

CHAPTER 45

INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH 45

This chapter contains prophecies concerning Cyrus, the deliverer of the Jews from captivity; and concerning the grace, righteousness, and salvation of Christ; and the conversion of the Gentiles. An account is given of Cyrus, and of the great things God would do for him, and by him, (²³⁵⁰¹Isaiah 45:1-3) and the ends for which he would do these things, for the sake of his people Israel; and that he might be known to be the only true God, who is the Maker of all things, (²³⁵⁰⁴Isaiah 45:4-7) an intimation is given of the Messiah, as the author of righteousness and salvation; and of the contention and murmuring of the Jews about him, (²³⁵⁰⁸Isaiah 45:8-10), encouragement is given to pray for and expect good things by him for the children of God, in consideration of the greatness of God as the Creator, who would raise him up in righteousness, the antitype of Cyrus, (²³⁵¹¹Isaiah 45:11-13), the conversion of the Gentiles, the confusion of idolaters, and the salvation of the Israel of God, are prophesied of, (²³⁵¹⁴Isaiah 45:14-17), which are confirmed by his works and his word, what he had done and said, (²³⁵¹⁸Isaiah 45:18,19), the vanity of idols is exposed, and Christ the only Saviour asserted, to whom persons in all nations are directed to look for salvation, (²³⁵²⁰Isaiah 45:20-22) when it is affirmed with an oath that all shall be subject to him; that his people shall come to him for righteousness and strength; that his enemies shall be ashamed, and the spiritual Israel of God shall be justified, and glory in him, (²³⁵²³Isaiah 45:23-25).

Ver. 1. *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, &c.*] Cyrus is called the Lord's anointed, not because he was anointed with material oil, as the kings of Israel and Judah were; but because he was appointed by the Lord to be a king, and was qualified by him for that office; and was raised up by him to be an instrument of doing great things in the world, and particularly of delivering the Jews from their captivity, and restoring them to their own land:

whose right hand I have holden; whom he raised up, supported, strengthened, guided, and directed to do what he did:

to subdue nations before him; which was accordingly done. Xenophon^{f873} relates, that he subdued the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the countries of Phrygia, the Lydians, Carians, Phoenicians, and Babylonians; also the Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, the Sacae, Paphlagonians, and Megadinians; likewise the Greeks that inhabit Asia, Cyprians and Egyptians. Herodotus^{f874} says, that he ruled over all Asia: all which the Lord subdued under him; for it was he that did it rather than Cyrus; it was he that clothed him with strength and courage, gave him skill in military affairs, and success and victory:

I will loose the loins of kings; as Croesus king of Lydia, and Belshazzar king of Babylon, by divesting them of their dignity, power, and government; and particularly this was true of the latter, when, by the handwriting on the wall, he was thrown into a panic; “and the joints of his loins were loosed”, (²⁸¹⁶Daniel 5:6), “to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut”; the gates of cities and palaces wherever he came, which were opened to receive him as their conqueror and sovereign; this was very remarkably true of the gates of the palace of the king of Babylon, when the army of Cyrus by a stratagem had got into the city, and were come up to the king’s palace, they found the gates shut; but a clamour and noise being made, the king ordered to see what was the matter; the gates being opened for that purpose, the soldiers of Cyrus rushed in to the king, and slew him^{f875}; but, what is more remarkable, the gates of brass, which shut up the descents from the keys to the river, were left open that night Babylon was taken, while the inhabitants were feasting and revelling; which, had they been shut^{f876}, would have defeated the enterprise of Cyrus; but God in his providence ordered it to be so.

Ver. 2. *I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight, &c.*] Or, “level the hilly places”^{f877}; as pioneers do. The sense is, that he would remove all impediments and obstructions out of his way, and cause him to surmount all difficulties:

I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; with which the brasen gates were barred: in the wall that surrounded Babylon there were a hundred gates, all made of solid brass, twenty five on each side of the square; which, no doubt, are here referred to; which could not hinder the entrance of Cyrus into the city, and the taking of it; though they were not then destroyed by him, but by Darius afterwards^{f878} these

gates of brass are mentioned by Abydenus^{f879}, as made by Nebuchadnezzar, and as continuing till the empire of the Macedonians.

Ver. 3. *And I will give thee treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, &c.*] What had been laid up in private places, and had not seen the light for many years. The Jewish Rabbins say^{f880}, that Nebuchadnezzar having amassed together all the riches of the world, when he drew near his end, considered with himself to whom he should leave it; and being unwilling to leave it to Evilmerodach, he ordered ships of brass to be built, and filled them with it, and dug a place in Euphrates, and hid them in it, and turned the river upon them; and that day that Cyrus ordered the temple to be built, the Lord revealed them to him: the riches of Croesus king of Lydia, taken by Cyrus, are meant; especially what he found in Babylon, which abounded in riches, (^{<2613>}Jeremiah 51:13). Pliny^{f881} says, when he conquered Asia, he brought away thirty four thousand pounds of gold, besides golden vessels, and five hundred thousand talents of silver, and the cup of Semiramis, which weighed fifteen talents. Xenophon^{f882} makes mention of great riches and treasures which Cyrus received from Armenius, Gobryas, and Croesus:

that thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel; to call him by name two hundred years, or near it, before he was born, was a proof that he was God omniscient, and knew things before they were, and could call things that were not, as though they were; and this Cyrus was made acquainted with; for, as Josephus^{f883} says, he read this prophecy in Isaiah concerning him; and all this being exactly fulfilled in him, obliged him to acknowledge him the Lord, to be the Lord God of heaven, and the Lord God of Israel, (^{<2500>}Ezra 1:2,3).

