

# ISAIAH

## ISAIAH 45:22-25, THE SAVIOR OF JEW AND GENTILE, PART 3

Next, God reveals a specific revelation concerning the truth and the certainty of Gentile justification salvation. This is nothing new in the book of Isaiah. Prior to this verse, Isaiah has predicted Gentile salvation no less than 7 times (Is. 2:2-4, 9:1, 11:10, 19:23-25, 25:6-9, 27:13, 42:1-4) and there will be more to come.

For example, right at the beginning of the book of Isaiah, it has been revealed that the world will travel to Jerusalem, the place from which the King will rule the world in peace, to learn the Word of God. Justification salvation will be available to every Gentile living in the Messianic Kingdom. They will still have to believe in the Messiah King, but every one of them will have the opportunity to do so.

Isaiah 2:2-4 <sup>2</sup>Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. <sup>3</sup>And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.

In the same way, at the end of the book, it has been revealed that Gentiles from all over the world will come to Jerusalem to see for themselves the glory of God and to proclaim that glory among the nations.

Isaiah 66:18-19 <sup>18</sup>"For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory. <sup>19</sup>"I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations.

"In many OT texts the unrepentant and unbelieving world has destruction meted out on it. But the point here is that salvation is not the sole preserve of the Israelites whose God the Lord is. Isaiah's logic is also inexorable here. If the Lord is the sole God of the whole world and if he is a savior, then he must be the savior of the whole world as well" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 223].

Isaiah 45:22 <sup>22</sup>"Turn [פְּנֵיהֶם] to Me and be saved, all the ends [אַחֲרֵי] of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.

Only the one true God can save anyone—Jew or Gentile. This verse clearly reveals that every human being has the opportunity to be saved. Turn is an imperative verb and it is

not restricted in scope to the theological construct called the “elect;” every human being has a legitimate, honestly offered choice to make—believe and be saved, or, as this verse states it, turn to God and be saved, or continue in rebellion against Him and remain unsaved which is the only other possible option for any person. While it is true that all men have rebelled against God and are therefore lost, it is equally true that all men can turn to Him and be saved. Hell was made for Satan and his angels; it was not made for man (Mt. 25:41); therefore, no person need end up in the lake of fire. Furthermore, Christ Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2); therefore, the sin barrier has been removed by the death, which was a substitutionary sacrificial death on behalf of mankind, and resurrection of Christ Jesus. This is a universal truth applicable to mankind; Jew and Gentile alike may be saved.

The way the first clause of this sentence is set up in terms of grammar is very important regarding justification salvation for the world outside of Israel.

The Hebrew word for “turn” is an imperative verb form which is a command. “Hebrew often uses an imperative [verb] to express the absolute certainty with which a result will follow: ‘Just turn to me and your salvation will be certain beyond all doubt!’” [J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 292]. “The imperative [be saved] in logical dependence upon a preceding imperative [turn] ... serves to express the distinct assurance or promise that an action or state [be saved] will ensue as the certain consequence of a previous action [turn].... In this case the first imperative [turn] contains, as a rule, a condition, while the second [be saved] declares the consequence which the fulfillment of the condition will involve. The imperative is used for this declaration since the consequence is, as a matter of fact, intended or desired by the speaker” [Gesenius’ *Hebrew Grammar*, 324-325, sec. 110 f and 110 f (a)]. The point being emphatically made by the grammar is this: believe and be saved.

The second point the grammar is making is the passive nature of the salvation. The sense of this verse is “Turn to Me in order that you be saved” [Ronald J. Williams, *William’s Hebrew Syntax*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 135, sec. 519]. “The Niphal [passive or reflexive verb stem] imperative with prefixed vav (ו) indicates purpose [be saved] after the preceding imperative [turn]. The Niphal probably has a tolerative sense, ‘allow yourselves to be delivered, accept help!’” [The NET Bible, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1296, n. f]. The NET Bible brings out the passive sense very well: “Turn to me so you can be delivered.” The passive verb requires that something or someone outside of the ones turning must do the saving. People cannot save themselves, and that Someone who can and does save them is God. Man believes, which is not a work (Rom. 4:4-5), and God justifies. That is true for Jews and that is true for Gentiles.

