

The True God and Savior

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Bible Text: Isaiah 40:12-31

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If you would look with me in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 40. I will read for us from verse 12 down to verse 31 and speak with you about the true God and Savior.

Verse 12 of Isaiah 40.

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? 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. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. 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. Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? 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: That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. 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. To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. 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.

Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? 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. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: 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.¹

Whenever we jump in the middle of a portion of Scripture it is always very important for us to maintain the context. And I would have you remember that the last time we considered the verses just previous where we read, “Behold your God,”² it was speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, God coming in the flesh. And here as we continue to read on is the same context. You know, we can’t just take this portion of Scripture from verse 12 down to verse 31 that I just read of you and say, “Well, it applies generally to God.”

Who is being described here other than our Lord Jesus Christ? Scripture is giving a description of him as God lest the fact that he came as a man leave some to think that as a man he was any less than God. He never cased to being God. And that is really when you consider it in that context, such a glorious doctrine concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. When it asks again and again this question: “To whom then will ye liken me?”³

To whom then will you liken God? Well, God has given us an image of himself. That image is in his Son. Bob, you read it in Colossians chapter one. He is the express image of the invisible God. That man that came and was born in a manger in Bethlehem was none other than the God of the universe, no less so when he was a babe than he was when he was in glory. When he sucked at his mother’s breast, he was the one providing life to that mother and milk to sustain himself as a man. When he took those nails and nailed our Lord to the tree he was the one who put the ore, the iron in the ground and caused that those nails be prepared, every last one of them that would nail him to that tree.

But, you know, when his hands were nailed to that tree he was not bound by those nails. All the while he was directing every aspect of what was taking place, ordering it as the... not only the Creator, but the judge of the universe. That is a phenomenal truth if the Lord ever opens your eyes and causes you to see it.

And so what we have here in these few verses is what when I went to school we used to

¹ Isaiah 40:12-31.

² Isaiah 40:10.

³ Isaiah 40:25.

take semesters to study even though I was ignorant and blind at the time. They called it Christology, the Christology of the Old Testament.

But these few verses right here sum up all of who Christ is as God.

Yes, “Behold your God,”⁴ is what is described in the verses, who “will come with strong hand and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.”⁵

So he came as a man, but he was nonetheless God, the God man. And he was... he is the shepherd.

“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd.”⁶

That is who he came to save was that sheep, those sheep that the scriptures describe as those that the Father gave him.

“[And] he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”⁷

But the context doesn’t change between verse 11 and verse 12.

“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand?”⁸

When he calmed the storm the disciples marveled, “Who is this that even the waves of the sea obey him?”

Well, they were perhaps ignorant at that time of this particular verse. Well, who is he? He is the one who measured all the waters and did it in the hollow of his hand.

You think about whatever percentage of water this world is. It is a large percent. And he is described as taking the whole of it like a man would take a whole sea and put it in his hand. No wonder the waves obey him. We should marvel at this, but we get short sighted even with regard to difficulties and trouble that we face. It all seems so dark, impossible.

Who created the world? Whose world is it? It is his, that God would give us a heart that even in the worst of affliction and trouble to know that his hand is so directed. There is no accidents with God. He is the God of this universe, the true God.

And so let’s look at these different aspects that are revealed here.

⁴ Isaiah 40:10.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Isaiah 40:11.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Isaiah 40:12.

First of all in verse 12 as the Creator and Sustainer of all. Who is he? He is the Creator and Sustainer of all.

When I see the description given here of this one who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, the waters of the seas for which he has provided a receptacle, where he has collected and put them together, even Job speaks of that. You look at the marvel of the sea, how those waves come up to a certain point and then go back. Do you realize that if he were not sustaining it your standing on that beach would not be safe? When you consider the amount of pressure and volume of that sea and the roaring of it, how come it comes to a point and stops and goes back? Well, it is our Lord. Where is he today? Seated upon the throne.

Even when he became a man he did not cease to sustain all things by the word of his power.

If you look over in Hebrews chapter one you will see how the Lord directed the writer to the Hebrews to state this in Hebrews chapter one.