Ver. 4. *For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name, &c.*] Not so much for the sake of Cyrus, and to do honour to him, was it that he so long before he was born called him by his name; but to assure the people of the Jews, the Lord's chosen people, and who were his servants, of the certainty of their deliverance, their deliverer being mentioned by name; and it was for their sakes, and not his, that he called him, and raised him up to do such great things as he did, that he might deliver them from their captivity: and it is for the sake of God's elect, whom he has chosen to holiness and happiness, to serve him, and be with him for ever, that he has called Christ, of whom Cyrus was a type, and sent him into the world, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them:

I have surnamed thee; not only called him by his name, Cyrus, but surnamed him his “shepherd”, and “his anointed”, (²³⁴⁸Isaiah 44:28 45:1):

though thou hast not known me; as yet not being born; and when he was, and was grown up, he was ignorant of the true God; and though, upon sight of the above prophecy, and under an immediate influence and impression, he acknowledged the God of Israel to be the God of heaven yet it does not appear that he left the Pagan idolatry; for Xenophon^{f884} relates, that when he found his end was near, he took sacrifices, and offered them to Jupiter, and the sun, and the rest of the gods; and gave them thanks for the care they had taken of him; and prayed them to grant happiness to his wife, children, friends, and country.

Ver. 5. *I am the Lord, and there is none else*, &c.] Whom thou, O Cyrus, for the words are directed to him, ought to own, serve, and worship:

there is no God besides me; in heaven or earth, in any of the countries conquered by thee, and thou rulest over; for though there were gods and lords many, so called, these were only nominal fictitious deities; not gods by nature, as he was; of which the following, as well as what is before said, is a proof:

I girded thee, though thou hast not known me; the Lord girded him with a royal girdle, a symbol of kingly power; he made him king over many nations; he girded him with strength, courage, and valour for war; and made him so expeditious, successful, and victorious, as he was, though a Heathen prince, and ignorant of him, in order to answer some valuable ends of his own glory, and the good of his people, and particularly for what follows.

Ver. 6. *That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west*, &c.] That all the inhabitants of the world, from east to west, which takes in the habitable part of the world, that from north to south not being entirely so; that all within this compass, by hearing what great things God did by Cyrus, and for his people, might know, own, and acknowledge,

that there is none besides me: I am the Lord, and there is none else; or, “besides me there is nothing”^{f885}; all creatures are nonentities in comparison of God; and he fills up all places, and everything lives, and moves, and has its being in him; and there is no God, the Lord, the eternal Jehovah, but the one true God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

Ver. 7. *I form the light, and create darkness, &c.*] Natural light, or that light which was produced at the first creation, and of which the sun is the fountain and source; or day which is light, and night which is darkness, the constant revolutions of which were formed, appointed, and are continued by the Lord, (^{<000B>}Genesis 1:3-5 8:22), moral light, or the light of nature, the rational understanding in man; spiritual light, or the light of grace, by which things spiritual and supernatural are known; the light of joy and comfort from Christ, the sun of righteousness; and the light of eternal glory and happiness: this is all from God, of his producing and giving; and so darkness is his creature; that natural darkness which was upon the face of the earth at the beginning; what arises from the absence of the sun, or is occasioned by the eclipses of it, or very black clouds; or any extraordinary darkness, such as was in Egypt; or deprivation of sight, blindness in men; and, in a figurative sense, ignorance and darkness that follow upon sin; judicial blindness, God gives men up and leaves them to; temporal afflictions and distresses, and everlasting punishment, which is blackness of darkness:

I make peace, and create evil; peace between God and men is made by Christ, who is God over all; spiritual peace of conscience comes from God, through Christ, by the Spirit; eternal glory and happiness is of God, which saints enter into at death; peace among the saints themselves here, and with the men of the world; peace in churches, and in the world, God is the author of, even of all prosperity of every kind, which this word includes: “evil” is also from him; not the evil of sin; this is not to be found among the creatures God made; this is of men, though suffered by the Lord, and overruled by him for good: but the evil of punishment for sin, God’s sore judgments, famine, pestilence, evil beasts, and the sword, or war, which latter may more especially be intended, as it is opposed to peace; this usually is the effect of sin; may be sometimes lawfully engaged in; whether on a good or bad foundation is permitted by God; moreover, all afflictions, adversities, and calamities, come under this name, and are of God; (see ^{<820>}Job 2:10 ^{<106>}Amos 3:6):

I the Lord do all these things; and therefore must be the true God, and the one and only one. Kimchi, from Saadiah Gaon, observes, that this is said against those that assert two gods, the one good, and the other evil; whereas the Lord is the Maker of good and evil, and therefore must be above all; and it is worthy of observation, that the Persian Magi, before Zoroastres^{f886}, held two first causes, the one light, or the good god, the

author of all good; and the other darkness, or the evil god, the author of all evil; the one they called Oromazes, the other Arimanius; and, as Dr. Prideaux^{f887} observes,

“these words are directed to Cyrus king of Persia, and must be understood as spoken in reference to the Persian sect of the Magians; who then held light and darkness, or good and evil, to be the supreme Beings, without acknowledging the great God as superior to both;”

and which these words show; for Zoroastres, who reformed them in this first principle of their religion, was after Isaiah’s time.

