represents Himself as actually battering down strong bronze gates that seemed to guaranty the safety of the cities and actually hewing in pieces gate-bars, and all this in the interest of Cyrus. (Leupold)

45:3 *give you treasurers of darkness* – A further item of God's guiding of the destinies of this servant of His is that He allows the conqueror to amass rich treasures, such as are wont to be kept for safe-keeping in dark, sometimes subterranean, chambers, or may be buried in secret places – so to speak, the Fort Knox-in-stallions of days of old. The reassures amassed by Babylon must have been fabulous, for they are also referred to in Hab. 2:6-8; Jer 50:37; 51:13. (Leupold)

that you may know. God's actions reveal his power (cf. Eze 6:7; 7:27). (CSB)

A careful reading of the text indicates that Cyrus did not know God as his own God and Savior, but he did come to understand that the Lord God of Israel was responsible for his success. In Cyrus' own edict of 538 B.C., recorded in Ezra 1:2-4, he acknowledges that "the Lord, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem" had enabled him to conquer the other nations. God guides world history in such a way that even unbelievers will fear, respect, and submit to him. See Josh 2:9-11 and Phil 2:10 "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow..."). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 4)

call you by your name. To indicate God's control of Cyrus's activities. (CSB)

Yahweh calls Cyrus by name. This emphasizes the importance of Yahweh' predictive capabilities. He alone is able to foretell the future and bring it to pass (Is. 41:4, 21-24, 26-27; 43:12; 44:7, 26; 45::20-21; 46:9-10; 48:3). Babylonian diviners attempt to peer into the future, but are woefully inadequate (44:25). (CC)

This verse concludes with the first of three reasons for God's action. The Lord granted Cyrus victories and success so that he would know that it was the Lord who stood behind him. (PBC)

45:4 *my servant.* This verse describes how God uses the left-hand kingdom for the benefit of those in his right. Unbelieving rulers unwittingly carry out God's plan, as Jesus himself implies about Pilate (Mt 19:11). (CSB)

The Lord clearly identifies the second reason for His action: “For the sake of Jacob My servant, of Israel My chosen.” Notice that God’s people still are precious in the eyes of the Lord. He calls them “my servant” and “my chosen,” special names that reveal their close relationship with the Lord. He has not forgotten them. He has remained faithful to the covenant He once made with Abraham, and He intends to fulfill all the promises He made concerning His people. (PBC)

my chosen – In Hebrew this is theologically equivalent to “elect” in Greek. God guides history for the sake of his elect (Mt 24:22; Rom 8:28; 11:7; 2 Tim 2:10).

my chosen. Perhaps “anointed” (v. 1). (CSB)

For Israel’s comfort, the Lord specifically names Cyrus, who has done nothing to earn his status in the Lord’s sight. (TLSB)

though you do not know me. Cyrus apparently worshiped the chief Babylonian deity, Marduk, whom he praised in his inscriptions. (CSB)

Though Cyrus used the Lord’s name in his edict and attributed his success to the Lord, Isaiah notes that his words and actions do not stem from genuine faith. (TLSB)

When Cyrus took Babylon he was ignorant of Jehovah and of the designs which he purposed to accomplish through him, and was only indulging his own ambitious desires. The knowledge which he afterwards had of God, (Ezra 1:2) was doubtless received from the Jews residing in Babylon. God has often employed princes. Who were ignorant of Him and His counsels, to accomplish wonderful deliverances for His people. (CB)

45:5 *I ... there is no other*. This Lordship is not just the kingdom of grace over believers, but also God’s kingdom of power over unbelievers.

