

Isaiah Chapter 40 Continued

Isaiah 40:14 "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgement, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?"

It was not necessary for Him to take counsel from anyone.

Jesus is Truth and Wisdom to the utmost.

He is also the Judge of all the earth.

Each of us will stand before Jesus to be judged.

He is the One who will say, heaven or hell for each of us.

Verses 15-17

Since the surrounding nations who had oppressed Israel were utterly insignificant in comparison to the Lord's greatness and power, they could not prevent His purposes from being accomplished.

His deliverance of Israel was certain.

Isaiah 40:15 "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing."

To compare the creation to the Creator is a foolish thing.

Even the entire earth is but a small creation compared to the entire universe.

His Omnipotence is more than we can begin to comprehend.

Isaiah 40:16 "And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering."

"Burn ... burnt offering":

God is so great and worthy of so much worship, that even the large wood and animal resources of Lebanon were insufficient for appropriate offerings to Him.

Lebanon has been a thorn in the side of Israel.

This is speaking of it as an enemy of God.

Isaiah 40:17 "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity."

We read that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Philippians 2:10-11 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;" "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Verses 18-31

In light of the sovereignty of God, human idolatry is pictured as utterly ridiculous.

Through another series of rhetorical questions, the prophet lifts his readers into the very presence of God.

He argues that no "graven image" (idol) shall compare to (demuth), or "likeness" of God.

The term is the same as that used (in Genesis 1:26), where man is created in the image and likeness of God as a personal and moral being.

Verses 18-20

The prophet sarcastically indicated the futility of trying to portray the immensity of God.

His power, wisdom and resources.

In the form of a man made idol, no matter how ornate, durable and immovable.

Isaiah 40:18 "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?"

There truly is no comparison between God and anything or anyone you could see with physical eyes.

We are told the following in John:

John 4:24 "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

He is also spoken of as a consuming fire in Hebrews:

Hebrews 12:29 "For our God is a consuming fire."

Isaiah 40:19 "The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains."

The very first commandment warns us not to worship other gods.

It specifically speaks against graven images.

Isaiah 40:20 "He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved."

This is just talking about those who cannot afford to purchase a gold or silver false god.

They settle for one made of wood.

Verses 21-31

Isaiah extolled God as Creator, in whom the Jews were to put their full trust.

Isaiah 40:21 "Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundation of the earth?"

"Have ye not heard ... understood":

Throughout human history people had heard by special revelation from God that the Lord, not idols, created all things.

They had also understood it from natural revelation as reason looks at creation (Romans 1:20).

To worship anything that you could see with physical eyes would be worshipping someone's creation and not the Creator.

Those who do such things are without excuse.

Isaiah 40:22 "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:"

The word "circle" is applicable to the spherical form of the earth, above which He sits.

This implies that God upholds and maintains His creation on a continuing basis (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3).

As He looks down, men seem like insects to the One who has stretched and spread out the universal heavens.

If you have ever flown in an airplane and looked back to the earth, you know people look so small they look like little specks walking around.

God created billions of these little specks and called them people.

Isaiah 40:23 "That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity."

"Princes ... judges":

God disposes of human leaders according to His will.

Verse 24 expands on how suddenly God removes them.

High position in society means nothing to God.

It is God who elevates a person to high authority and brings another down.

We all die the same; we are all judged the same way.

The highest position any of us can have is to be sons of God.

Romans 8:14 "For as many are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

That Scripture tells us just exactly how we become sons of God.

Isaiah 40:24 "Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble."

We understand that life is but a vapor.

We are here today and gone tomorrow.

James 4:14 "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow.

For what is your life?

It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

God controls our destiny (the number of our days on earth).

Isaiah 40:25 "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One."

“Likened ... be equal”:

Israel was foolish to compare such a sovereign, almighty Lord with the gods of their Babylonian captors (see verse 18).

The answer to this could only be one.

1 John 5:7 "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

Isaiah 40:26 "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth."

“Created these things”:

Rather than worshiping the stars, Israel should have seen in them the evidence of God’s creatorship (Psalm 19:1).

