

Isaiah 45:14-25

*“A God Like No Other”*

*Blessing and Temptation*



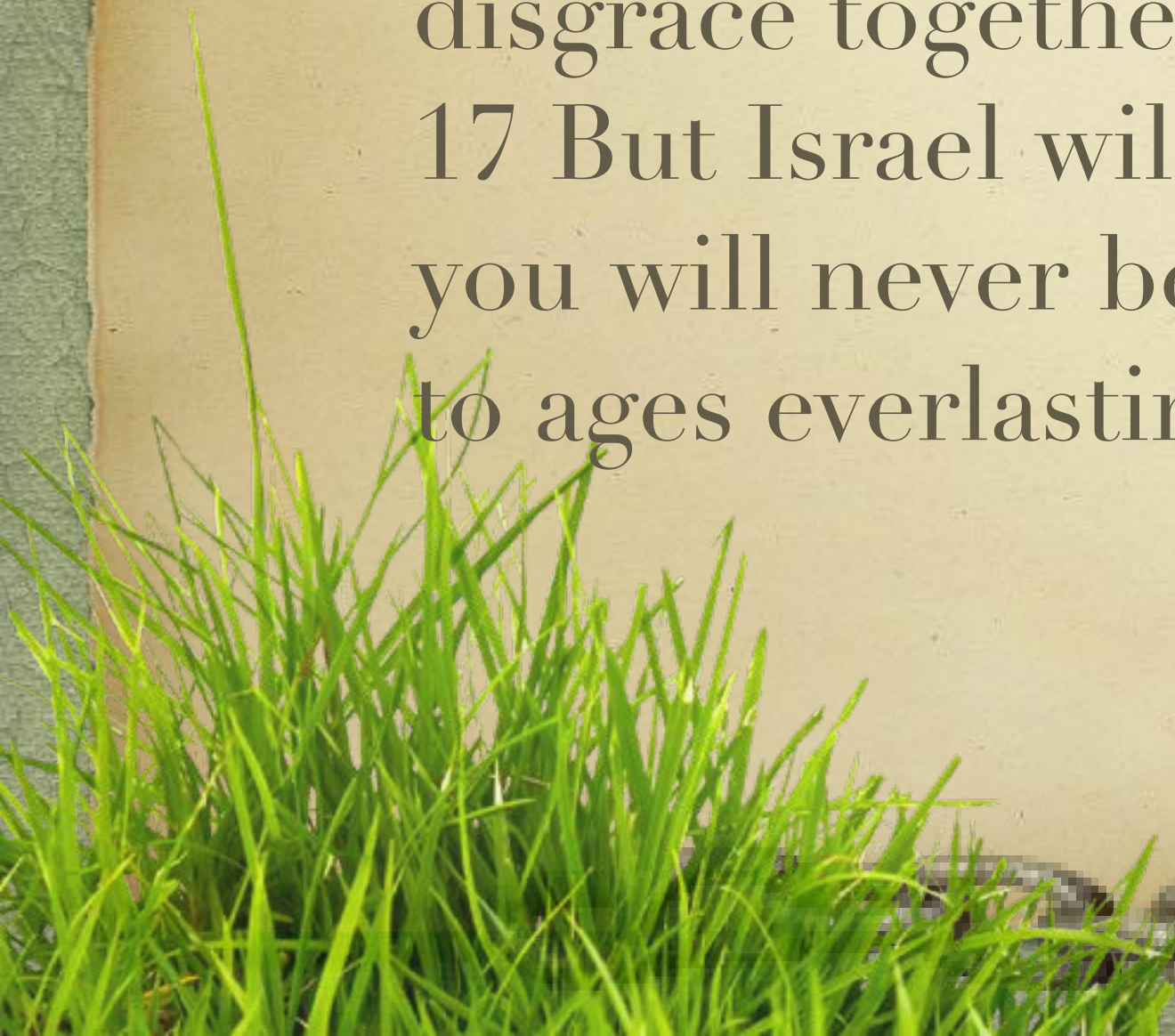
# Isaiah 45:14-17

14 This is what the Lord says: “The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush, and those tall Sabeans — they will come over to you and will be yours; they will trudge behind you, coming over to you in chains. They will bow down before you and plead with you, saying, ‘Surely God is with you, and there is no other; there is no other god.’”