Turning to God implies belief which is the foundational factor in everyone’s justification salvation experience. Therefore, being saved is the result of turning to God, i.e., placing faith in Him. Once a person exercises faith, God saves that person. “Here is one of the climatic points of prophecy. Jehovah’s love is not limited to Israel alone, God cares for all humanity and invites all men to ‘look unto me and be saved.’ The text contradicts all those who maintain that the God of the Old Testament is a cruel, narrowminded and narrowhearted [sic] God” [Victor Buksbazen, *The Prophet Isaiah: A Commentary*, 366]. Turn, פָּנָה, in this context, means to turn to, to turn towards; it often has the sense of to turn oneself. As used here, it has positive spiritual significance. When the word has theological

significance, it is most often used to identify a negative spiritual situation such as turning to idols (Lv. 19:4) or to go the way of one's own choosing (Is. 53:6) which implies a turn away from God. Here, it has the sense of turning to God in order to be saved. Turning to God necessarily involves turning away from something else. The person who turns to God is turning away from the world and its antichrist worldview. In terms of this section of Isaiah, idolatry, i.e., false gods, are worthless, evil, and must be rejected. One cannot successfully turn to the one true God without turning away from whatever false gods one is trusting in. It is not turn to God plus keep your old gods; it is turn to God alone.

"All the ends of the earth" is a way of saying that Gentile salvation is part of God's plan for history. Ends, אֲחֻרַיִם, means the extremity, the end, cessation referring to the end or the limit which represents a boundary marking the extremities of something which, in this case, is planet earth. It has the sense of a very distant place, formally, ends of the earth, i.e., a very distant place with a strong implication of peoples both physically and culturally distant. Gentiles are very far from Israel, in terms of geography and culture. Remember, Israel is not to be numbered among the nations; it is a completely distinct nation separated from all others. One of the functions of the Mosaic Law was to emphasize the differences between Jew and Gentile. The relationship Israel has with God sets them apart as well. The Jews were, and still are, very leery of Gentiles and for good reason. Gentiles are unclean to Jewish people which is an evident fact of the New Testament (cf. Acts 10:28; Gal. 2:12).

The Scriptures clearly reveal the fact of God's desire to save Gentiles. Salvation is not just a program for the Israelites; it is available to everyone. "Since Yahweh alone saves, people and nations around the world should turn to Him for salvation. In so doing they could experience the same salvation that Israel would enjoy. Yahweh is the saving God of the whole earth, not just Israel, so salvation is available to all, not just Israel" [Thomas L. Constable, "Isaiah" in *Thomas Constable's Notes on the Bible: Volume IV: Isaiah-Daniel*, 4:131].

The only time it will be possible for this to happen is at the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom. Worldwide, all-encompassing Gentile salvation has simply not happened to this point in history. Turning to God and being saved to this degree are Kingdom prophecies. "This is the invitation of the crucified, risen, glorified Christ returning to set up His millennial Kingdom. Salvation will be offered on the basis of faith in the King of glory's finished redemptive work" [Merrill F. Unger, "Isaiah" in *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1269].

There is nothing in this verse that should be construed to mean universal salvation in the sense that all people will be saved. It is not saying that. It is saying that all people have the opportunity to be saved, but justification salvation is contingent upon belief. Those individuals among the world's population who turn to God in belief will be saved; those who continue to refuse to believe will remain in their lost state.

For some reason, many commentators seem to have a desire to deny the fact of worldwide Gentile salvation that is clearly revealed in this verse. For example, *the Word Biblical Commentary* explains this verse as an offer from Cyrus to ensure salvation to the borderlands around Israel, salvation being understood as peace and prosperity. "Cyrus offers salvation to the borderlands of Palestine. The salvation he offers is restoration of a

measure of political order and prosperity, protection from vandals and bandits, and a share in the imperial peace in exchange for fealty and tribute. God will, in time, offer to these peoples from the nations more spiritual and religious salvation through Zion (chaps. 55 and 66), but this chapter deals with the values that God is offering through the Persian conqueror" [John D. W. Watts, *Word Biblical Commentary: Isaiah 34-66*, rev. ed., 707].

The problem with understanding salvation to be physical is that worldwide physical salvation did not happen at the time Isaiah made the prophecy, and the context, "I am God, and there is no other" has a clear meaning in relation to the world's spiritual condition. The world's physical safety is not an issue; the fallen world has no guarantee of physical protection from God, in fact, the fallen world will be judged during the Tribulation and almost completely destroyed. Verse 23, "every knee will bow, every tongue will swear" is referenced by some theologians as something that happened on the part of some Gentiles, but the verse clearly refers to "all" people acknowledging God. Despite the fact that some Gentiles are getting saved now and have been throughout history, this is a reference to a time when all who enter the Kingdom will be saved people.