And the whole point here is that if he is such a God, and he is, that even the winds and the waves obey him and the seas come to a certain point and no further and go back, if he is such a God and Creator and Sustainer, is he not able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him?

Absolutely because the reason they come is because he draws them just like he draws the waves of the sea so he directs the hearts of men whithersoever he will.

But Hebrews chapter one beginning with verse one it says, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.”⁹

Diverse manners, that is in types, pictures, promises.

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.”¹⁰

You know, when the Word has asked there, “To whom then will ye liken me?”¹¹ that is God speaking. But what he is doing is pointing them to this one who would come. God has given the image of himself in his Son. So we don’t need to look any further. Every attribute of God is revealed in his Son.

“[He] hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”¹²

⁹ Hebrews 1:1.

¹⁰ Hebrews 1:2.

¹¹ Isaiah 40:25.

¹² Hebrews 1:2.

They are just now discovering planets, new planets and they are... with the technology they have going back and correcting some things that they made us say on tests back when we were in school that now is false, some that were named planets that aren't. You know, all these distinctions that men discover have been in place since the beginning of the world, the worlds.

And it says, "Who being the brightness of his glory,"¹³ Christ being the brightness of God's glory, "...and the express image of his person..."¹⁴ Here it is. "...and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."¹⁵

There is not a one of us that could ever take on that responsibility even of bearing our own sin. We would have to die condemned sinners for our own sin. But you think about this one who bore the sins of every one of his people. Scripture says a number that no man can number.

In our finite minds we try to pick and choose and think, well, this one, that one. We are foolish even thinking so. This is a number that no man can number as to who is the Lord's and who isn't. But he bore their sin.

And that amazes us to think of it, but this is such a God he is. He is the God of the universe. Even as we read here in Isaiah 40 and verse 26.

"...who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might."¹⁶

We are just now giving names to different stars and planets that are newly being discovered. But there is millions of galaxies. And the Lord already has named them. He knows them all by name. And if that is so, would he ever forget one of his little ones that the Father gave him?

How many times we think in our trouble that he has overlooked us. He hasn't. If he bore our sin, we have been on his breast plate as that high priest from the beginning. And he will not lose one. He will not lose one. Oh, what a glorious God, what a glorious Savior he is.

When you read, coming back to Isaiah 40 and verses 13 through 15 he is the Creator and Sustainer of all in verse 12, but he is the omnipotent, the omniscient and omnipresent one, three omnis concerning God. What God is, Christ is. Omnipotent, all power being given unto him. Omniscient, all knowing and omnipresent, everywhere present.

Where can you flee but what? The Lord has his hand on his own.

¹³ Hebrews 1:3.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Isaiah 40:26.

And it asks this question in verses 13 through 15.

“Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD?”¹⁷

When we talk about the Spirit of the Lord we are talking about his omniscience, omnipresence. We don't know where he is working. We don't know where he is moving. You know, John in John three, if you look over there with me, hold your hand here and come over to John three.

He is working in the hearts of sinners. We can't tell. You know, we tend to put time tables on people. We assume, well, this one here is hardened so obviously they are not the Lord's. We can't say that. They may be the Lord's and the Lord still hasn't been pleased to reveal himself in them yet.

Think back to yourself, the years of darkness when you were lost and maybe had a religious and a moral front, but still lost. But in time when it, like Paul said, “When it pleased God to reveal Christ in me,” you see. They may be the Lord's, for whom he died. How can we know how his Spirit is working or not?

Here in John three when he spoke to Nicodemus down in verse eight he said, “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”¹⁸

Such is his omnipotence. He knows his own. He knows who it is that he has redeemed. He knows who it is that the Father gave him. But who are we to instruct him?

You see how foolish we are? Even though we say we know him, we don't. If we did, we would keep our mouth shut in many, in most instances.

“Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?”¹⁹

I have heard some people in their prayers sounded like they are teaching God something. We are going to inform God here. Let's bring this before the Lord so he knows. Really? Is he a dumb idol that unless you tell him he doesn't know?

This is foolish thinking.

“With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment?”²⁰

¹⁷ Isaiah 40:13.

¹⁸ John 3:8.