Ver. 8. *Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness, &c.*] Or, “the righteous One”, as the Vulgate Latin version; the Lord our righteousness, Christ the author of righteousness, who was to bring in an everlasting one; and whose coming was to be, and was, as the rain, as the former and latter rain to the earth, (^{<206B>}Hosea 6:3), and who came from heaven to earth to fulfil all righteousness; and with him came an abundance of blessings of rich grace, even all spiritual blessings, peace, pardon, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life, which were poured down from above upon the sons of men; thus the Holy Ghost, the spirit of prophecy, proceeds at once from Cyrus to Christ, from the type to the antitype, from the temporal redemption of the Jews to the spiritual redemption of the Lord’s people; and these words are to be considered, not as a petition of the prophet, or of the church, for the coming of Christ, and salvation by him; but a promise and prophecy of it. Aben Ezra and Kimchi take them to be an address to the angels of heaven to assist in the affair of the salvation of Israel; these did drop down or descend, even a great multitude of them, at the incarnation of Christ, and published the good tidings of good things that came by him:

let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation; or the “Saviour”, as the Vulgate Latin version; Christ the author of salvation, who was appointed to be the salvation or Saviour of his people, who came to effect it, and has obtained it; heaven and earth were both concerned in bringing forth this “fruit” of righteousness and salvation, as the word^{f888} rendered “bring forth” signifies; (see ^{<204D>}Isaiah 4:2). Christ was the Lord from heaven, and yet made of a woman in the lowest parts of the earth: Christ, who is the “truth”, sprung “out of the earth”; and he, who is the author of “righteousness”, looked down from heaven, (^{<195I>}Psalms 85:11) and it

follows: “let righteousness spring up together”; or “bud forth”^{f889} as a branch; one of the names of the Messiah, frequent in prophecy:

I the Lord have created it; or that, both righteousness and salvation; or Christ as man, the author of both, whom God appointed, and raised up, and sent to be the Redeemer and Saviour of his people. The Targum interprets this of the resurrection of the dead, paraphrasing the whole thus;

“let the heavens from above minister, and the clouds flow with good; let the earth open, and the dead revive; and let righteousness be revealed together; I the Lord have created them.”

Ver. 9. *Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker*, &c.] That contends with him, enters into a controversy, and disputes with him, or litigates a point with him; quarrels with his purposes and decrees; murmurs and repines at his providences, and finds fault with his dispensations: this seems to have respect to the murmurs, quarrels, and contests of the Jews about Christ, the author of righteousness and salvation, when he should appear:

let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth; let men strive with men, who are as earthen vessels made of the same mass and lump, and so are upon an equal foot, and a match for each other; but let them not have the insolence and vanity to strive with their Maker, who, as he has made them, can dash them in pieces as a potter’s vessel:

shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what makest thou? yet this might be said with as much propriety and justice as that the Jews should quarrel with God for not sending the Messiah as a temporal prince to rescue them from the Roman yoke; but in a mean and humble manner, in the form of a servant, as a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs; and, at last, became obedient to the death of the cross, the way in which he was to be the Saviour of men: or

thy work, he hath no hands? or thus, or “thy work say unto thee, he, the potter, hath no hands”; no power nor skill to make me; I can make myself: as weakly, as wickedly, and as foolishly did the Jews, seeing no need of the Saviour sent them, nor of his righteousness and salvation, argue for justification by their own works, and in favour of their self-sufficiency to work out their own salvation. The Targum takes the words to be spoken to idolaters, and paraphrases the former part thus;

“woe to him who thinks to contend in judgment against the words of his Creator, and trusts that earthen images shall profit him, which are made out of the dust of the earth, &c.”

and there are many interpreters who think they are spoken against the idolatrous Babylonians, particularly against Belshazzar, as Kimchi; and others, against Astyages, a king of Persia, who was angry with the father and mother of Cyrus, and sought to have slain him as soon as born^{f890}.

Ver. 10. *Woe unto him that saith unto his father, what begettest thou?* &c.] That quarrels with him, and complains of him, because he was not of the other sex, or not so wise, or so rich, or so handsome, as others:

or to the woman; disdaining to call her mother:

what hast thou brought forth? equally as absurd and impious it was in the Jews to quarrel with Christ for his conversation with sinners, and the reception of them; or for the regeneration of such persons; or to find fault with God for the conversion of the Gentiles, and resent it, and be angry at it, as they were; (see ^{<5109>}Romans 10:19,20 ^{<5216>}1 Thessalonians 2:16).