Skinner realizes there is more to this verse than a few Gentiles experiencing physical salvation, but for some reason, he just can't bring himself to admit it. "'Salvation' here has still its ordinary sense of deliverance; although the great judgement is past, it is plainly assumed that only those who own Jehovah's sovereignty shall be spared (v. 23). But the thought that it depends on knowledge of the true God, who is the God of salvation, conveys the suggestion at least of a more positive meaning; cf. John 17:3" [J. Skinner, *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah, chapters XL-LXVI. With Introduction and Notes*, 67].

Whybray, an advocate of higher criticism who denies inerrancy, claimed that verse 22 does not mean what it says. He claims that verse 25 restricts the understanding of salvation in verse 22 to Israel only. The "ends of the earth" only means that the world will acknowledge God's work on behalf of Israel [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 223-224, citing R. N. Whybray]. Schoors, who also denies inerrancy, admits that verse 22 appears to sanction universal, worldwide salvation, but since that is the only reference in so-called Deutero-Isaiah, then that must be incorrect [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 224, n. 79, citing Schoors]. Of course, there is no Deutero-Isaiah which negates this line of thought from the beginning; therefore, in light of that fact, the assertion makes no sense. You cannot formulate doctrine and make conclusions based on something that does not exist. Replacement theology also has a role to play in the formulation of some of the various false doctrines formulated out of faulty interpretations of verse 22. "Westerman contends with more force that 'Deutero-Isaiah' is envisioning the end of Israel as a political entity as membership in the people of God comes to be based on the recognition of anyone that Yahweh alone is God" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 224, n. 79, citing Westermann].

I have pointed these things out simply to demonstrate that interpreting verse 22, not to mention the whole Bible, in this way is unacceptable; Isaiah clearly reveals worldwide Gentile salvation.

God's Word, which cannot fail, will eventually result in the world God has promised where every human being will acknowledge Him as the one true God.

Isaiah 45:23 <sup>23</sup>"I have sworn [שָׁבַע] by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness [צְדָקָה] And will not turn back [שׁוּב], That to Me every knee will bow [כָּרַע], every tongue will swear [שָׁבַע] *allegiance*.

It should be self-evident that there can be no more of a promise confirming statement than God saying, "I have sworn by Myself." There is nothing greater to swear an oath on than God. Human beings who swear an oath to God can obviously still violate the oath, but God Himself cannot do that; His Word must come to pass exactly as He has expressed it. God swearing by Himself on an oath is not exactly on the same level as human beings using His name to confirm an oath. God is infallible and cannot violate His oath; man is fallible and can violate his oaths even when sworn in the name of God.

Sworn, שָׁבַע, means to swear, to make an oath, or to bind oneself by an oath referring to promising solemnly, usually by invoking a divine witness, regarding future acts or behavior, often including penalties for failure within the contents of the oath. "OT oaths consist of a *promise* that is strengthened by the addition of a *curse*, with an appeal to a deity (or even a human king) who could stand as the power behind the curse.... In the OT, any promise of God is tantamount to an oath.... When God spoke, it was unthinkable that his word would not come to pass; it was implicit that he had sworn by himself in every promise to and covenant with his people.... Israel believed that God himself had made oaths to his chosen people in order to underscore the surety of his word" [Willem A. VanGemeren, s.v. "שָׁבַע," *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 4:32-33].

God confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant to Abraham by swearing on Himself.

Genesis 22:16–18 <sup>16</sup>and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup>indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>18</sup>"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

The Abrahamic Covenant is a big deal; it is the foundational covenant that is guiding world history. It is not a promise to Israel alone; it is also a blessing promise to the world. It should be quite reassuring to know that God Himself has guaranteed the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant based on His righteousness alone. We already know that the Covenant was ratified by God alone as the only responsible party for fulfillment (Gen. 15:12-16). That He has sworn by Himself to fulfill it guarantees that outcome.

The author of Hebrews used the truth concerning God's swearing by Himself to illustrate how much that fact should give us hope.

