

Isaiah 40:12-31

Note: this passage addresses the response of "Jerusalem" to the good news of the coming of the Lord (40:1-11). Verse 13 is quoted in 1 Corinthians 2:16 and there are also other echoes such as verse 23 (princes) in verse 6 of 1 Corinthians 2. The princes are "the wise" of this world that ridicule the Gospel and do not understand God's ways.

Section A states the contrast between the Creator and humans. Why would humans think they were wiser than God. This is parallel with A' where Israel is challenged to consider that the All Mighty Creator can see through hypocrisy but is also gracious to strengthen those who accept the Gospel.

Section B and B' both begin with the same question - what is God like? In B the folly of idolatry is exposed and contrasts with the majesty of the Creator in B'.

The middle section C gives the answer to the questions of B and B' and the answer to the arrogance of the "princes"- God is Creator but the princes of this world are less than nothing!

A. The Creator

12. 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?

13. Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD,
or being his counsellor hath taught him?

14. 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**?

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.

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

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

B. What is God like? - an idol!

18. **To whom then will ye liken God?**

or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

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

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.

C. Answer - The Creator!

21. **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?

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:

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

B'. What is God like? -the Creator!

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

A'. the Creator

27 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?
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**.
29 He giveth power to the faint;
and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.
30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary,
and the young men shall utterly fall:
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.