Ver. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, &c.]* He whose name alone is Jehovah, who is glorious in holiness, the Sanctifier of his people, and the Maker of them, both as creatures, and new creatures:

ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me; these words are not spoken to idolaters, or the idolatrous Jews, or those of them that were inclined to idolatry; directing them to ask of the Lord, and not of their idols, things to come, which they were not able to show, and to seek to him for, and insist upon the performance of his promises to them, his children, and creatures; but to the spiritual Israel of God, as the preface shows, directing them to inquire after things future, concerning his children and people, especially among the Gentiles, whom the carnal Jews despised; and to expect, and believe, and even as it were demand the performance of them, being promised and prophesied of: there are some who are the “sons” of God, not by creation only, or by natural birth, or by desert, or merely by profession, but by adopting grace; which is a very great and excellent privilege, preferable to civil or national adoption, or to the highest rank of sonship among men; a blessing which continues forever, and entitles to eternal life: and these become the work of the Lord’s hands in regeneration; they are made new creatures; they are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus; whatever is

wrought in them is of his operation, faith, hope, love, and every grace, which make up that good work which shall be performed until the day of Christ: first, men are the sons of God by adoption, and then they are his workmanship in regeneration; and the latter because of the former, and of which the latter is an evidence: now there were and are “things to come”, concerning these persons; there were some things to come, and which were to come to pass, and did, in the first times of the Gospel, as the incarnation of Christ, and redemption by him; his sufferings and death, and the glory that should follow; the effusion of Spirit, and the conversion of the Gentiles; all which were for the sake of these “sons” of God, and respected them: and there are other things yet to come concerning them, and will be accomplished in the latter day; some things sad and sorrowful, as the giving the outward court to the Gentiles, the Protestant churches to the Papists, and the slaying of the witnesses; and others desirable and joyful, as the numerous conversions of the Jews and Gentiles; their extensive knowledge of spiritual things, and their abundant peace and prosperity; the increase of brotherly love, their purity, spirituality, holiness, and righteousness; their power, authority, and dominion, both in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ, and their ultimate glory. And now the Lord allows his people, and encourages them to “ask” of him these things; to inquire of him by prayer, and by searching the Scriptures, what these things are that are to come; what of them have been accomplished, and what of them remain to be accomplished, “and how long it will be to the end of these wonders”, (²⁷¹¹⁶Daniel 12:6), and so Jarchi interprets the word, rendered “things to come in the text”, signs and wonders: and they may and should pray for the accomplishment of them; yea, insist upon and demand them. The Lord not only allows his people to put him in remembrance of his promises and prophecies, but to plead for, and, as it were, require the performance of them; and so the words are an encouragement to the importunate prayer of faith. Faith in prayer has great power with God, a kind of command over him; it holds him to his word; it will not let him go without the blessing; nor let him alone till he has made good his promise; nor give him any rest, day nor night, till he has fulfilled the things to come concerning his sons. Some^{f891} read the words by way of interrogation, “do ye ask or question me concerning things to come?” what I intend to do hereafter? am I obliged to give you an account of my secret purposes and designs? or make you acquainted with future events? “do ye, or should ye, command me concerning, my sons and the works of my hands?” will you prescribe to me what I shall do in my family? am I a father, and must I be directed what

to do with my sons? am I the Maker of all men, and must I be told what to do with the work of my hands? what arrogance and insolence is this! but the former reading and sense are best.

Ver. 12. *I have made the earth*, &c.] The Targum adds, “by my Word”; the essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; (see ^{<810B>}Hebrews 11:3); this, with what follows, is said to show that the Lord was able to bring to pass things to come, concerning his children, and the works of his hands, which he allowed his people to inquire of him concerning, and to insist upon the performance of them; since he was the Creator of all things, and had made the earth out of nothing, in the beginning of time, by the word of his power:

and created man upon it; the last and chief of the creation, for the sake of whom the earth was made; and man was made to dwell upon it, manure, and cultivate it:

I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens; as a canopy over the earth, as a curtain and tent to dwell in; a phrase often used to express the greatness and majesty of God; (see ^{<342>}Isaiah 40:22 42:6):

and all their host have I commanded; into being, and to perform their offices regularly and constantly, the sun, moon, and stars, as well as the heavenly host of angels; (see ^{<89B>}Psalm 33:9 148:5), what is it that such a God cannot do? he is able to do more than his people can ask of him, or think to receive from him, (^{<48D>}Ephesians 3:20).

Ver. 13. *I have raised him up in righteousness*, &c.] Though this may be said with some respect to Cyrus, yet chiefly to Christ, of whom Cyrus was a type; him the Lord appointed and determined to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; him he sent forth in time for that purpose, in righteousness or faithfulness to concerning him: or, “unto righteousness”^{f892}, as the Vulgate Latin version; to bring in an everlasting righteousness for the justification of his people: or, “with righteousness”, as the Septuagint version is ^{f893}:

I have raised him up a King with righteousness; a righteous King, a King that reigns in righteousness, as Christ does, and better agrees with him than Cyrus; (see ^{<24B>}Jeremiah 23:5,6):

and I will direct all his ways; or “make them plain”^{f894}; remove all difficulties and obstructions out of his way; he shall succeed and prosper,

as the “pleasure of the Lord did prosper” in the hands of Christ; God being at his right hand as man and Mediator, to direct, counsel, and assist him, and to make him successful:

he shall build my city; not Cyrus, for he did not build the city of Jerusalem, whatever orders he might give for it, (^{<234B>}Isaiah 44:28) though his proclamation only mentions the temple, (^{<150D>}Ezra 1:2-5), but Christ, the builder of the church, often compared to a city, and called the city of God, of which the saints are fellow citizens; and which is built by Christ, upon himself the Rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, (^{<416B>}Matthew 16:18):

and he shall let go my captives, not for price, nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts; the Lord’s people are captives to sin, Satan, and the law; Christ has not only redeemed these captives, but has proclaimed liberty to them, and delivered them from their bondage by his Spirit and grace; and all this freely, not through any merits of theirs, but of his own rich grace and mercy; and though they are redeemed with a price; yet not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ; and whatever their redemption and freedom cost him, it costs them nothing, it is to them without money and without price, (^{<251B>}Isaiah 52:3).