Hebrews 6:13–20 <sup>13</sup>For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, <sup>14</sup>saying, "I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU." <sup>15</sup>And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. <sup>16</sup>For men

swear by one greater *than themselves*, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. <sup>17</sup>In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, <sup>18</sup>so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. <sup>19</sup>This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, <sup>20</sup>where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

God's promises almost always concern fulfillment that is in the future from the standpoint of the time the promise is issued. When God makes a promise, it is certain to be fulfilled. He does not have to make that promise on an oath, but when He does, that is simply a further demonstration of the trustworthiness of God and His Word to do what He says He is going to do. We have to understand that the fulfillment of His promise may not quickly happen, but it will certainly happen. The obligation of the believer is to stand fast and persevere while resting in the knowledge that God, who cannot lie, must fulfill His promises. Abraham is the premier example of that truth, but God's promise is no different for Abraham in that situation than His promise is for anyone else. Men have a tendency to swear by something greater than themselves which is supposed to validate their intention to fulfill their obligations. God is obviously the highest authority; therefore, swearing on His name or on His person is supposed to really show the seriousness with which the oath among men is undertaken. God cannot appeal to a higher authority; He is the Higher Authority; therefore, it is a most solemn occasion when He swears on oath by Himself. God cannot change His attributes; when He makes an unconditional promise, it must be fulfilled as stated and therefore cannot be changed or abrogated. God cannot lose His integrity or change in terms of His nature or His stated purposes. God's promises, sworn by Himself, are true, He cannot lie, and they are meant to serve as encouragement and comfort for mankind who is relying on Him to fulfill those promises.

The fact that the Word goes forth from God's mouth is the stamp of divine authority over it which is based on all the personal attributes that make God who He is: omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, immutability, holiness, righteousness, transcendence, immanent, and so on. These things make Him a completely truthful and totally trustworthy divine Being who must fulfill all that He promises to do. A literal rendering of the text is "from My mouth of righteousness" which highlights the connection between God and His attributes of holiness and truth with the Word of God better than does "in righteousness." Some translations use "truth" or "integrity" instead of "righteousness" (NET Bible, CSB). "The word of promise comes from a mouth of righteousness. This word is efficacious and will accomplish its purpose, not returning unfulfilled to the mouth that spoke it" [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3:217].

The Word of God will not turn back or return. The implication is that God's Word cannot go forth and be unsuccessful or fail to produce the desired result which is the same concept that is more specifically revealed in Isaiah 55:11. Turn back, שׁוּב, means to turn back or to return referring to going back or coming back to a place, condition, or activity where one has been before.

Isaiah 55:11 <sup>11</sup>So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it.

The context here is the justification salvation of the Gentile people of the nations. God, who created the universe and all it contains by means of the spoken Word (Gen. 1), is certainly capable of saving those who have been far off and alienated from Him if that is His expressed desire, which these verses indicate it is. "The point here is that there is only one God to whom the world owes allegiance, only one by whom oaths can be guaranteed. Thus there is only one judge and savior of the whole world" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 224].

One could reasonably presume that God cannot be God if His Word could fail to come to pass, but these verses proclaim the impossibility that any Words going forth from the mouth of God could fail. One of the primary meanings of righteousness, צְדָקָה, is honesty. God, of course, cannot lie (Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18); therefore, He must always do what He says He will do.

Paul clearly referenced Isaiah 45:23 in Romans 14:10-12 and Philippians 2:10 where there is no question that "all" means every human being. "The concluding verses are remarkable first for their picture of world-wide and heart-felt conversions, and secondly for the bold use the NT was to make of vs 23-24, applying them directly to Christ in Phil. 2:10-11" [F. Derek Kidner, "Isaiah" in *New Bible Commentary: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Edition*, 659]. The fact that every knee will bow and every tongue will swear allegiance is not restricted to the saved as Kidner seems to suggest. While there is no reason to suppose that Isaiah 45:22-23 mean anything less than the possibility of salvation for every human being, there is also no reason to suppose that most of the world's population throughout history will accept the salvation offered and therefore they will have to acknowledge the Lord while in a state of unbelief.

Romans 14:10-12 <sup>10</sup>... For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD." <sup>12</sup>So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.

Philippians 2:9-11 <sup>9</sup>For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

It seems as though this is a very important concept in the mind of God. At some point, every human being is going to acknowledge Yahweh as the one true Creator God of the universe—whether they want to or not. Every person of every tribe, tongue, and nation will participate in this event. When it comes time for every human being to bow and swear an oath to Him, most of mankind will do so as condemned unbelievers and only a relatively small number of the earth's total population since the Fall will submit to His authority as pardoned sinners granted forgiveness of sins and eternal life based on faith alone. This is not a proclamation of universal salvation for all, but every human being will

acknowledge God as the Creator God of the universe at some point in the future, whether they are believers or not. This event will occur at some point just before the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom.

