



DEVOTIONAL TIME

09-22-2015 @ 0900

"God Uses... Who?!!"

Isaiah 45:1-4

BE EXALTED, O GOD!

I will give thanks to Thee, O Lord, among the peoples!

I will sing praises to Thee among the nations! For Thy steadfast Love is great...

Is great to the heavens, and Thy Faithfulness... Thy Faithfulness to the clouds!

(Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let Thy Glory be over all the earth!) 2X's

Isaiah 45:1-4

"The LORD has chosen Cyrus to be king. He has appointed him to conquer nations; He sends him to strip kings of their power; the LORD will open the gates of cities for him. To Cyrus the LORD says, 'I Myself will prepare your way, leveling mountains and hills. I will break down bronze gates and smash their iron bars. I will give you treasures from dark, secret places; then you will know that I am the LORD, and that the God of Israel has called you by name. I appoint you to help My servant Israel, the people that I have chosen. I have given you great honor, although you do not know Me!'"

QUESTIONS FOR TODAY

- Were you ever utterly dumbfounded to receive assistance from a source you would never have even *considered*, let alone expected? Did you think to give God credit for that "miracle"?
- Speaking of "God", what did you make of the times He seemed to "arrange" that you receive unanticipated, (even extravagant!) aid from "the enemy's camp"? How did your faith handle it?
- We generally like God "preparing" our "way"; what is it like to consider that God is "preparing" a "prosperous way" for the "worldly" and "unbelievers" to whom He chooses to give great honor?

Wow! That grumpy old "so and so" across the street just invited you over for a cup of coffee... leaving you in a quandary. You could accept and go, or just decline and keep to the people and friends you know and trust... But what if God is getting ready to open a most unlikely "door of opportunity", with offered help you didn't know you'd need, and comfort that you would have never seen coming? In this Passage, the Lord is throwing us another "cosmic curve ball" to clue us in about the unexpected ways in which He weaves His "threads of Providence" into the "Master Tapestry of Salvation"! Cyrus was not an Israelite, or even a "believer" in their God; yet God affirmed "I have appointed him to help My Chosen People!" We have a terrible tendency to presuppose we know the "true" and "proper" ways God should prepare our paths, meet our needs, and answer our prayers. On the basis of what we've seen and heard in the past, we've "got God figured"! We "know" the real and righteous way in which God should always operate, and on whom He can bestow blessing, or what he can and cannot use in doing so. How "big", "wise", and "awesome" is your God? Is your God "unbounded" and truly "Sovereign", or is your "god" a concept limited by your lack of vision and faith? The God who inspired Scripture chose Cyrus, a pagan, to be king of a pagan nation... to be the very one to secure and protect the "Chosen People of the Lord", and to be a key "instrument" God appointed to fulfill the holy Promise made to Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God, grant us the Grace of Discernment and the Spirit of Wider Vision! Be sovereign in Your Providence as You move freely in any way You choose...from the direction You know best...and in the people You appoint to accomplish Your Will. Keep us patient and humble when it seems to us that You prepare, appoint, and bless "the wrong people" until we see the unfolding of Your Divine Design. Teach us to live an "all-in" commitment to Your "Covenant Life", to "let go" and let You "be God" as You alone, O God, can "BE GOD!"