Ver. 14. *Thus saith the Lord*, &c.] The following words are said not to Cyrus, nor to Christ, but to the church, as the feminine pronouns show; and Kimchi observes, they are directed to Jerusalem:

the labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia, and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee; a prophecy of the conversion of many in these nations, who should join themselves to the churches of Christ, formed among them, and make use of their riches, got by merchandise, labour, and industry, for the support of the interest of religion; and had its accomplishment in part, in the first times of the Gospel, which was brought into Egypt, as it is said, by the Evangelist Mark; and by which, no doubt, many were converted and formed into a church state, and others joined them. The Ethiopian eunuch, baptized by Philip, carried it into his country, where it also met with success, was embraced and professed; as it will be more so in the latter day, when the kings of Seba and Sheba shall offer gifts to Christ, and bring their riches into the church, the same with the Sabeans here; (see ^{<197D>}Psalm 72:10,15), who are said to be “men of stature”; that is, of a large and tall stature, as the men of Seba are said to be by other^{f895} authors; or, “men of

measure”^{f896}. The Targum renders it, “men of merchandise”; who used measures in trade and business: “and they shall be thine”: give up themselves to the church, become members of it, and submit to its rule and discipline:

they shall come after thee; follow the church and its pastors, as they have them, for examples. The Targum is,

“they shall walk after thy word;”

be directed, guided, and governed by the church:

in chains they shall come over; being subdued and conquered by the grace of God, shall come in the chains of efficacious grace, drawn with the cords of love, and bands of a man; and yet shall come willingly, being made willing in the day of the power of divine grace upon their souls:

and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee; this is not to be understood of religious worship and invocation, such as is made to God, who only is the object of adoration and prayer in that sense; but is only expressive of their profound veneration and respect for the church of God, beseeching that it would receive them into, though unworthy of, its communion; (see ^{<3423>}Isaiah 49:23 ^{<4119>}Revelation 3:9):

saying, surely God is in thee, and there is none else, there is no god; induced thus to come to the church, and show all this respect unto her, from this consideration, that God is in the midst of her, of a truth, her name being “Jehovah Shammah”, the Lord is there; here he grants his presence, here his word is preached, and ordinances administered; and hither converts flock, in hope of enjoying the same blessing also, being fully satisfied there is no other God but in Zion, (^{<3823>}Zechariah 8:23) (^{<2685>}Ezekiel 48:35). This passage of Scripture is thus explained in the Jewish Chronicles^{f897}: “the labour of Egypt”, that is, Pharaoh king of Egypt: “and the merchandise of Ethiopia”, that is, Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia: “and the Sabians, men of stature”, these are their armies:

they shall come over to thee, this is Jerusalem:

they shall be thine, peace being now made with thee:

they shall come after thee, that is, Hezekiah:

in chains they shall come over, in chains and bracelets:

they shall bow down to thee, and make supplication to thee, they shall give praise to God in the midst of thee, and say,

surely God is in thee.

Ver. 15. *Verily thou art a God that hideth thyself*, &c.] Who hid himself from the Gentile world for some hundreds of years, who had no knowledge of the true God, lived without him in the world, and whose times of ignorance God overlooked, and suffered them to walk in their own ways; though now he would make himself known by his Gospel sent among them, and blessed for the conversion of them. He is also a God that hides himself from his own people at times, withdraws his gracious presence, and withholds the communication of his love and grace. These seem to be the words of the prophet, speaking his own experience, and that of other saints: or rather of the church, upon the access of the Gentiles to her, declaring what the Lord had been to them in former times; but now had showed himself to them in a way of grace and mercy. Some render it “thou art the hidden God”^{f898}; invisible in his nature; incomprehensible in his essence; not to be found out to perfection, nor to be traced in his providential dispensations; his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. It may be applied to Christ in his state of humiliation; for though he was God manifest in the flesh, yet the glory of his deity was seen but by a few, being hid in the coarse veil of humanity; he appearing in the form of a servant, who was in the form of God, and equal to him; and to him the following words agree:

O God of Israel, the Saviour; for he is God over all, and the God of his spiritual Israel in an especial manner; and the Saviour of them from sin, wrath, condemnation, and death, by his obedience, sufferings, and death; or if it is to be understood of God the Father, who is the God of Israel, he is the Saviour of them by his Son.