As innumerable as the stars are, He knows every one and named each.

Not one of the stars runs astray, but all are held by the forces with which He has endowed the universe to keep them in their orbit and place.

John 1:1-3

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

"The same was in the beginning with God."

"All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."

Colossians 1:17 "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

This says it all.

Verses 27-31

The prophet applied the comforting truths (in verses 1-26), about God to Israel's situation in Babylon during the coming captivity.

Isaiah 40:27 "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is passed over from my God?"

“Why sayest thou”:

In light of who God is, how could His people in exile have thought He had forgotten them or was ignorant of their condition?

All through these lessons, I have mentioned that there are two houses of Israel.

Jacob, in the verse above, is speaking of the Hebrew descendants of Jacob (Israel).

Israel, in the verse above, is speaking of the spiritual house of Israel (the believers in Christ).

Just because a person is in the lineage of Jacob, does not cause God to overlook his sin.

All men have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

The only way for anyone to be free of sin is through the shed blood of Jesus.

He paid the penalty for our sin on the cross.

We are judged not guilty of sin, because our sin debt was paid by His sacrifice on the cross.

Isaiah 40:28 "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding."

God was not too weak to act on their behalf, nor was fatigue an obstacle for the Creator in caring for His people (verses 29-30).

Though even the young and strong become tired and fall, the Ancient of Days never does.

To the human mind, God's wisdom is not fully comprehensible in how He chooses to fulfill His promises to deliver Israel.

Paul saw a future illustration of this truth in God's plan for the final restoration of Israel (Romans 11:33; see Isaiah 40:13).

He planned salvation from the foundation of the earth.

He became our substitute.

He is not a man that He should tire.

He lives in eternity where all of time from the beginning to the end is one eternal day.

He is everlasting God.

He is Lord of all.

He is the Creator of all.

He is all knowledge and understanding.

He is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient.

Isaiah 40:29 "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."

In our weakness, He is strong.

Power dwells within Him and He can dispense it to whomever He will.

Luke 9:1 "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases."

Isaiah 40:30 " Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:"

All humans, young and old, get weary in the flesh.

Our bodies need rest to be able to go on.

Isaiah 40:31 "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

“Wait upon the Lord”:

There is a general principle here that patient, praying believers are blessed by God with strength in their trials (2 Cor. 12:8-10).

The Lord also expects His people to be patient while awaiting His coming in glory at the end to fulfill the promises of national deliverance, when believing Israel would become stronger than they had ever been.

The frailty of man gives God the opportunity to pour His strength into us when we ask for His help.

When we pray, we must believe and patiently wait for His answer.

The strength of the Lord in us makes it possible for us to do all things well.

Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

Isaiah Chapter 40 Continued Questions

1. Who taught God judgment?
2. Jesus is _____ and _____ to the utmost.
3. Who is Judge of all the earth?
4. The nations are as a drop of a _____.
5. He taketh up the isles as a very _____.
6. To compare the _____ to the _____ is a foolish thing.
7. Compared to the universe, what is the earth?
8. All nations before Him are as _____.
9. To whom will ye liken God?
10. John 4:24 tells us God is a _____.
11. In Hebrews 12:29 what is God called?
12. What does the first of the 10 commandments warn us of?
13. What does it specifically speak against?
14. The impoverished choose what to make a false god with?
15. To worship anything that could be seen with physical eyes would be doing what?
16. Where does verse 22 say He is sitting?

17. What are people spoken of as being like in verse 22?
18. What are judges to God?
19. What is the highest position any of us can have, really?
20. Who receives sonship?
21. Life is but a _____.
22. What does the Holy One say in verse 25?
23. In Colossians 1-17 we read that by Him all things _____.
24. Who is Jacob speaking of in verse 27?
25. Who are the spiritual house of Israel?
26. How is the only way to be free of sin?
27. What are some of the words used to describe God in verse 28?
28. He giveth power to the _____.
29. How weak are they in verse 30?
30. The _____ of man gives God the opportunity to pour His strength into them.