

The Mission of God

Isaiah 45:20-25

Isaiah 45 begins by talking about Cyrus – a pagan king whom God will use to do his will in the world: because it is God who is in sovereign control. The implications of that keep coming in this chapter.

Only One God

God continually reminds us in this passage that he alone is God. The people of the day thought gods were territorial – different gods for different nations. We can be tempted to think the same: that it's ok for different people to have a different god from us. Or we might think some things are too difficult for God, or that other things might be more fulfilling. But here God says he is the only God.

That means anything else or any other god we might give our lives to, or worship, or look to for ultimate satisfaction is an empty idol. It is powerless to give us what we are looking for.

But instead of God destroying those who worship idols, he offers something much better.

Inviting the World

God calls on all people everywhere to turn to him and be saved. He is the only way to be saved – and he invites all to be rescued by him. Sadly, Isaiah says that not everyone will respond positively to that invitation. Some will turn away and face shame. But others will respond – and they will be welcomed as members of God's family. They will be justified: declared not guilty.

But isn't shame what we deserve? How can any of us be declared 'not guilty'?

Dying to Save

Paul takes what Isaiah writes here about every knee bowing before God and applies it to Jesus. God, who issues this world-wide invite, has come as a man – Jesus. He humbled himself to death on the cross to save us. The one who is everything, made himself nothing – to rescue us. He was abandoned by God that we might be welcomed into his family. He was made a thing of shame that we might be clothed. He became a curse that we might be declared not guilty. He is the one who makes this world-wide invitation possible.

The implications of this are significant.

What will you do?

1. If you are not yet a Christian – become one. Put your trust in Jesus, not in yourself. Accept his invitation.
2. Go: Go into the world and share the invitation.
3. Send: Enable others to go by giving sacrificially to missions.
4. Pray: Pray that God would send workers into the harvest field.