Ver. 16. *They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them*, &c.] This refers not to any persons spoken of before; not to Israel or the church, or converts among the Gentiles that came to her; but to those that follow, of whom the same is said in other words:

they shall go to confusion together, that are makers of idols; the Targum is,

“worshippers of images;”

both may be designed: this refers to the first times of the Gospel, and its coming into the Gentile world, and its success there; when the oracles of the Heathens were struck dumb; idols and idol temples were forsaken; and Paganism was abolished in the Roman empire; and when the gods they served could not help them, but they fled to the rocks to hide them from the wrath of God and the Lamb, (~~cf~~ Revelation 6:15-17).

Ver. 17. *But Israel shall be saved in the Lord*, &c.] Not the carnal seed of Israel, or the natural posterity of Jacob, for only a remnant of them were saved; indeed, in the latter day, when there will be a general conversion of them, there will be a general salvation of them,

all Israel shall be saved; but here the spiritual Israel of God are meant, such as God has appointed unto salvation; who are taken into the covenant of his grace, in which their salvation is secured; who are his spiritual people, whom Christ saves from their sins; who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, and are called by his grace; who believe in him, and hope in the Lord: these “shall be saved”: there is a certainty of their salvation, and not a mere probability and possibility of it only. It is not they “may be”, but they “shall be” saved; it is the will of God they should, whose will cannot be resisted; they are the purchase of Christ, which he will never lose, and the Spirit is the earnest and pledge of salvation to them: and it is “in” and “by the Lord” they are saved, not in of themselves; their destruction is of themselves, but their salvation is of the Lord; and they are saved as they are in him, and owing to their being in him; they are chosen in him, and hence spring all the blessings of grace and salvation to them; they are representatively in him, as their federal Head; they are openly in him, in effectual calling; and they are justified in him, and by his righteousness, and so saved; and being in him, there is no condemnation to them, nor can they ever come into it. They are saved “by” the Lord; by the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; by Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word; by his obedience, sufferings, and death; by his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; and by his interceding life, and that “with an everlasting salvation”; which is distinguished, by this epithet, from a temporal one, and is opposed to eternal damnation, the desert of sin; it is the salvation of the immortal soul, and includes in it grace and glory, which are perpetual and everlasting; and the duration of it is owing to the perpetuity of Christ’s person, office, and grace: or, “with a salvation of ages”, or “worlds”^{f899}:

ye shall not be ashamed, nor confounded, world without end; or, “unto the ages of eternity”^{f900}; that is, such who believe in Christ, and are saved by him, they shall not be ashamed, though the makers and worshippers of idols will; they shall not be confounded, neither in this world, nor in the other; they shall not be ashamed of Christ, his word, and ordinances, nor of their faith and hope in him, or of their sufferings for him; they shall not be ashamed in the resurrection morn, their vile bodies being fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ, when others shall rise to shame and everlasting contempt; nor shall they be ashamed at the coming of Christ, and when they stand before him, being clothed with white robes, and having on the wedding garment; when they shall be introduced into his own and his Father’s kingdom and glory, into the world of happiness, which will know no end.

Ver. 18. *For thus saith the Lord, that created the heavens, &c.*] These words, and what follow, are the words of the Son of God, of the Lord the Saviour, in whom Israel is saved with an everlasting salvation; and this is said to assure them of it, as well as to distinguish himself from the gods of the Gentiles, who made not the heavens and the earth, as he had done; for by the Word of the Lord, the essential Word of God, were the heavens made in the beginning; (see ^{<B76>}Psalm 33:6 ^{<S10>}Hebrews 1:10):

God himself, that formed the earth, and made it, he hath established it; the Saviour is God himself, truly and properly God, who has all the perfections of deity in him; and this appears as from his creation of the heavens, so from his forming, making and establishing the earth; he made the chaos of the earth out of nothing; he formed that chaos he made into a beautiful order, and prepared, as the last word^{f901} signifies, fitted, and furnished it with everything convenient for man and beast:

he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; the earth indeed was “tohu” when it was first created, (^{<C102>}Genesis 1:2), which word is used of the chaos of the earth first made, here rendered “in vain”; but then it was not created to continue so, nor did it continue so; for though it was first without form, it was soon formed in a beautiful manner, and fitted for the habitation of men and beasts, and especially the former; and more especially for the habitation of the saints, those sons of men, with whom the delights of Christ were from eternity, and whom he foresaw would dwell in the habitable parts of the earth, which was a pleasure to him; and for the sake of them was it made to be inhabited, and not by them with the

wicked promiscuously only as now, but when purified, and refined by fire, to be the habitation of the righteous, with Christ at the head of them; as will be the case in the thousand years' reign:

I am the Lord, there is none else; the one Jehovah with the Father and the Spirit, and there is no other that is the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Ver. 19. *I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth, &c.*] In a private whisper, in a muttering manner, and out of the belly, as the Heathen priests did; and from out of cells, dens, and caverns of the earth, from whence the oracles of Heathen deities were delivered; but in a free, open, clear, and public manner, before multitudes, in the face of all men, or where there was a great concourse of people: so Christ delivered the law on Mount Sinai, in an audible manner, attended with a multitude of angels, and before all the people; and when here on earth he said nothing in secret, but openly to the world, in the synagogues and temple of the Jews, where they resorted in great numbers, (^{<481D>}John 18:20) and ordered his disciples also to publish on the housetops what they heard with their ears, (^{<401D>}Matthew 10:27):

