

Isaiah 40:18-31

- ¹⁸ To whom then will you compare God; to what image will liken him?
- ¹⁹ As for an idol, a craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and fashions silver chains for it.
- ²⁰ A person too poor to present such an offering selects wood that will not rot; they look for a skilled worker to set up an idol that will not topple.
- ²¹ Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded?
- ²² He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.
- ²³ He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.
- ²⁴ No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.
- ²⁵ “To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One.
- ²⁶ Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.
- ²⁷ Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, “My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God”?
- ²⁸ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.
- ²⁹ He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.
- ³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;
- ³¹ but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.



THE MOST FAMOUS CONVERSATION IN THE BIBLE

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”
(John 3:16).*

TODAY: *“For God so loved the world...”*

Scripture Focus: Isaiah 40:18–31

Lesson Objective: to discover that God is in the midst of every detail of life--no matter how small--and ask him to help us trust him in every situation.

REWIND

Read out loud: Isaiah 40:18-31

The Context: The Israelites were having issues with their faith. They were headed for exile in Babylon and felt as if God had forgotten them. The middle portion of Isaiah (chapters 40–55) shows us that the Israelites were in captivity as part of God's disciplinary hand, not because the gods of the Babylonians were more powerful than the God of Israel. This middle section of the book offers hope for the exiles' ultimate return to their homeland. It serves as a call to a renewed faith in and commitment to the Lord who had proven himself to them over and over.

(vv.18-20) The Israelites had been on a spiritual roller coaster, with more lows than highs, with slow climbs and rapid descents. They toyed with the pagan worship of the Canaanites because it was more appealing to their carnal instincts. So, Isaiah asks them, "Can God be compared with anyone or anything?" He specifically asks if he can be compared to an idol made by a craftsman, covered in gold, and adorned with silver.

(vv.21-26). What was undeniable evidence does God present to support his existence? Is God's greatness good?

(vv.27-31) God seems appalled that the Israelites knew the stories and experienced God's rich grace, and yet still turned to idols, rather than their Creator and Savior. Yet, what hope does he hold out to the penitent in Israel?

RETHINK

Is evidence for God's existence more or less evident to us in modern times?

Yet, despite better knowledge, in what ways do we disappoint Him?

How does God react to our sin?

- **Galatians 6:7** - Do not be deceived: God cannot be **mocked**. A man reaps what he sows.
- **Psalms 103:10** - He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.
- **Hebrews 12:6** - The Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.

REACT

"For God so loved..."

On what basis does God love and forgive us?

- **Isaiah 40:1-2** - "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry out to her that her warfare* is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins."

Sometimes God seems far away, uninterested or unwilling to help or forgive you?

(v.21) "He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers."

* Or *hardship*

Where You Are

by Rich Mullins



Talkin' Daniel in the den of the lions
Talkin' Jonah in the belly of a whale
Talkin' three Hebrew children
And they're standing in a furnace, fiery furnace

But the fire didn't burn them, and the lions didn't bite
And the Lord reached down and you can be sure that
Everything turned out right
Oh you'll meet the Lord in the furnace
A long time before you meet Him in the sky

And where you are ain't where you wish that you was
Well your life ain't easy and the road is rough
But where you are is where He promised to be
From the ends of the world to every point of need

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Continues on back...

Meet Him in your time of trial
Meet Him in your hour of prayer
You can reach out and I'll bet
That you'll find that He's right there

Where you are, however grim it may seem
This is real life, baby
This ain't no Hollywood dream
And where you are no matter what you may face
You're gonna find out real soon what they mean when they say

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