



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"The One and Only is NOT a Boxed, Pre-Packaged Limited Edition"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Is 45:1-8; I. 42:6-9; 43:18-19; 44:24-28; Hab. 1:1-2:4; Dan. 5; Rom. 3:4

Israel is sitting in exile, and the Lord has been reassuring them: *"I am Adonai, maker of all things... spreading the earth abroad by Myself"* (Isa 44:24). He speaks and reality moves. He says Jerusalem will be inhabited again, Judah will be rebuilt, the temple will have a foundation again (Isa 44:26–28). That's comfort when it's still future—when it's still "one day." But it's one thing to be comforted by what God says will happen; it's another thing to be comforted when it starts happening. When the Lord "descends to particulars," and the deliverance has a name, and the plan doesn't look like what you expected—suddenly comfort can turn into confusion.

Because the name God puts on the page is Cyrus. *Koresh*. A Gentile. Not an Israelite king, not a prophet, not a priest—an outsider. And we feel the tension because we do the same thing: we try to categorize God. We can take good tools—systems, categories, neat packages—and if we're not careful, we begin to worship our theology instead of the living God. We start acting like the One and Only is a boxed, pre-packaged, limited edition. But Isaiah 45 opens the box and says, "No. You don't get to shrink Him down." He will keep His promises—and He will not be confined to our paradigms.

1. GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES, BUT HE REFUSES OUR BOXES

The Lord ends Isaiah 44 with this unstoppable declaration: *"I am Adonai... stretching out the heavens alone"* (Isa 44:24). He confirms His word, He fulfills His counsel, He speaks rebuilding over ruins (Isa 44:26–28). The comfort is that God's promises don't wobble just because circumstances do. If He said He would restore, He will restore. He is not improvising. He is not reacting. He is speaking.

But the shock is **how** He speaks it into history: *"Thus says Adonai to **His anointed**, to Cyrus"* (Isa 45:1). As if calling Cyrus "shepherd" wasn't shocking enough (Isa 44:28), the Lord intensifies it: *mashiach*—"anointed one." That title had been used for Israel's priests, prophets, and kings, and now God places it on an outsider. Why? Because Isaiah has been pressing this point all along: God is not the Lord of Israel alone; He is the Lord of the whole world. And Israel's election was never "for Israel only"—*"I will give you as a... light to the nations"* (Isa 42:6). God will keep His promises to Israel, but He will not be managed by Israel's expectations—or ours.

2. GOD'S "UNEXPECTED INSTRUMENTS" DON'T MEAN GOD IS UNTRUSTWORTHY

This is where people get uncomfortable: "If God can do something I didn't predict, can I trust Him?" And Isaiah would say: you're confusing **unpredictable methods** with an **unfaithful character**. God's character never changes, but God is not locked into *your* script. Habakkuk had to learn that. He cries out because everything is twisted among God's people, and God answers, essentially, "I'm going to do something you never would've guessed." The Lord says He will use the Chaldeans (Hab 1:5–6). Habakkuk objects—"They're worse than us!"—and the Lord replies that, *actually*, they're worse than Habakkuk even realizes, and yet the righteous will live by

trusting Him through it (Hab 2:4). God disciplines in unexpected ways. And in Isaiah 45, God restores in unexpected ways.

Listen to how personal and decisive God makes it with Cyrus: *“I will go before you... I will shatter bronze doors and cut through iron bars”* (Isa 45:2). This isn’t Cyrus being amazing; this is God clearing the path. Doors, gates, kings, nations—none of it can halt what God has purposed. And then the Lord says, *“I will give you treasures of darkness... so you may know that I am Adonai... who calls you by your name”* (Isa 45:3). Cyrus is being confronted with the living God. And Israel is being reminded: “I know what I’m doing. You don’t need a predictable God. You need a true God. Fix your eyes on Him.”