¹⁹ Isaiah 40:13.

²⁰ Isaiah 40:14.

Were you there when he determined who he would save and who he would pass by? Why do we have a fight with him? We weren't there. This was determined before any of us was even born or created.

“... taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?”²¹

We get pretty proud in our thinking in our knowledge to where, you know, we forget that we really are nothing and that we need him and depend upon him for all things.

When he says here in verse 15, “Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket,”²² you think about this world.

I have traveled a lot in the world and you think about even with the best means of travels and jets today, getting one place, from one place to another, traveling at several hundred miles an hour, something that Orville and Wilbur Wright didn't even think even possible when they were trying to pedal that little plane that they were trying to get it off the ground for a few hundred feet.

And yet how long it takes to get from one point to another.

And then when you land and you see masses of people, you are just... you marvel. Different culture, different people, different languages, the variety. To me that shows there is a God who created it all and distinguished one from the other.

But here in verse 15 it says, “Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance.”²³

Remember the old stores, hardware stores. They had that little balance there with the weights. Put one thing on one end and another and you walk in sometimes and there is a bunch of dust on there just a slight cover of dust. Here it says all of that, the nations put together are nothing but dust in the balance.

And then there is little old you and little old me. How cocky we get thinking ourselves to be something when we are really nothing and how we need the Lord teach us that we need him, we need his wisdom, we need his direction. We are not teaching him what is right and wrong. We need him to teach us and particularly in this matter of salvation. You know, we spend our time worrying about the other guy, when, in reality, we ought to be asking the Lord of this guy right here.

Lord, whether anybody else keeps their eye on you or not, grant me the grace, grant me the life, grant me the wisdom to see Christ and Christ alone and find all of my being, all of my salvation in him.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Isaiah 40:15.

²³ Ibid.

But that is who he is. He is the Creator, the Sustainer. He is omnipotent. There is nothing that could ever be put in his way to keep him from saving a lost sinner.

We tend to put things in his way. We think, well, this sin or that, but the Lord has taught you of the power and grace of his shed blood and that righteousness. Even as the Lord deals in your own heart you say even that sin, too. You know, he is able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him.

Verses 16 and 17 we see his holiness. See, all of the attributes that pertain to God are in Christ. He is holy.

It says, “And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.”²⁴

Scriptures talk a lot about the cedars of Lebanon. Solomon sent up there to cut them down, to hew them and to bring them to Jerusalem to help in the building of the temple. It was a wood, a hard wood of great value. I don’t know much about timber, but there is some specialists that know the difference between good and bad wood. And in Scripture when it talks about the cedars of Lebanon it was talking about the best of the best.

I remember there is a... some years ago I read about a company in the harbor of New York City. They discovered at the bottom of the Hudson River some high quality timber that had fallen off back in the day in the 1800s, some rare wood that is not even existent today. But in offloading it back in the day some of it fell over the side and people forgot about it. And with modern technology they found it down there now and they have developed a whole company to put out furniture made of the best wood and they are living off of this industry now from what they pulled up off the bottom of the Hudson River. People are willing to pay big bucks to get that kind of furniture because that wood doesn’t exist anymore in the world, but there it is.

And the point is that the Lord is saying here just how holy is he? Down here in verse 25 he identifies himself as the holy one. But you think about the description here. How holy is the Lord? He is saying, “Go and take all of that good wood of Lebanon, even the best,” and then stop and think, well, who caused it to grow? It was the Lord. But go ahead. Cut it all down and bring it to burn along with the beasts, as many as you can count. Take all of the beasts and you think about all of the ones that were sacrificed from starting with Adam, that first innocent lamb all those thousands of years the beasts that were offered and what does it say? That “Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for [even one] burnt offering.”²⁵

How holy a God is this? That is the first thing that a man thinks of. I have lived and grown up in countries where you wake up in the morning, go out there and in the middle of a cross roads you will find a sacrifice. You will find a chicken head. You will find

²⁴ Isaiah 40:16.

²⁵ Ibid.

something that was offered, someone trying to ward off evil spirits, you know, something.

Men have a notion. Ok, sacrifice is needed. But the Lord says, "Take it all and it is not sufficient for even one burnt offering."