I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain; that is, he never suffered the seed of Jacob, Israelites indeed, praying Jacobs and prevailing Israels, the true worshippers of him, to seek him in vain; to pray unto and worship him to no purpose, or without fruit to themselves; for all such who seek him early and earnestly, heartily and diligently, and where he may be found, always find him; he receives them, and not rejects them; and they receive that from him which is worth seeking after, and amply rewards all their trouble. The Targum is,

“nor have I said to the seed of the house of Jacob in vain, seek my fear:”

I the Lord speak righteousness; the word of righteousness, the doctrine of justification by his own righteousness; that which he wrought out by his obedience, sufferings, and death, he declared and brought near in the ministry of the word; (see ^{<246B>}Isaiah 46:13). The Targum renders it, “truth”; grace and truth came by Christ, (^{<401D>}John 1:17):

I declare things that are right; according to right reason, agreeably to the word of God, both law and Gospel, fit for men to receive, and what made for his own and his Father's glory; (see ^{<2086>}Proverbs 8:6,18).

Ver. 20. *Assemble yourselves, and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations, &c.*] Not that escaped the sword of Cyrus's army, the Chaldeans; nor the Jews that escaped out of Babylon and other countries, by his means; but the remnant, according to the election of grace among the Gentiles; such who were called out of Heathenish darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel, and escaped the idolatries that others continued in; these are called and summoned together, as to observe the grace of God to themselves, so to labour to convince others of their gross ignorance and stupidity in worshipping idols, and to judge and pass sentence on the obstinate among them:

they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image; or that "lift up" or "carry the wood of their graven image"^{f902}; the inside of whose graven image is wood, though covered with some metal which is graved; and for a man to carry such an image on his shoulders, either in procession or in order to fix it in some proper place for adoration, argues great ignorance and stupidity; such persons can have no knowledge of deity, that can believe that a log of wood, covered with gold or silver, graved by art and man's device, and which they are obliged to carry upon their shoulders, can be a god, or a fit object of worship:

and pray to a god that cannot save; itself, nor them; cannot hear their prayers, nor return an answer to them; cannot help and assist them in distress, nor deliver them out of their troubles; and therefore it must be the height of madness and folly to pray unto it.

Ver. 21. *Tell ye, and bring them near, and let them take counsel together, &c.*] Tell them what I say of their ignorance and stupidity; and gather them all together, their gods, their makers, and their worshippers, and let them lay their heads together, and consult what proof they are able to give of their divinities, particularly by foretelling things to come:

who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? that is, who of all their gods or priests have ever declared this or anyone thing at any distance of time before it came to pass? either this everlasting salvation of my people, or the redemption by Cyrus, which was a type of it, and was spoken of beforehand? have ever any of them foretold anything like this, and it came to pass as predicted? not one of them.

Have not I the Lord? he had. Christ, by his Spirit in the prophets, signified before hand his sufferings and his death, and the glory that should follow,

(~~1~~1 Peter 1:11) and when he was here on earth, he foretold his being betrayed to the chief priests; his being delivered to the Gentiles; his scourging and crucifixion, and resurrection from the dead; all which came to pass exactly as he had predicted, (~~1~~Matthew 20:18,19):

and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour: there is “none beside me”, Christ is the one God with the Father and Spirit, and there is no other; nor any Saviour of lost sinners, but him; there is salvation in him, and in no other; and he is “just” in things pertaining to God, in satisfying his justice, and fulfilling his law; he was set forth as Mediator to declare his righteousness, and which is displayed in the work of redemption by him; so that God is just, while he is the justifier of him that believes in him, (~~1~~Romans 3:25,26).

Ver. 22. *Look unto me*, &c.] And not to idols, nor to any creature, nor to the works of your hands; to your own righteousness and doings; to your wounds; to your tears and humiliations; to your own hearts and frames; to your graces and the exercise of them; all must be looked off of, and Christ only looked unto by a direct act of faith, for righteousness, for pardon, for all supplies of grace, and for glory and eternal happiness. He is to be looked unto as the Son of God, whose glory is the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world; as the only Mediator between God and man; as the Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners; and considered in all his offices and relations: under all circumstances he is to be looked to; when in the dark, look to him for light; when dead and lifeless, look to him for life; when weak, look to him for strength; when sick, look to him for healing; when hungry, look to him for food; and when disconsolate, look to him for comfort; for none ever look to him and are ashamed or disappointed, they have what they look for; and as it is profitable, so pleasant to look to Jesus, and he himself is well pleased with it; and therefore here encourages to it, adding,

and be ye saved; or, “ye shall be saved”^{f903}: Christ is set up in the Gospel, and the ministration of it to be looked at, that men may be saved by him; and it is the will of God, not only that men should look to him, but that whosoever sees him, and believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life: the ministers of the Gospel are appointed to show men the way of salvation by Christ, and to assure them that he that believes in him shall be saved; and saints in all ages have looked unto him, and have been

saved by him; and therefore this may be taken for a sure and certain thing, that such that look to Christ, as the Israelites did to the brasen serpent, the type of him, shall be saved, (^{scrib}John 3:14,15):

all the ends of the earth; all that live at the furthest part of the earth; Christ has a people there, the Father has given him for his possession, and which are the purchase of his blood, and for whose sins he became the propitiation; and to these he sends his Gospel and his ministers, to find them out, and publish salvation to them, and to assure them, that however distant they are, both as to place and state, yet through looking to him by faith they shall be saved, even though they are the worst and vilest of sinners:

for I am God, and there is none else; and so mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost, all that come to him, and to God by him, be they where they will; since he is truly God, there is virtue enough in his blood to pardon sin, and cleanse from it; and in his righteousness to justify from all sin; and in his sacrifice to expiate it; and therefore sensible sinners may safely look to him, and venture their souls on him. The Targum is,

“look unto my Word, and be ye saved, &c.”