3. THE ONE AND ONLY IS BEHIND THE WHOLE RANGE OF LIFE—AND HE’S DOING IT TO REVEAL HIMSELF. The Lord stacks the language until you can’t miss it: *“I am Adonai—there is no other. Besides Me there is no God”* (Isa 45:5). Then He says something that humbles our categories: *“I will strengthen you (speaking of Cyrus), though you have not known Me”* (Isa 45:5). God can use someone who doesn’t acknowledge Him. That doesn’t make Cyrus righteous; it makes God sovereign. And then the purpose widens: *“so they may know, from the rising... to the setting... that there is no one besides Me”* (Isa 45:6). So that Cyrus may know. So that Israel may know. So that the world may know.

Then comes the line people stumble over, and Isaiah refuses to soften it: *“I form light and create darkness. I make shalom and create calamity. I, Adonai, do all these things”* (Isa 45:7). This is not saying God causes moral wickedness in human hearts; it’s saying there is no cosmic tug-of-war where a rival deity thwarts Him. *Shalom*—wholeness, well-being—and the hard seasons of calamity are not “outside of God,” as if He meant good but couldn’t pull it off. Even the “bad day” is not proof God lost control. It may be discipline, it may be formation, it may be mystery—but it is not *in spite of God*. That’s why Job can worship and say, *“Adonai gave and Adonai has taken away; blessed be the Name of Adonai”* (Job 1:21). And Isaiah ends this section with a lyrical call: *“Rain down, O heavens... let salvation sprout... I, Adonai, have created it”* (Isa 45:8). The purpose of God’s uniqueness isn’t a dry argument—it’s deliverance. He is doing right by saving His people.

CONCLUSION:

So here’s the question Is. 45 puts in our lap: where have you been trying to keep God “safe” by keeping Him small? Where have you been saying, “Lord, I’ll trust You—as long as You do it like this... through this kind of person... in this kind of timeline... with this kind of outcome”? That’s not faith; that’s control with religious language. And the Lord, in mercy, shatters our boxes—not to confuse us, but to free us from worshiping our own frameworks. *“I am Adonai—there is no other”* (Is 45:5). He will keep His promises. He just won’t be confined to your categories.

If you’re in a season you don’t understand—doors you can’t open, bars you can’t cut through, darkness you can’t interpret—hear the Lord saying, *“I will go before you”* (Isa 45:2). And if you feel disqualified because you’ve “not known Him” like you should—look at Cyrus: God calls by name, God gives mercy, God reveals Himself (Isa 45:3–5). Come home to the One and Only. Fix your eyes on Him. And ask Him to “untwist” your understanding, until your trust is anchored not in your explanations, but in His character.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Where do you most feel tempted to “pre-package” God—what are the assumptions you carry about how He *must* act?
2. Why do you think God chose to highlight Cyrus so strongly (shepherd, then anointed) instead of choosing someone who “fit” Israel’s expectations? (Isa 44:28; 45:1)
3. What’s the difference between God being “unpredictable” and God being “untrustworthy”? How does Isa 45:2–6 address that fear?
4. How does Isa 45:7 challenge a “two forces” view of life (good god vs. bad god), and how does it reshape how you interpret hardship?
5. What would it look like this week to “fix your eyes on Him” instead of living off what you think you already know about Him?

CLOSING PRAYER:

ADONAI You are the One and Only—there is no other. Forgive us for trying to shrink You down into something we can manage, something predictable, something that fits our comfort. Forgive us for when we’ve worshiped our frameworks more than we’ve worshiped Your face. Untwist our thinking. Break the boxes that keep us from seeing You rightly, but never let us doubt Your character—Your goodness, Your righteousness, Your faithfulness to what You have spoken.

And Lord, for those of us walking through doors that won’t open and bars that won’t break, we ask You to go before us as You promised. Make the crooked places straight. Give us faith to trust You when You restore in ways we never would have scripted. Let salvation sprout. Let righteousness spring up. Rain down Your justice and mercy over Your people. We fix our eyes on You—Hineni—here we are.

B’Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.