“The text does not say if this bowing before God is a coercive forcing of people to submit or a joyful and willing reverence of God, but in light of 45:24 it appears that some will bow because of the judgment they will receive and others will bow in gratitude and worship for the great salvation that God will pour out through his grace. This indicates a universal appeal that ignores all distinctions of nationality, race, or ethnic background. There will be a worldwide response to God, but this prophecy that everyone will bow before God will not result in universal salvation for everyone” [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 279].

Bow, כָּרַע, means to bow down, to kneel down, or to bend one's knee referring to getting into a prostrate position as in submission, homage, humility, worship or grief among other things. The context here is a reference to giving respect or worship. Those who are believers will certainly be bowing before the Lord in reverence giving Him respect and worship, but unbelievers will be acknowledging who He is probably without any aspect of respect or worship in their actions. They will simply be acknowledging what they have no choice but to acknowledge after their defeat at the hands of the Conquering King which is their submission to His authority, but one has to believe their hearts will still be in a state of rebellion. Nevertheless, to bow is an indication of submission and the tongue expresses acclimation of some sort even if it is simply an acknowledgment of His authority as King of kings and Lord of lords.

To swear, שָׁבַע, is to take an oath. In the NASB, the word “allegiance” has been added to the text by the translators as an explanatory insertion into the text, but it is not in the text. A literal rendering is “every tongue [will] swear” (YLT, LSV) or “every tongue shall take an oath” (NKJV). The implication is swearing an oath of acknowledgement concerning His identity. Perhaps the exact nature of the oath remains unstated in the text because both believers and unbelievers will be appearing before the Lord.

The text also says that this only happens one time. It seems to be something that must take place prior to the inauguration of the Kingdom, but that still leaves a multitude of unsaved, yet to be resurrected unbelievers who will appear before the Lord at the Great White Throne Judgment. I'm speculating here, but everyone will do this, saved and unsaved alike; therefore, it may take place in at least two stages. “[T]o Him every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear (allegiance), not only in the eternal state, but here in context the millennial age, the last era in time” [Merrill F. Unger, “Isaiah” in *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1269].

“This verse [v. 23] underlines again the importance of the verification of the prophetic word. God swears to the fact that what he says is correct and will never need to be retracted. Involved here is the whole concept of special revelation. The Bible insists that the one God has revealed himself in intelligible messages that can be confirmed and that indeed have been confirmed. We may accept or deny this claim that God has spoken, but if we deny it, we ought to admit that we have ceased to adhere to biblical



religion" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 224].

The next verse suggests that both the saved and the unsaved will be acknowledging the Lord. One group, believers, will be dealt with in one way, and the unbelieving group another way, but both groups will acknowledge His authority over them. This verse is confirming what verse 23 revealed: every, meaning all, knees will one day bow before the Lord.

Isaiah 45:24 <sup>24</sup>"They will say of Me, 'Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.' Men will come to Him, And all who were angry [הָרָה] at Him will be put to shame.

Believers who appear before the Lord, will, I presume, joyously proclaim that Yahweh is their only source of righteousness and strength, because as believers, He is their source of righteousness and strength. The righteous in God are also strengthened to meet the challenges of living in a compromised world subject to Satan's influence and control and to enjoy fellowship with God as they continue to walk "in a manner worthy of the calling with which [they] have been called" (Eph. 4:1). Believers have no righteousness apart from the righteousness of God that is imputed, or credited (Rom. 4) to them the moment they believe. Righteousness relates to a standard, and God is the standard; therefore, believers must have His righteousness credited to them in order to meet the standard. This is a truth that is for the individual, and it is a timeless, historical truth that applies to us as well.

The word "righteousness" is plural which "suggests abundance of righteousness, the sum total of all of God's righteous words and actions. In particular ... these are to be understood as his saving actions. What will convince the world of God's sole lordship? It is his power in deliverance, his absolute faithfulness to his promises, the utter reliability of all he has said" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 225]. When the word is used in the plural, the "reference is generally to righteous actions. But when these are those of the Lord, they are more particularly saving actions" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 225, n. 82].

Even though all submit to the Lord, not all are happy about it. Anger, הָרָה, means to burn (with anger), to be or become hot referring to being angry, aroused, or to burn with anger, to have a temper, i.e., to have strong feelings of displeasure with a focus of an action to follow. The sense of the word is to be or to become angry and feel aversion and antipathy for something which is figuratively conceived of as becoming hot in the nose. This could be translated "And they will be ashamed all of the ones keeping (or making) themselves enraged against Him." The word "angry" is in the reflexive voice meaning they are doing it to themselves. People do not have to remain in an adversarial relationship with God; He has provided the means for reconciliation through faith. God is not making people mad at Him. Being in a continual state of anger at God is the natural result of rejecting Him, and that is a self-imposed state of affairs; it does not have to be that way. Although every human being will submit to the Lord and acknowledge who He is and the authority He carries, not all will be saved and not all will want to bow before Him in submission. "The enemies of Yahweh are inflamed; their attitude is not one of neutrality or passivity; they

are active in their indignation against the God of Israel, and their end is shame" [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3: 218].

