

TO KNOW GOD, THAT WE CAN TRUST HIM

ISAIAH 45:18-25

For thus says the Lord, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the Lord, and there is no other. I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, 'Seek Me in vain'; I, the Lord, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

"Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you who have escaped from the nations. They have no knowledge, who carry the wood of their carved image, and pray to a god that cannot save. Tell and bring forth your case; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, a just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me.

"Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself; the word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall take an oath. He shall say, 'Surely in the Lord I have righteousness and strength. To Him men shall come, and all shall be ashamed who are incensed against Him. In the Lord all the descendants of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory.' "

In the Word of God we have a plethora, an abundance, of examples of not only how God WAS active and reigning in His sovereignty over His creation, as our passage of Scripture in Isaiah testifies of, but also we are to know and believe that He IS still reigning and active, and that His Word is true and if God said it or says it, you can believe it. How is God presently active and reigning over His creation? Through His Word. How can that be if His Word has already been recorded as to what God said in the past. The answer is two-fold. **First, in Hebrews 4:12:** "the Word of God is living and powerful [powerful is from the Greek word "energes" which you can see is a form of the word energy-therefore it is also translated to mean "active"], and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Secondly, all of God's Word, that we have recorded in the Scriptures of what we call our Holy Bible, has not yet all been fulfilled.

So, even though God's Word has been written down and preserved, we can read in **Isaiah 46**, which is the following chapter of our passage of Scripture for today, God says through Isaiah the prophet, "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no

other; I am God, and there is none like Me, **declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done,** saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,'" (**Isaiah 46:9-10**) So God is presently active through His Holy Spirit and according to His Word, and as He promises, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." We can then read and learn from the Word of God of what was and also what will be. But we're not just gleaning from the Bible so as to be more knowledgeable about history and what will become history. God Almighty is not just a history professor. God has given us examples and leads us in the understanding to know Him. Contrary to that, the Apostle Paul, in speaking to the Jews in Antioch stated, "Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because **they did not know Him**, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him." (**Acts 13:26-27**) That was prophesied, in **Psalm 118:22**, saying "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone", which was speaking of course of Christ Jesus. They then did not know God, and they didn't have an understanding of God's Word. We must realize though that our spending time in God's Word is a major part of spending time with God, to know Him, and to let Him guide us in His Word.

It is up to us therefore, as the Apostle Paul told Timothy, to "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (**2 Timothy 2:15**) AND to believe that "ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (**2 Timothy 3:16**) It is not in our calling to right all the wrongs in this world. God is calling us to repentance, to turn to Him for the forgiveness of sins, and He then is working in all of His children changing their hearts and renewing their minds and then being His light to this dark, depraved and dying world. We are told by Jesus to not even concern ourselves with what we will eat or wear but to "**seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.**" (**Matthew 6:33-34**)

The context of the passage of Scripture in **Isaiah 45** as well as throughout God's Word in the focal message by God is that we are being told to trust in Him, as this is HIS creation, and regardless of what seems to be God being on vacation or in hiding, He IS presently working towards the building of His eternal kingdom, from one living soul to the next. Where we are indeed being led, by the Spirit of God, and according to God's Word, is to know Him, trust

Him, and to honor Him, and to live our lives in agreement with Him being our Lord, God, and Savior and then also, as our Heavenly Father. It is in what Jesus cried to God the Father before He was to be crucified on a cross by praying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." (Matthew 26:39) We are guaranteed, as we have all experienced, pain, sorrow, tears, grief, and the loss of loved ones.

It is then necessary for us to put our trust in God and get on His plan and purpose and not just be trying to get God on our plans. Our message last week from **Proverbs 3**, centered on **Proverbs 3:5-7**, where we are told, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil." What we are really being shown, by God through His Word, is that we cannot be judging by our 5 senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching, in how God IS presently working towards His plan and purpose. Jesus spoke of that to Nicodemus saying, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:5-8)

That is clearly and succinctly explained by the Apostle Paul when He said of all those who have received and believed on Christ Jesus, "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if **by the Spirit** you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.** For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, **if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.**" "If indeed we suffer with Him." We are indeed God's workmanship and it is is Christ alone that we can live by the Spirit. The Apostle Paul tells us in **Ephesians 2:8-10**, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

It is not a popular message for preachers to speak of the sufferings that we have to endure in Christ, but it is a critical thing to know as a child of God. God has not saved us so that we can presently have a life full of happiness and bliss. That comes later. We are promised

by God, in His Word, "But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." (**Psalm 37:11**) That was what Jesus also promised in what we call "the Beatitudes" in His "Sermon on the Mount". To go along with the peace of God, Jesus also promised, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Right now we are on the battlefield, not against flesh and blood, we are being led by the Spirit of Christ to be meek and His peacemakers, and we are told in His Word, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (**Ephesians 6:12**) It is not up to us then to determine who is going to heaven and who is doomed to hell, yet it is up to us to, as we are told to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." (**Romans 13:14**) That meekness that we walk in-which is described as **humble submission with gentleness and longsuffering**-is a character trait that becomes us as we allow the fruit of the Spirit, to work in us. "love, joy, peace, **longsuffering**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **gentleness**, self-control." It is then also in Christ alone that we live according to the 4 pillars (as I refer to them) that Paul spoke of in **1 Corinthians 1:30**, in His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.

