

# The Unknown

## Isaiah 45:8-9

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#### I. From the Unknown v. 1

##### a. Cyrus

##### i. Anointed

1. Cyrus would easily conquer other nations (Isa. 45:1b), with God's help (v. 2), and would receive wealth from the nations he overcame (v. 3). This he did in conquering Lydia and Babylon. All this would be for **the sake of Jacob**, God's **Chosen** People (see comments on 41:8–9). And even though Cyrus would enjoy a special relationship with God (God called him **by name**; cf. 43:1) and was honored by God, he still was not a believer for he did **not acknowledge** the Lord as the true God.
2. the work of Cyrus is a manifestation of the power of Yahweh, which the whole world can see
3. But for the prophet, Yahweh is the power behind the conquests of Cyrus; he grants Cyrus world supremacy in order that he may restore Israel. We have no record that Cyrus ever recognized Yahweh (vs. 3);

##### ii. Taken Right Hand

##### 1. Subdue Nations

- a. Besides issuing a decree permitting the captives to return home, **Cyrus** also avenged God's wrath on the **nations**. Amazingly the Lord called Cyrus **His anointed**. The word "anointed" referred to the relationship Israel's first two kings, Saul and David, had with God (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:6). Since Israel in exile had no king, Cyrus functioned in a sense as her king (the anointed one) to bring about blessing. Like the Messiah (lit., "the Anointed One") who would come after him, Cyrus would have a twofold mission: to free the people, and to bring God's judgment on unbelievers.

##### 2. Loose Loins of Kings

3. In Cyrus' day the Lord was not universally acknowledged, but eventually He will be (cf. Phil. 2:10–11). People will realize that all that happens-**light** (life), **darkness** (death), **prosperity**, and

**disaster** (not “evil” as in the  $\kappa\upsilon\upsilon$ ; cf. Amos 3:6)—comes from God. As the sovereign **LORD** of the universe He can **do** everything

## II. From the Top v. 8

- a. Drip Down - BDB suggests that *rā‘ap* and *nāzal* both mean ‘trickle’ or ‘drip’, but more likely both suggest a much more abundant flow of water
  - i. From Above
    1. Rather their miraculous and abundant production of rain and crops provides a simile for the imminent miraculous and abundant accomplishment of Yhwh’s purpose by the power of Yhwh’s word (cf 54:9–10, where *šālôm* also recurs
    2. version of the commission to heavenly aides and earthly agents such as Cyrus, who have responsibility to see that Yhwh’s right purpose is put into effect.
- b. Pour Down
  - i. Righteousness
    - 1.
- c. Open Up
  - i. Salvation to Bear Fruit
    1. Salvation- saving traditionally right, upright Salvation that comes from God
    2. Righteousness to Spring Up
      - a. Only here are the verbs used theologically in connection with right and deliverance.
- d. I have Created It
  - i. God’s desire and will is that the heaven and the clouds should shower down righteousness on the earth like rain, that the earth should “open wide” and produce salvation and righteousness (55:10). This metaphorical expression of God’s desire was intended to encourage the prophet’s audience to trust him. The audience not only knows some details about what God will do to establish his plans (44:24–45:7); they also know God’s deep desires for this plan to be implemented. This fertility language reminds one of God’s plans to bless the land (Deut 28:11–12), which happens when God removes his curse (Deut 28:23–24). But here God is not talking just about material blessing or even the deliverance from some enemy. The full extent of this promise will be seen when God one day establishes a period of salvation and justice on the earth for all humanity to enjoy (2:1–4; 42:1–4). As sure as “I am the LORD,” that is how sure the audience can be that God’s righteousness will invade the world of humanity and creatively transform it into a place of righteousness.

### III. Not From You v. 9

- a. Quarrels - to **attack someone** (with reproaches), dispute with someone
  - i. Maker
    - 1. They proclaim the legitimacy of YHWH's choice in terms of his sovereign right as Lord to choose how he will fulfill his promises to Israel. Some in Israel thought YHWH should use Israelite armies and an Israelite king
- b. Earthenware
  - i. Vessels of earth
- c. Clay – create , form
  - i. Clay - Is 29:16; 64:8; Jer 18:6; Rom 9:20, 21 **material for making vessels**
  - ii. Potter
    - 1. What are You Doing
      - a. The unthinkable is happening: clay protests the potter's intentions; someone protests the parents' conception of a child. Just as astonishing are the complaints of the exiles, who cannot see YHWH's redemption in the coming of the Persians (v. 13)
- d. Thing
  - i. You have no Hands