I suspect that at that moment, just as John, the disciple Jesus loved, fell at His feet as though dead when confronted with the glory of the Living God (Rev. 1:17-18), so the unsaved will be unable to do anything other than acknowledge Him as God when appearing before Him face-to-face. They will be enraged, but they will also be so frightened that they can do nothing but acknowledge the truth of Who and what is before them. It does not seem to be a situation of forcing them to do it either; they will do it because it is true and they can no longer deny it when the obvious truth of it is staring them right in the face. It is unclear to me how all of this will work itself out. The unsaved will be enraged against Him, but they will also acknowledge His identity and authority. Satan obviously knows God (Job 1-2), and the demons know the Lord and are afraid even while acknowledging His authority over them (James 2:19), but they have no faith in Him. When these unsaved people appear before Him, I think their situation will be analogous to that. They will acknowledge that He is God and they will submit to His authority, but they will hate it all the while doing it.

Some theologians believe the unsaved making this confession are making a statement of repentance which I do not believe is correct. "... This characteristic, in contrast to the failure of the gods to keep their promises, will bring all the world to the Lord's feet, ashamed of the false trust that we have reposed in the works of our own hands. To fight against him, while depending on the gods of this world, can result only in humiliation. This is the essence of repentance: to come to the Lord admitting the foolishness of our own ways and owning that the only hope is in him" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 225]. While it is true that the unsaved will be humiliated and ashamed, it is also true that they will remain in their anger and hatred of God. They do not come to faith. They go to the lake of fire in their rage. I could be wrong, but his use of the concept of repentance here seems to be suggesting that he thinks these people have come to faith, but I do not think that is correct.

I think there is a more realistic view of the unbelievers who will be in this position one day. "God's justice will be evident as it works itself out in the destiny of the people who 'are incensed, angry', for they will be judged and will experience great shame, for at this point they will know the truth about this glorious righteous God they have rejected" [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 280].

Regarding Israel, at this point in the eschatological scheme of things, the believing remnant has been identified and they will enter the Messianic Kingdom to realize the fulfillment of the unconditional covenants. While this verse specifically mentions Israel, we have to remember that this pericope is eschatological in nature and Gentiles are also subject to the same truths being revealed here. Not only is there hope for Israel in the end, there is also hope for the Gentiles as well.

Isaiah 45:25 <sup>25</sup>"In the LORD all the offspring of Israel Will be justified [קִיָּם] and will glory."

Justified, צָדִיק, means to be just, to be righteous, to be in the right, or to be vindicated all in accordance with a standard. The sense is to be in conformance with justice, custom, law, or morality. I think "will be vindicated" (NET Bible) or "shall be in the right" (LEB) are better in this context.

"This acclimation of joyous confidence in God was meant to encourage the Israelites to make wise choices in their daily lives because one choice will lead them to disappointment and shame while the other choice will result in times of great praise in the presence of God. This dramatic choice faces each person who lives on this earth today; so every person who hears of the righteous deeds of God must realize that their future depends on whether they are willing to turn to God and be saved" [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 280-281].

Replacement theologians who put the church into the Old Testament and declare Israel's role in God's plan for history over have no clue what the text is actually revealing. The church is not Israel, new Israel or otherwise. Keil and Delitzsch agree with and quote a theologian holding that position.

"Ruetschi has very properly observed on this verse, that the reference is to the Israel of God out of all the human race, i.e., the church of the believers in Israel expanded by the addition of the heathen; which church is now righteous, i.e., reconciled and renewed by Jehovah, and glories in Him, because by grace it is what it is" [C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament: Isaiah*, vol. 7, 7:451].

Young also represents this extremely erroneous position. "This verse constitutes a concluding declaration of the salvation of the true Israel taken from the whole human race.... The reference is not to the historical entity Israel, for not all of the historical Israel repented. Indeed, there were those who belonged to the historical Israel who opposed our Lord and cried out for His death while He was here upon earth. The reference rather is to the Israel of God, the true believers in Israel whose company was increased in multitude by the addition of those from the Gentiles who turned from idols to serve the living and true God" [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3:218].