Do you see the necessity, then, for the coming of this God in the flesh, that the blood of bulls and goats could not put away sin? But you take this one God man of whom the Scriptures say that he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but condescended to come down and take on him the form of a servant.

You know, he had a choice of any kind of man, but it says he took on him the form of a servant "and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."²⁶

That is satisfaction. That is what God himself determined because all else is nothing. That is why we don't look to the works of our flesh. We don't look to ceremonies. What ceremony are you going to do in order to satisfy a holy God? He already said if you want to start, go over to Lebanon and cut down all the trees first. And then get all the beasts you can to keep burning so long as that fire is burning. Keep burning. Keep putting beasts on it. And when you are all done it is still not sufficient even for one burnt offering.

Well, that is a mission there, isn't it? But that is what people do. They run. They go to ceremonies. They trust in works of the flesh when the Lord says right here in verse 17, "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity."²⁷

You might sooner try to build a rocket ship to take you to the sun and hope to live than to face a holy God. Being less than nothing is the way that we are described.

Well, he is holy. He is holy.

Fourthly, in verses 18 through 20 he is Spirit and not to be compared to idols.

He says, "To whom then will ye liken God?"²⁸

If all of this is true, what on earth are you doing trying to make something to visualize who God is?

"Or what likeness will ye compare unto him?"²⁹

I know it is I popular in religion today to put out pictures of a so called Jesus and to hang them everywhere and put them in Bible story books. It is such a shame. And I have seen

²⁶ Philippians 2:8.

²⁷ Isaiah 40:17.

²⁸ Isaiah 40:18.

²⁹ Ibid.

in stores some Bible story books that I would love to... in reading them, the way they describe them, they are pretty accurate, but then they have got these glossy pictures in there.

I don't want my children thinking that is the image of God. Don't you think that if Christ had purposed to leave a picture of himself that it could have been done from the beginning? They knew how to draw back then. But he didn't leave any picture of himself, any kind of drawing of himself. That is idolatry.

You say, "Where did it start?"

Well, in some man's head, an idea that that was how they are going to preserve the image of Christ. But it is idolatry.

He says here, "What likeness will ye compare unto him?"³⁰

You say, "Well, then how are we to visualize him?"

By his character, by these attributes even with our children. Don't think that they will know Christ better if they see some human drawing of him. I say that is a handicap. That is an obstacle. Read them Isaiah 40 and talk to them about it. Here is how Christ is described. We don't want something in that mind that is totally unrelated to who he is in his person and character. But you can see the ignorance of men.

It says there in verse 19, "The workman melteth a graven image."³¹

Without even considering where these things come from, the gold, the silver, the metal that they use, those are all minerals that God himself created, that Christ himself is the creator of them and yet they take and formulate these things. And they think... look at verse 20. They think that it is pleasing unto God or it is a way to have his blessing because their mindset says that they are too poor to bring a sacrifice.

Well, guess what? You don't have to bring a sacrifice. You look to the sacrifice.

It says, "He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot."³²

So here, again, I have seen people willing to go pay big sums of money. They are already poor. They are already impoverished, but they pay big sums of money to go and have somebody make an idol.

What really strikes you is in poor countries when you travel and you see some of the garnishment that goes on in religion. We saw it in India. One of the courtyards of some

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Isaiah 40:19.

³² Isaiah 40:20.

people it was n open meeting, preached publicly, but here was this ornate shrine with... it might as well have been covered with gold and then you look around at some of the houses that these people live in, just as poor as they come, but there sits an idol worth several thousand dollars that they have invested in to worship. And in their blindness they think they have done something to satisfy God when the message of Scripture is what?

Come freely, to partake freely of the gift of grace which is in the Lord Jesus Christ and that tone sacrifice that he accomplished for his people. But men in their depravity and so we thought at one time till the Lord opened our eyes that we have got to bring something. We have got to give something. We have got to earn his favor.

Not so. Not so.

You see why verse 21 says, “Have ye not known?”³³

Isn’t that the problem? Isn’t that what Christ said to the Samaritan woman? You know, “If you had known this one that speaks to you and says take freely of the water of life, you wouldn’t be come seeking some other.”