I equip you – This type of dealing with man on the basis of pure grace is then the distinctive mark of His dealing with mankind. (Leupold)

45:6 *that people may know*. God acts to spread the message of salvation throughout the world because He is the only God for all (Mt 28:18–20). (TLSB)

The sequence of knowing Yahweh begins with the particular, Cyrus (45:4-5), and moves to the universal, all people (45:6). The goal of Jacob/Israel’s restoration is that Cyrus, as well as the entire world, may know that Yahweh is the only God and then believe in him. Whereas Ps. 72:8-11 announces that this will come by means of the Heir of the throne of David, Yahweh shockingly links these promises to Cyrus. (CC)

rising ... to ... setting. The whole earth (see Mal 1:11 and note). (CSB)

I am the Lord...is no other – Only the Lord blots out sins. Only the Lord is the redeemer. No other religious idea, no other god, no other theology offers what the Lord offers: forgiveness, life, and salvation. We look beyond Cyrus to this greater work of God. No other God carefully planned the redemption of His people and all the world. The Lord’s superiority rests on His plan to send a Redeemer more important than Cyrus. (PBC)

“I am Yahweh” appears frequently in this periscope: in 44:24 and in 45:3, 5-8, 18-19, 21. Knowing Yahweh is a central concern in the OT. From the burning bush (Ex. 3:14) to Ezekiel’s

ongoing us of “and you/they will know that I am Yahweh” (e.g., Ezek. 6:7, 10, 13-14; 7:4, 27; 13:14, 23). Israel’s God demonstrates that he longs to be known. Josiah shows what this looks like concretely, for the king who repented after the rediscovery of the Torah then acts with justice and righteousness on behalf of the poor and needy (Jer. 22:15-16). Yahweh is fully known through Jesus Christ and his great acts of compassion for all people (Jn. 1:18; 14:9). (CC)

45:7 *darkness ... calamity.* Such as the darkness that plagued the Egyptians (see Ex 10:21–23; Ps 105:28; cf. Is. 47:11; Am 3:6). (CSB)

create darkness. Indicates aspect of God that the Vulg translates in v 15 as “the hidden God” (*Deus absconditus*). In His hiddenness, the Lord brings judgment and destruction; in His revealed state, He ushers in light and life (cf Jn 1:14). *well-being and ... calamity.* The Lord is not the source of evil or the cause of sin. Nothing happens without the Lord’s knowledge and permission. He is the cause of well-being. He may inflict retribution, but He may also permit calamity to come through human sinfulness, through Satan, or through the sin-corrupted order of the natural world. (TLSB)

Since God is the author of all things, He governs and sets limits to all. The good and bad actions of men and angels are under His control that He accomplishes through them His own wise counsels, while they are left altogether free and responsible to Him for their conduct. (CB)

We may be puzzled by His dealings in our world and in our own lives, but whether He brings prosperity or creates disaster, He always has the best interests of His people in mind. So He promised, “In all things God works for the good of those who love Him” (Romans 8:28). (PBC)

I am the Lord, who does all these things. God foresees everything that happens and governs everything according to his good pleasure, which is to save all people by his grace alone in Jesus Christ (e.g., Ps. 139:16; Dan. 4:35; Acts 2:23; Rom. 11:33-36; 1 Peter 1:20-21; Rev. 17:17). The Bible also teaches that since the fall (Gen. 3), humans are slaves to sin and by nature reject God’s gift of salvation. Both of these truths need to stand in tension. People are saved only when God works through his mean of grace to bring about repentance and faith in Christ. Thus salvation is the free gift of God without any human merit or cooperation; it is God’s work alone. (CC)

45:8 *shower.* A picture of abundance (see Hos 10:12). (CSB)

righteousness. In v. 13; 41:2 Cyrus is mentioned in connection with God’s righteousness. God is “making things right” through the Persian king. (CSB)

God’s righteousness is boundless, free, and refreshing. (TLSB)

salvation. God will deliver his people. (CSB)

In spiritual terms, the picture means that by nature humanity does not have what is necessary for salvation . We are dead in trespasses and sin (Eph. 2:1). (PBC)

righteousness may bear fruit. † Peace and justice will prevail. (CSB)

45:9 *him.* Anyone who challenges God’s creation and leadership. (TLSB)

a pot among earthen pots! All human beings are made from the same dust (Gn 2:7). (TLSB)

clay say. The silent clay accepts the potter's shaping as Israel should accept the shaping of God. (TLSB)

