

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Isaiah: Jahweh Is Salvation**

#### **Part LIX: God's Encouragement That He Will Ably, Richly Bless His People (Isaiah 40:12-31)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. Though Isaiah 40:1-11 predicted Israel's restoration from her future Babylonian Captivity, the people of Israel who would have spent 70 years in Babylon would be tempted to give up hope that God could ever help them.
- B. Like them, God's afflicted people after long trials often tend to cease trusting that He is able ever richly to bless them again, and Isaiah 40:12-31 offers believers of all ages timeless encouragement to hope in the Lord:

##### **II. God's Encouragement That He Will Ably Richly, Bless His People, Isaiah 40:12-31.**

- A. Since God's downtrodden people in captivity would need encouragement to rely on the Lord with a renewed hope, the Lord reminded them in Isaiah 40:12-26 of His greatness as the Creator and Lord of the universe, including all that God's people are often tempted to view as too difficult for God to overcome to bless them:
  - 1. First, God reminded Israel of His omnipotence as the All-Powerful Creator God Who measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Who measured out the heavens with the span of his hand -- the distance between "the out-stretched thumb and the little finger -- half a cubit, or about nine inches" (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Isaiah 40:12), Who put the earth's dust as it were in a small basket and weighed out the mountains and hills on what would be small scales to Him, Isaiah 40:12; B. K. C., O. T., p. 1092.
  - 2. Then, God reminded His people of His omniscience as the Creator, Isaiah 40:13-14: no one ever counseled or taught the Lord anything because He is eternally omniscient, or all-knowing.
  - 3. The Lord thus viewed the nations like Babylon that seemed much too strong to His people who were held captive by them as if they were a drop in a bucket, small dust on a scale or even as nothing, Isa. 40:15-17.
  - 4. Compared to the nations' idols, including the gods in whom the Babylonians trusted, God was the great, living, omnipotent King where Gentile false gods were but the work of the hands of men who formed them from silver or gold (v. 18-19), or, if they were too poor to make idols of precious metals, men sought for pieces of wood that would not rot to carve into fragile idols to set up so they would not totter (v. 20).
  - 5. Israel's Lord was thus utterly sovereign over Gentile rulers, especially those who held His people captive, Isaiah 40:21-23. Such princes and rulers can scarcely get set up in their little kingdoms before God merely blows on them and they wither, with a whirlwind carrying them away like worthless stubble, Isaiah 40:24.
  - 6. God thus summed up this comparison of Himself with false gods, nations and rulers, all that tempted His people in Babylonian Captivity to be discouraged, and He asked to whom would Israel compare Him, Isaiah 40:25. God urged His people to lift up their eyes and look to the heavens where the stars that the nations worshiped existed and to ask Who but He had made them, Who but He had called them all by name and made sure that not one went missing just like God looked after each of His people, Isaiah 40:26.
- B. In Isaiah 40:27-31, the Lord applied these considerations of His absolute greatness and sovereignty over all as Creator to address the discouragement and lack of hope His people would experience in captivity (as follows):
  - 1. God asked His discouraged people in captivity why they would ask if their way was hidden from the Lord or disregarded by Him, for God is the everlasting Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, Who does not faint or grow weary, and His understanding is infinitely unsearchable, Isaiah 40:27-28.
  - 2. Indeed, God gives power to His faint people, and to him who has no might He increases strength (Isaiah 40:29), and this thought is expanded in Isaiah 40:30-31 (as follows):
    - a. Though youths will faint and be weary and young men will fall exhausted (Isaiah 40:30), the opposite will be true to those who wait for the Lord to deliver them in faith in Him, Isaiah 40:31a.
    - b. Thus, those who trust God (1) will renew their strength out of a state of weakness as they exchange their human weakness for God's supplied strength, (2) they will soar on wings as eagles in encouragement over the depths of dismay, (3) they will run and not grow weary (4) and they will walk and not be faint in persistent progress amid trials, Isaiah 40:31b NIV; E. J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 1974, v. III, p. 68-69.

***Lesson:*** *When God's downtrodden people in Babylon would need encouragement that they would yet experience God's rich restorative blessings after their long captivity, they were to recall His role as Creator and Sustainer of the universe, taking heart that this infinite God would dramatically reverse their trials to give them great blessing.*

***Application:*** *If dismayed and oppressed, may we recall God's infinite greatness and so trust Him richly to bless us!*