It is important for us to learn, in the wisdom that comes from Him, that we are not on my timetable or your timetable and that regardless of outward appearances God is in control and He is perfect in all of His Ways (**2 Samuel 22:31**) and Works (**Deuteronomy 32:4**) It is though important for us to know what exactly God is saying and to not be quick to take His Word out of context to suit our own desires or to meet up with our own expectations. At the heart of any message for us today, should be that God has revealed to us His New Covenant with His people, be they Jews or Gentiles, that whoever will believe on Christ Jesus and receive Him, you then become a child of God, have been forgiven of your sins, and have been reconciled to God to have a right relationship with Him, from that time forth and through all of eternity. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (**John 1:12-13**) We all know, I think, and have heard what Jesus spoke of as God's plan to send His only begotten Son to this earth (**John 3:16-17**), to where Jesus then preached the Word of God to call sinners to repentance (**Matthew 9:13**) and then to die on a cross for our sins, taking our sins upon Himself, to all those who are being redeemed, as the Apostle Peter stated, "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might **live for righteousness**-by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." (**1 Peter 2:24**)

So that is what we will do as we look at our passage of Scripture in **Isaiah 45**, as we are looking to the **Word of God**. The context of this passage of Scripture, is that it starts in verse 1 saying, "Thus says the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held—to subdue nations before him and loose the armor of kings, to open before him the double doors, so that the gates will not be shut: 'I will go before you and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze and cut the bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the Lord, who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel.'" (**Isaiah 45:1-3**) That was God, speaking through Isaiah the prophet, to King Cyrus, who would be called by God to allow the rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem, some 200 years later, after it had been destroyed by the Chaldeans. We can read of the story of King Cyrus and the rebuilding of the temple in the book of Ezra. The book of Nehemiah, the next book in our Bibles, is the story of the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem.

Another notable example of God speaking a person specific prophesy, was from a man of God who prophesied in the days of King Jeroboam, that one named Josiah would burn the evil priests on the altar that Jeroboam had made. Jeroboam was an evil king, who gotten his priests contrary to the Levitical priesthood, and the altar that Jeroboam worshipped at was not to THE God Almighty. That prophesy was not fulfilled for over 500 years. But God knew exactly when and how it would be accomplished. The most prominent of the prophesies in the Old Testament of course are of Christ Jesus and it is said that there are over several hundred prophesies of Christ. "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, **declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done**, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,'" (**Isaiah 46:9-10**)

"Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself; the word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall take an oath. He shall say, 'Surely in the Lord I have righteousness and strength. To Him men shall come, and all shall be ashamed who are incensed against Him. In the Lord all the descendants of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory.' " The call to us, as recorded in the Word of God, is to ensure that we will not be ashamed at the time when we stand before Christ Jesus. "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Jesus, in speaking to His disciples about the last of days said, "But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved." (Mark 13:9-13) That doesn't sound like a good time does it? Jesus didn't tell them to just eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow you die as is quoted of Solomon in Ecclesiastes.

Solomon states, "There is a vanity which occurs on earth, that there are just men to whom it happens according to the work of the wicked; again, there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity. So I commended enjoyment, because a man has nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink, and be merry; for this will remain with him in his labor all the days of his life which God gives him under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 8:14-15) At that point Solomon had concluded that life on this earth, with all of man's accomplishments, is meaningless and to just do what one can to find happiness. But that wasn't the conclusion of his seeking out wisdom from God. We find that at the end of his book, where Solomon says, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil." (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14) Jesus sums up God's commandments by saying, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31) Fear God, keep His commandments, love God wholeheartedly and loving others as God loves them and as He desires for none to perish-that is what we must be focused on and seeking after-the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Always hopeful and patient, waiting on the Lord. Whether good comes our way or evil we must put our wholehearted trust in Jesus, as the author and finisher of our faith. In His perfect time He will right the wrong and He will follow through with ALL of His promises! Proverbs 13:12 says, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life." We are clinging to the hope that we have in Christ Jesus yet for us to overcome this world we are also comforted by His Spirit and guided by His Word-it is then in Christ Jesus where we find our tree of life!