The potter exercises complete control and can make what he wishes with the clay he works with his hands. Whatever God has made of us, we have one purpose – to glorify Him. (PBC)

It has just been indicated that the Lord is going to use as His instrument for restoring Israel the conqueror Cyrus. That purpose may indeed meet with some measure of disapproval on the part of some of the children of Israel. Their attitude would be: A heathen like that is not worthy for the achievement of God's high purposes. This objection would not be raised by faint-hearted unbelief, but the very verb "find fault" may also be translated "strive." That would imply stubborn opposition, an attitude of knowing things better than the very Lord Himself. (Leupold)

no handles. Request for improvement. (TLSB)

45:10 *what are you begetting* – It is as though a child were questioning the propriety of having a father beget it and bring it into the world, an uninformed, inexperienced child. It is as though at any point in childhood any youngster were to remonstrate with his mother: "To what are you giving birth?" (Leupold)

Child does not question the parent but is thankful for life and birth. (TLSB)

45:11 *Holy One of Israel.* The Lord asserts His sovereignty. He decides what to do with His children, with all humanity, with Cyrus, and with all He has created. (PBC)

him. Israel. (TLSB)

Ask Me. Ambrose: "To God the things that are to come are present, and for Him Who foreknows all things, they are as though they were past and over" (NPNF 2 10:217). (TLSB)

children ... work of my hands. "Leave matters up to Me. Commit the cause of My children and My works to Me. I will not forsake you." The church is the work of God's hands, and His children are His cultivation. "Therefore command Me. You cannot bring the matter to a successful issue. I will do it. Believe Me." Ezra and Nehemiah carefully read these words of comfort and consoled the people and the king by means of the Word. Let God handle the matter, He will do it properly. (Luther)

45:12 *I made the earth* – "Has My hand been shortened? Am I not able to help you?" Here He calls attention to His own power so that they might trust in Him. They raise the objection, "Yes, we are under the king of Babylonia, exiled and in a foreign land." He says, *I made the earth*, that is, "all things are in My hand. Nothing can escape Me." This is our glory today against all tyranny of the bishops and princes, since all their plans and schemes are in the hand of God. They cannot harm us because all things are in His hand. (Luther)

commanded all their host. Innumerable stars, planets, and heavenly bodies. (TLSB)

45:13 *stirred him up in righteousness.* The Lord rescues Israel through Cyrus, the pagan king of Persia. The Lord uses all creation – even Satan – to accomplish His good purposes. (TLSB)

make ... ways level. Enabling him to reach his goals. (CSB)

build my city. “and he shall send you captives away as free men.” These are motherly consolations that enfold us in their bosom. “Just let Me take care of things, I will accomplish all of it. You will not need to pay anything. Cyrus will do all this at his own expense. You need have no worry of your own. I will take care. You are too poor. But King Cyrus is rich and has an ample purse. He will build and restore Jerusalem.” (Luther)

not for a price. † The exiles had nothing to contribute to their emancipation. (CSB)

Exiles had nothing to contribute to their emancipation. Their undeserved deliverance envisions the spiritual liberation of all nations held in chains by Satan’s bondage and ransomed not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. (1 Peter 1:18-19). (TLSB)

45:1–13 The Lord rescues Israel through Cyrus, the pagan king of Persia. The Lord uses all creation—even Satan!—to accomplish His good purposes. If the devil and an idolater can come to such notable service, will the Lord not use you to great purpose? He has already purposed your salvation through the blood of Jesus, His Anointed. • Call me to service, O heavenly Potter. I am at Your disposal. Amen. (TLSB)

The LORD, the Only Savior

14 Thus says the LORD: “The wealth of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush, and the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over to you and be yours; they shall follow you; they shall come over in chains and bow down to you. They will plead with you, saying: ‘Surely God is in you, and there is no other, no god besides him.’” 15 Truly, you are a God who hides himself, O God of Israel, the Savior. 16 All of them are put to shame and confounded; the makers of idols go in confusion together. 17 But Israel is saved by the LORD with everlasting salvation; you shall not be put to shame or confounded to all eternity. 18 For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!): “I am the LORD, and there is no other. 19 I did not speak in secret, in a land of darkness; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, ‘Seek me in vain.’ I the LORD speak the truth; I declare what is right. 20 “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you survivors of the nations! They have no knowledge who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save. 21 Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together! Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. 22 “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. 23 By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: ‘To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.’ 24 “Only in the LORD, it shall be said of me, are righteousness and strength; to him shall come and be ashamed all who were incensed against him. 25 In the LORD all the offspring of Israel shall be justified and shall glory.”

