

**Isaiah 45:19 - 46:2, 13**

In the Book of Numbers, God leads Israel through the wilderness, and although one generation will die there because of their rebellion, He stays with them throughout.

In this passage there is a reference to the wilderness that's not immediately apparent.

**Isaiah 45:19** - "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right."

"right" = plain, straight, even

"Seek ye me in vain" - vain = *tôhû* - waste, a land blasted by God's judgement, a desert or wilderness

- **Genesis 1:2** - "And the earth was without form (*tôhû*), and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

In fact, the previous verse directly references this:

- **Isaiah 45:18** - "For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain (*tôhû*), he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else."

This could mean that the earth was blasted by God's judgment, perhaps when Satan fell from heaven, then it was re-fashioned.

"dark place of the earth" - Compare Jeremiah's saying, where the "dark place" is equated with the wilderness:

- **Jeremiah 2:31** - "You people of this generation, consider the word of the LORD: Have I been a wilderness to Israel or a land of dense darkness? Why do My people say, 'We are free to roam; we will come to You no more'?"

i.e. God had been open and direct with His people. He did not shroud His sayings in mystical mumbo jumbo as in some of the liturgy of idolatry, like the pagan oracles hidden in caves or darkened shrines. He manifested Himself on Mount Sinai to them all. They could easily find Him - He appeared as a pillar of fire and cloud to lead them.

But like the doomed generation in the wilderness, the generation of the exile turned from God and was chastised for trusting to idols.

- **Deuteronomy 30:11-14** - "This commandment which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off... . But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it"

- **John 18:20** - "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing"

Earlier God is described as "hidden" (verse 15) but this is in respect to his invisibility to humans in contrast to the idols, which men can touch and feel.

**Isaiah 45:20** - "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save."

This is the same command given to the Levites as they are numbered in **Numbers 3:6** - "Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest"

Here God is calling all - Israel, but also all those who have "escaped of the nations" - which could be the Jewish remnant who have returned from exile, or all believers who have been drawn from the Gentile peoples in this last time -

**Isaiah 45:21** - "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me."

i.e. no other divinity can prophesy the future as God has done, which proves He is unique.

**Isaiah 45:22** - "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."

Targum: "look unto my Word, and be ye saved"

To look away from any virtue in ourselves or any other god or philosophy, but look only at Him, meaning Jesus the Messiah on the cross. It means to look with believing faith:

- **Numbers 24:9** - "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

- **John 3:14-16** - "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"all the ends of the earth" - the whole world, all the world's people

**Isaiah 45:23** - "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

At the end, everyone will swear allegiance to Jesus as Lord.

- **Psalm 72:11** - "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him."

- **Philippians 2:10** - "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,"

- **Romans 14:11-12** - "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God."

- **Hebrews 2:8-9** - "But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Like the Levites, we are given a "charge" -

- **1 Timothy 6:13-15** - "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;"

**Isaiah 45:24** - "Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed."

Targum: "in his word they shall confess, and all the people shall be confounded with their idols, who rush upon his people"

**Isaiah 45:25** - "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

Targum: "in" or by the Word of the Lord all the seed of Israel shall be justified"

- **Jeremiah 23:6** - "In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is His name by which He will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness."

- **1 Corinthians 1:30-31** - "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."..."

### The Humiliated Idols

In contrast to the Kohathites, who are charged with carrying the sacred vessels and furniture of the Tabernacle in **Numbers 4**, the pagan gods - being transported on beasts - are shown unable to even carry their own waste in their bowels, without excreting in uncontrollable diarrhea because of fear - i.e. to "stoop" and "bow down."

**Isaiah 46:1-2** - "Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast.

They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity."

God goes on to contrast his "carrying" of Israel in the following verses. Then:

**Isaiah 46:13** - "I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."

Rabbi David Kimchi, medieval Spain - "the salvation I will give to them shall be glory to me"