

RELISHING THE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Part I: The Essence Of God

C. Treasuring The Infinite Immensity Of God's Essence (Isaiah 40:21-31)

I. Introduction

- A. The feeling of hopelessness, a debilitating state, afflicts many people: the high cost of living, growing tensions between nations, threats of global terrorism, growing apostasy against God and His ways in the world all tend to discourage people and at times even make believers feel a sense of hopelessness.
- B. Actually, this affliction arises from failing to know or to focus on the infinite immensity of God's essence, the "largeness" of God in all His greatness that greatly contrasts with what bothers us!
- C. We get a glimpse of that infinite immensity of God's essence, or the "stuff of which God consists" for lack of better words, a glimpse found in Isaiah 40:21-31 with edifying application as follows:

II. Treasuring The Infinite Immensity Of God's Essence, Isaiah 40:21-31.

- A. In the context of Isaiah 40, God began to encourage His captive people in Babylon, saying that He wanted them to be comforted after their long, arduous discipline of captivity to a Gentile nation, Isaiah 40:1-2.
- B. Yet, dismayed by decades of Babylonian domination, God's people in their own estimation seemed like the grass of the field that seasonally grows up only to wither and be destroyed when the breath of God's judgment blows upon it, Isa. 40:6-7. These captives needed victory over hopelessness!
- C. To address this need, God gave His dismayed people a glimpse of the infinite immensity of His essence so they might hope in **Him**, the **Sure** Source of their restoration to their own land, Isaiah 40:21-31:
 1. God reminded His captive, "beaten" people in Babylon that, since the beginning of creation, He has sat like a king above the circle (horizon) of the earth over the world's peoples who, by comparison to Him, are like mere grasshoppers, Isaiah 40:21-22a; Bible Knowledge Commentary, O. T., p. 1093.
 2. In fact, God noted He is so **immense**, He stretched out the heavens at creation like a shepherd would a Bedouin tent curtain so He might have room in which to dwell in the universe, Isaiah 40:22b! When we consider the fact that vast billions upon billions of light years mark one end of the heavens from the other, this picture helps to illustrate to us mortals how vast is the immensity of Almighty God!
 3. God said He brings princes who have hope of a bright future as kings to nothing, and He makes kings who rule the nations of the earth as emptiness, 40:23 ESV. Indeed, like plants that scarcely have been sown only to have taken root in the earth and then suddenly, utterly to perish when God blows on them, God maintains enormous sovereignty over even the Babylonians that ruled His people, Isa. 40:24 ESV!
 4. Shifting from a discussion of God's sovereignty over mankind, God dramatically illustrated His immensity in speaking of His sovereignty over the unimaginably immense stellar universe, 40:25-26:
 - a. Before noting His sovereignty over the stars, God asked the rhetorical question: "To whom then will you compare me . . .?" to which His people should respond, "No one!" (Isaiah 40:25 ESV)
 - b. Then, God began to speak of His immense sovereignty over the vast stellar universe, a universe we today know is much larger than Old Testament Isaiah would have perceived: (a) God revealed He made the stellar universe, Isaiah 40:26a. Considering there to be billions upon billions of galaxies of billions of stars in each galaxy, and that many stars are much larger than our sun that converts 4 million tons of matter into pure energy per second as a huge, relentless hydrogen bomb (Creation magazine, June-Aug. 2005, p. 53), the power and immensity of God is unfathomable to our minds! (b) God then reported He knows the number and the name of each of these stars, Isaiah 40:26b!
- D. Accordingly, God applies these facts to His hopeless people, asking how they could say God's way and goodness was hidden from them just because they were discouraged under Babylonian domination, 40:27.
- E. Because of God's immutable, infinite immensity, He was always able and willing to help the weak, worn and helpless who trusted in Him so that they would rebound where even young men would utterly fail, Isa. 40:28-31. Israel had an infinitely immense God Who was all-sovereign and could and would help her!

Lesson: *Hopelessness in God's people was solvable by their realizing the infinite immensity of God in His sovereignty, and that He desired to apply this greatness to deliver His people from their oppressors.*

Application: *May we also wait upon God that we might be renewed in hope and strength, Isa. 40:28-31.*