45:14 *wealth ... merchandise.* The bringing of treasures is stressed – treasure from Egypt, from Ethiopia and from Sabeans. Also the merchandise that is the exportable articles for these nations. (Leupold)

Egypt ... Cush ... Sabeans. Seba, which has tall and prominent men. Seba is the noblest state of the Ethiopians. In it are great, eminent, mighty people and lords. They shall be brought under your yoke as a reward. (Luther)

coming over to you.† See Ps 68:31. Israel’s former enemies will be among the nations seeking citizenship in the spiritual commonwealth and worldwide communion of saints of the Messianic kingdom because it offers “everlasting salvation.” (CSB)

Enemies are forced to acknowledge Israel as the chosen people of the only true God. (TLSB)

God is in you. Nations come to faith. (TLSB)

God pictures the results of Pentecost when people from all over the world came to believe in Jesus. That conversion continues today. (PBC)

45:15 *hides himself.*† God’s plans and actions transcend human understanding (cf. 55:8–9). (CSB)

The Lord and His plans are hidden to those who make idols (i.e. wealthy Egyptians in v 14). (TLSB)

Savior. Only those who turn away from idols in repentance and turn to the Lord in faith will be saved. Luther: “These are the words of the prophet, who had already predicted these words of consolation. Now he is snatched into a trance of the Word of God, as if to say, ‘Dear God, how strangely You deal with us!’ ” (AE 17:131). (TLSB)

45:16 *them.* Idolaters. (TLSB)

put to shame. See 42:17; 44:9. (CSB)

Now the prophet comforts them by way of antithesis. Whatever there is of other gods, they exhibit according to appearance. When it is no longer visible, it ceases to be god. Thus when mammon and the belly cease, they cease to be gods. When trouble comes, they disappear. So the prophet says elsewhere, “Where are your gods, who are unable to save you?” (cf. Is. 43:11 ff.). When affliction comes, they cannot help. So all the gods of the self-righteous are vain. In the snares and trials of consciences they depart and take their leave in disgrace. (Luther)

45:17 *everlasting salvation.* Cf. the “everlasting kindness” of 54:8. (CSB)

Idols of wood cannot save themselves, but God saves His own eternally. (TLSB)

Israel has a different God, a God who prepares King Cyrus for Himself, builds the temple, and restores Jerusalem with everlasting salvation. He shall not be forsaken nor covered with disgrace, although it might seem that in the captivity everything appeared disgraceful, and still appears so today. But it will not continue so. Yet we crave so much to be freed from all confusion. “No, there must be confusion and destruction, so that the Redeemer and Savior may come, because you will not be left in them. The ungodly man has his god in present good fortune, but when tribulation comes, he despairs. You, however, are delivered by Me from all evils.” (Luther)

you. Israel. (TLSB)

45:18 *created ... formed.* Here He repeats the promises, as if to say, “I did not create the earth in vain that it should be a desert; I did not in vain preach to Jacob that he should be confounded, but that the earth should be filled up and inhabited.” (Luther)

He is God! Prophet interjects expressions or responses of faith while introducing the Lord's message. (TLSB)

empty.† “Formless” or “chaotic,” or “without purpose.” Just as God created the world for a purpose, so he also chose Israel, and his plans concerning them will be fulfilled. (CSB)

I am the Lord...is no other – It is as if He were saying: “Who will stop me? Bel? Nabo, the god of the Babylonians? No, because I am Lord alone” (cf. Is. 46:1). (Luther)