“Have ye not known?”³⁴

What does it take. It takes the Lord to reveal himself in us, to cut through all of the chicanery of this flesh, the ceremonialism, the thought that even as a sinner I can do something about it. The Lord has to strip all of that away from us. It teaches of his Son.

“Have ye not heard?”³⁵

Oh, yeah. We have heard with our physical ears, but have ye not heard in the heart? Has the Spirit made Christ wisdom unto you, righteousness, sanctification and redemption that he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord?

“Hath it not been told you from the beginning?”³⁶

So many people read this book. God has plainly revealed himself, but they read with their eyes blinded.

“Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?”³⁷

I tell you. Unless the Lord removes the veil from the heart we will still go back to those old idolatrous ways. Even now having the Spirit when we sin—and we do—what is the first thing we think of doing? Something we have to do to make it right rather than as we

³³ Isaiah 40:21.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

saw in 1 John two he is our propitiation, that our eyes be lifted up and look to Christ alone. He is not to be compared to idols.

Fifthly here in verses 21 to 24 or 22 to 24 his sovereignty.

“It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth.”³⁸

That shows his throne.

I wonder who ever read the Scriptures back in the day when they thought the earth was flat. You know, just from a practical standpoint why would you set off thinking the earth is flat when the Scriptures say that, “He that sitting upon the circle of the earth”³⁹? Somebody just missed it. Invested a lot of effort and time and money in some of those early days heading out over the seas thinking that you would just keep going. And if they had had means, a lot of them got... they zig zagged. They got like ADD. They found a little island here and they settled down and found some gold and they got busy there and they never... they just forgot to keep going. But if they had, they would have come right back around to where they started because it is a circle.

You stand on the beach and look across the ocean, don't you see a little bit of a curve way out there? It is not flat, that horizon.

“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.”⁴⁰

It is like you take a little camping tent and set it up and it looks good. You feel, ok, I got it set up until the wind comes and hits the thing. But here he says the heavens are like a curtain to him.

When you go out looking for that sky at night you just think that is just like a tent that the Lord has spread for himself, that even that cannot contain him.

And the best of men, the princes, what does it say? He brings them to nothing.

“He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.”⁴¹

I don't care how powerful a man was in his day rendering judgments on whatever laws or could be the top supreme court justice, but go visit him some day in a nursing home. There are some judges down here in the nursing home. People tell me about how powerful they were in their day and you look at them sitting there. They can't even feed themselves. They are slobbering all over themselves, out of their minds.

³⁸ Isaiah 20:22.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Isaiah 40:23.

You know, to put any confidence in men or the flesh is such a foolish thing. Who is it that is the King of kings and the Lord of lords? Who is it that governs all things? It is not men. That is why I don't even like to get into political conversation or even get behind a cause because it is just a man. And he doesn't rule the world. And the Lord is going to bring him down. There is a reason why he has raised him up and in his day he will put him down. Put him away just like anybody else.

It says there verse 24, "Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown: yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth."⁴²

Even successions of supposed kingdoms and empires the Lord has laughed at. If there is a succession for a while it is because the Lord purposed it, but when the Lord is done in his purpose he will cut it off.

"And they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble."⁴³

Such is our God. Christ, we saw in John 17 in our Bible class, he thanked the Father that the Father had given him authority over all flesh. Sometimes we think, well, he is just a sovereign over his Church. No, he is over all flesh. But it says to give eternal life unto as many as the Father has given him. That is who will be saved. And he is sovereign to do it.

I don't care if it is one of his sheep out there in the most remote part of the world, if that is one of the Lord's he is going to bring him and he is going to draw him. And I have told you before. He will turn a whole nation upside down to deliver one of his elect and bring them out. Such a God he is that of all the that the Father has given him, he will not lose one.

Well, our time is gone. I have some more attributes to look at there, how he is all glorious in verses 25 to 27 and how he is faithful to his own, verses 27 to 31, but, Lord willing, I will pick up on that next time.

All right. Mike.

⁴² Isaiah 40:24.

⁴³ Ibid.