

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
Commentary by Michael Sigler
January 9, 2011

Turn to Me and Be Saved

Isaiah 45:18-24a

Key verse: “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:22).

Christian author and publisher Frank Sheed used to speak at “Speakers’ Corner” in Hyde Park, London. There it was common for speakers to be heckled by listeners, and Sheed was often heckled.

Once, after Sheed had described how the universe’s amazing order and design pointed to the existence of God, a heckler offered a challenge. He pointed out the prevalence of evil in the world. Then the heckler shouted, “I could make a better universe than your God!”

Sheed replied, “I won’t ask you to make a universe. But would you make a rabbit—just to establish confidence?”

“I am the Lord, and there is no other” (v. 18). This bold declaration is a guiding theme of Isaiah 45:18-24. And this passage offers at least three ways in which God demonstrates that He is the Lord, and there is no other.

1. *“I am the Lord, and there is no other” is demonstrated by the majesty of God’s creation.* “For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it....I am the Lord, and there is no other” (v. 18).

Exiled Israel must have wondered at times if God was still in control. But even in Babylon, the land of captivity, the creation demonstrated the power and the sovereignty of God. It still does.

The vastness of our universe demonstrates the might and majesty of our creator. In his book *Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference?* Philip Yancey gives the following description of God’s amazing creation: “If the Milky Way galaxy were the size of the entire continent of North America, our solar system would fit in a coffee cup. Even now, two Voyager spacecraft are hurtling toward the edge of the solar system at a rate of 100,000 miles per hour. For almost three decades they have been speeding away from earth, approaching a distance of 9 billion miles. When engineers beam a command to the spacecraft at the speed of light, it takes 13 hours to arrive. Yet this vast neighborhood of our sun—in truth, the size of a coffee cup—fits along with several hundred billion other stars and their minions in the Milky Way, one of

perhaps 100 billion such galaxies in the universe. To send a light-speed message to the edge of that universe would take 15 billion years.”

2. *“I am the Lord, and there is no other” is demonstrated by God’s exposure of idols and false gods.* “They have no knowledge—those who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save” (v. 20).

From our contemporary perspective, it may seem hard to understand ancient peoples’ fascination with idols made of wood and stone. However, it can ultimately be said of our modern idols, as well as those of ancient Babylon, such gods “cannot save.”

Our idols of money, pleasure, and power cannot save us. So, we too need to hear God’s declaration: “I am the Lord, and there is no other”!

Pastor and author Tim Keller said that true worship “is pulling our affections off our idols and putting them on God.”

3. *“I am the Lord, and there is no other” is demonstrated by God’s intention to provide salvation for all people.* “There is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is no one beside me. Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other” (vv. 21b-22).

This passage shows that God’s eternal plan is not salvation for one nation only, but for all peoples of the earth. God promised Abraham that, through his offspring, all the nations of the world would be blessed (Gen. 22:18). It was, of course, through the people of Israel that God’s Messiah, Jesus Christ, would come.

The gift of salvation through faith in Christ is available to all who will receive Him. “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13).

For exiled Israel, God must at times have seemed distant from them and from their difficult plight. But God’s Word came to remind them—and us—that “I am the Lord, and there is no other”!

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