45:19 *in secret ... darkness.* Probably an allusion to the clandestine ways of mediums and spiritists (see 8:19; 29:4). (CSB)

Though God determines how He will save His fallen creatures, He proclaims His good and gracious will to carry out His plan “from the beginning” (46:10; cf Ac 3:18, 21). (TLSB)

Seek me in vain. Cf. Jer 29:13–14. (CSB)

“My words are the words of righteousness and uprightness, words that establish the priesthood, the kingdom, and excellent ordinances. They speak the forgiveness of sins and of penalties. Therefore I do not speak into a vacuum. My words do not speak about gold and silver but are aimed at saving the people.” (Luther)

offspring of Jacob. Israel. (TLSB)

45:20 *assemble* – “My words are the words of righteousness and uprightness, words that establish the priesthood, the kingdom, and excellent ordinances. They speak the forgiveness of sins and of penalties. Therefore I do not speak into a vacuum. My words do not speak about gold and silver but are aimed at saving the people.” (Luther)

The Lord calls the nations to a trial to compare their idols to Him (cf 41:22, 26; 43:9). (TLSB)

no knowledge. These are titles and descriptions of the Chaldeans, spoken for the purpose of strengthening the souls of Israel. Therefore he says, “You are dead and ignorant, though you once were very wise.” They are fools who know nothing, and besides they are carriers of wooden idols. Not only do they lack wisdom but also righteousness and religion. They drag blocks of wood around. (Luther)

45:21 *Declare ... present.* Idolaters are invited to speak. (TLSB)

Speak up! Let us see whether there is anything efficacious in you. Produce it,” because above he said, “the words and deeds of the heathen are fruitless.” (Luther)

who told this long ago. “Who is it that could announce what I announce concerning Cyrus? Show Me one person who can do such a thing as to predict thus in advance. There is no one, because no one knows how to speak of the future. People could scarcely speak of the present.” (Luther)

no other god besides Me. Exclusivity of the Lord dominates this chapter (cf vv 5–6, 14, 18, 21–22). (TLSB)

45:22 *Turn ... be saved.* Cf. 49:6 and the invitation of 55:7. (CSB)

Not only the Jews but all the ends of the earth. Conversion through faith is necessary because the Word, when it has sounded forth, requires faith. Because the afflicted in their wretchedness can scarcely hear beyond the sense of the object, He arouses them to be converted to Him. (Luther)

ends of the earth. Denotes all Gentiles; an invitation for those outside of Israel to be included in the Lord's people of Israel. (TLSB)

45:23 *By myself I have sworn.* Explained in Heb 6:13. See also 62:8. (CSB)

Just as Israel took oaths in God's name, God takes oaths in His name as there is nothing more enduring. (TLSB)

word ... not ... return. That is, the Gospel, $\bar{\eta}\bar{\alpha}\bar{\gamma}\bar{\gamma}\bar{\alpha}$ a Word that teaches faith, grace, and a way of justification. It will not be useless and without fruit. (Luther)

every knee ... every tongue. † Paul quotes this portion of Isaiah in Ro 14:11 and Php 2:10–11 to describe Christ's exalted position and his worldwide kingdom. (CSB)

45:24 *it shall be said of Me.* An aside, explaining how the allegiance mentioned in v 23 would be expressed by all people. (TLSB)

only in the LORD. See v. 5 and note. This is the climax of the refrain that runs through the chapter. (CSB)

All who were incensed. Very similar to 41:11 except for "against you" (Israel). (CSB)

45:25 *glory.* Because Israel is justified by God alone, they praise Him alone. (Luther)

45:14–25 The Lord explains that all people will confess Him and will submit in faith or in fear. In times of discouragement or persecution, God seems hidden from us. Yet when Jesus hid His divinity from us while suffering on the cross, He was serving us most decisively. When the Lord seems far away, know that He is near, and confess His glory. • Draw near, O Lord. Return as You have promised, that we may rejoice in the fullness of salvation. Until then, grant us eyes of faith. Amen. (TLSB)