Ver. 23. *I have sworn by myself*, &c.] Christ being the true God, he could swear by no greater, (^{scrib}Hebrews 6:13), this shows that what follows, and is here sworn unto, is of great importance, and strictly true, and would certainly be accomplished:

the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness; both what goes before, that such that look unto him shall be saved; and also what follows, concerning the subjection of every creature to him; this was what he had resolved in his mind, and declared in his word, by promise and prophecy, should be; and as it was agreeably to truth and justice, it should certainly, and in faithfulness, be performed, and shall not return void and without effect, but be exactly and punctually accomplished:

that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear; that is, everyone, or at least the generality of mankind, shall be subject to Christ, embrace his Gospel, submit to his ordinances, profess his name, and serve and worship him; this will be when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, and the Jews are converted: the apostle quotes this passage, and applies it to the judgment day, when all, whether they will or not, shall confess that

Christ is God, which he so often asserts in this context; (see ^{f910}Romans 14:10,11 ^{f910}Philippians 2:10,11).

Ver. 24. *Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, &c.*] That is, one and everyone of these that shall be brought to submit to Christ, and to confess him, shall declare it as their faith, that in Christ alone is their “righteousness or righteousnesses”^{f904}; that they have a full and complete righteousness in him, and which serves for many; consisting of the holiness of his nature, the obedience of his life, and his sufferings of death; by which the law is honoured, justice satisfied, God is well pleased, and they are acquainted and discharged; and which is pure, perfect, and everlasting, is given them of grace, and entitles them to eternal life; and this they have in Christ as their covenant head and representative, and which they come to have by being in him: it is not inherent in them, but is in Christ, by whom it is wrought out, and becomes theirs by the imputation of it to them, and which they receive by faith; and this is an act of faith concerning it here expressed, and which declares the certainty of it, and of interest in it, and excludes all other: for it may be rendered, “only in the Lord”, &c.^{f905}; and seems to be spoken with great joy, in an exulting way, and what may be said at all times; for this righteousness is always in Christ, and “strength” likewise to enable them to exercise every grace; to do the will and work of God; to bear afflictions; to withstand Satan’s temptations, and oppose their own corruptions; and to which they have not sufficient strength in themselves, but there is enough in Christ. Some take these to be the words of the prophet, and differently interpret them. Some thus, as Abendana observes,

“saith the prophet, these future things I know not in a way of wisdom, but by the Lord, who saith unto me, my God of righteousness and strength.”

Aben Ezra thus,

“surely in the Lord that speaketh with me alone are righteousness and strength.”

Joseph Kimchi takes it to be in the form of an oath,

“the prophet said, I swear by the name of the Lord, that unto me he saith, righteousness and strength unto him shall come; as if he had said, the author or doer of righteousness and strength shall draw near to him, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.”

Even to him shall men come: or everyone of the above persons; they shall come to Christ, not merely to his word and ordinances, but to himself by faith; for righteousness and strength; for peace and pardon; for spiritual rest, joy, and comfort; for food and clothing; for all supplies of grace, and for eternal life; or if not in a way of grace now, they shall come to him, and appear before him at the last judgment, whether they will or not.

And all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed; that are incensed against his person, his deity, personality, and divine sonship; against his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction; against his offices, kingdom, and glory; these shall be ashamed, either when they are convinced of the truth of these things now, or however when they shall appear in his glory at the last day. Kimchi connects this verse with the preceding, thus,

“he saith, every tongue shall swear verily by the Lord alone, and not by another god; and so saith God, I have righteousness and strength to give to them that serve me; and all the people who are incensed against me, and reject my service unto that day, then shall they come unto him, and confess before him, and shall be ashamed for what they have done.”

The Targum is,

“in his word they shall confess, and all the people shall be confounded with their idols, who rush upon his people.”

Ver. 25. *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified,* &c.] All the spiritual Israel of God, whether Jews or Gentiles; all the spiritual seed and offspring of Christ, to whom he stands in the relation of the, everlasting Father and federal Head; these being given to him, and being in him, are justified in him from all things; and these, all and everyone, shall be brought to see their need of his righteousness, and look to him for it, and receive it from him by faith; and be manifestatively justified in their own consciences, as they will be openly at the bar of God, before angels and men, hereafter. The Targum is,

““in” or by the Word of the Lord all the seed of Israel shall be justified:”

and shall glory; in Christ, as the Lord their righteousness; not in themselves, in their own righteousness, holiness, wisdom, and strength, but

in this, that Christ is made to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, (~~ROM~~ 1 Corinthians 1:30,31).