15 Truly you are a God who has been hiding himself, the God and Saviour of Israel.

16 All the makers of idols will be put to shame and disgraced; they will go off into disgrace together.

17 But Israel will be saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation; you will never be put to shame or disgraced, to ages everlasting.



*Staying True to its Calling...*



“It is essential that the vision of all nations united in confessing faith in the God who is creator of all the preserved from degradation into self-serving nationalistic pride. Israel is not to seek personal gain and fame from its testimony to this God but is to remain true to its calling as a servant people...By responding to the light of truth to which Israel bears witness, the peoples of the world find their own true home in fellowship with the living God.”



# The God Who Hides

- God's mystery never surrendered
- Not available for manipulation or coercion
- Revealed to whom God chooses
- Revealed in God's covenant people
- Surpasses human understanding



# *Saved and Not Ashamed*



God's hiddenness is a hiddenness in mercy, making God's presence available only to those whose hearts are properly prepared. The God who "hides himself" is thus the God who is discovered by the humble and contrite, those broken in Spirit and open to God's gracious deliverance. Verse 15 thus concludes with the other half of the confession: "O God of Israel, the Saviour."

# Isaiah 45:18,19

18 For this is what the Lord says — he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty (Did not create it a chaos), but formed it to be inhabited — he says: “I am the Lord, and there is no other.

19 I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob’s descendants, ‘Seek me in chaos.’ I, the Lord, speak the truth; I declare what is right.

# *The God Beyond Chaos*



“Chaos refers here mainly to the death dealing context of Babylonian exile, or to the confused idol-makers themselves who are purveyors of deathly disorder. Yahweh is in sharp contrast to all of them...who is offered as an alternative who makes an ordered, viable, fruitful life possible.”

# Isaiah 45:20,21

20 “Gather together and come; assemble, you fugitives from the nations. Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood, who pray to gods that cannot save.

21 Declare what is to be, present it— let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the Lord? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me.





*"Fought the Good Fight"*

"To acknowledge the reign of that God is to pass through defeat to salvation and glory, for it is to unite the will of the people with the will of the sovereign of the universe."

# Isaiah 45:22-25

22 “Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.

23 By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear.

24 They will say of me, ‘In the Lord alone are deliverance and strength.’” All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame.

25 But all the descendants of Israel will find deliverance in the Lord and will make their boast in him.

## *Command or Promise?*

The anticipation of total deference to Yahweh is perhaps a command, telling the summoned nations what must now happen. Or perhaps it is a promise, anticipating what must inevitably happen because the nations will come to see that any alternative choice is a bad choice. The rhetoric of the summons that moves between promise and command is not unlike the first commandment, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3). Although this assertion is conventionally taken as commandment, H. Graf Reventlow has nicely shown that it is not a command, but simply a promise for the commands that follow.

Brueggemann

# *The Horizon of Blessing*



“The poet knows that the horizon of God’s creational blessing extends to all creatures. That further reach, however, is not consistently maintained in this exilic rhetoric. It is as though the poet suggests the larger horizon, and then pulls back to more conventional ground. We might wish it were otherwise.”

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*“I am the Lord, and there is no other.”*

- God who his ‘found’ in hiddenness (15)
- Saviour of an everlasting salvation (17)
- Creator of order and fullness, not chaos and emptiness (18)
- Hidden but not secret, speaks the truth (19)
- Available for all people (20,22)



“A mature Christian sees Christ in everything and everyone else. That is a definition that will never fail you, always demand more of you, and give you no reasons to fight, exclude, or reject anyone.”

*Richard Rohr, The Universal Christ*