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The Foundations of the Earth

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
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or Roget's Thesaurus – **September 18, 2016**

Isaiah 40:21-31

Introduction: Isaiah was born in 765 BC., two years after Jonah preached to Nineveh. In 748 BC., he had his vision of the Lord (Yahweh) on the throne, the year **Uzziah died**, making him **17 years old** when he began his ministry. This is 743 years before the birth of Christ, which was in 5 BC. During this time, Assyria was the world power. Isaiah preached during the ministries of Micah and Hosea. In **712 BC.**, at the age of **53**, he wrote **Isaiah 40**, which is **110 years before** the first of the Jews, in 586 BC, were taken into exile. The captivity lasted for 70 years, from **586 BC.** to **516 BC.** Isaiah was **martyred** during the reign of Manasseh around 681 BC., which means he was about **84 years old** when he **died**. **Jeremiah** was born 31 years later. (Source: *The Reese Chronological Bible*, pages 806-808, 828, 908, 961, 1256)

During this critical time in Judah's history, God needed someone to take his **word** to a **rebellious** nation.

In spite of the fact that **Isaiah** faithfully **preached** God's word to the people of Judah, they **refused** to **REPENT**. Hearing God's word would actually **harden** the **hearts** (MINDS) of many (Isaiah 6:9). Isaiah nevertheless was still called upon to proclaim the word of the Lord to the bitter end, after which the people would finally be carried away as **captives** (vs. 11). (Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator*, Union Press Publication- Christian Life Series)

Isaiah 40:1-2, *Comfort ye, **comfort** ye my people, saith your God. **Speak ye** comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her **warfare** is accomplished, that her iniquity is **pardoned**: for she hath **received** of the LORD's (Yahweh's) hand **double** for all her **sins**.*

NOTE: As Christians, we cannot help recalling Jesus' promise to send "another Comforter, that **He**, (not **IT**), may abide with you for ever." (John 14:16) This **Comforter** is the Holy Spirit. As the "**God of all comfort**" (2 Cor. 1:3) comforts us, we must comfort one another.

...Once Judah **repented** of her sins, she could be pardoned. There is **no forgiveness** **apart from the willingness to turn from sin** (Isa. 55:6-7). God is **WILLING** to forgive, but man must be **WILLING** to **REPENT** (Ps. 51:17).

(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator*, Union Press Publication- Christian Life Series)

Isaiah 40:3-5, *The **voice** of him that **crieth** in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of **the LORD** (Yahweh), make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the **GLORY** of the LORD (Yahweh) **shall be revealed**, and **all flesh** **shall SEE it** together: for the **mouth** of the LORD (Yahweh) hath **SPOKEN IT**.*

NOTE: Yahweh being their leader, so it shall be at the coming restoration of Israel, of which the restoration **from Babylon** was but a **type** (NOT the full realization; because their way from it was NOT through the "wilderness"). Where John preached (namely, in the

wilderness-the **type** of this earth-a **MORAL wilderness**), there were the hearers who are ordered to prepare the way of **the Lord** (Yahweh), and there was to be the coming of **the Lord** (Bengel). John, though he was immediately followed by the suffering **Messiah**, is rather the herald of the coming **reigning Messiah**, as Malachi 4:5-6 proves.

Thought 1. As we see, verse 3 is speaking of the coming of Yahweh. But, during John's ministry, this scripture was fulfilled, in part, by Jesus' (Yahshua's) coming as the Messiah. What comes to mind here is that Yahweh was "IN" Jesus, by his Spirit. This truth is confirmed by several scriptures that point to this same "reality."

Isaiah 7:14 ...the Lord himself shall give you a SIGN; Behold, a **virgin** shall **conceive**, and bear a **son**, and shall call his name **Immanuel** (**WITH us is God**).

Acts 10:38, How God (Yahweh) **anointed** Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with **power**: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for **God was WITH him**.

John 14:10... the **Father** that **delleth IN me**, **HE** doeth the works.

2 Corinthians 5:19 ... **God was IN Christ**, reconciling the world unto himself...

Thought 2. God is IN us also! Christ is IN us, and as you know, that doesn't make us Christ. Jesus and his Father are OF one Spirit. There is only ONE Spirit! (Eph. 4:4)

1 John 4:15-17, God is love; and he that dwelleth IN love **delleth IN GOD**, and **God IN HIM**.

Matthew 17:11, cf. Acts 3:21, implies that John is NOT exclusively meant; and that, though in one sense Elias has come, in another he is yet to come. **John** was the **figurative Elias, coming "in the spirit and power of Elias"** (Luke 1:17): John 1:21, where John the Baptist denies that he was the actual Elias, accords with this view. Mal. 4:5-6 cannot have received its exhaustive fulfillment in **John**; the **Jews** always **understood it** of the **literal Elijah**. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/isaiah-40.html>)

Isaiah 40:17-21, *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 (rise) of the earth?*

NOTE: Have ye not known? - This is evidently an address to the **worshippers of idols**, and either designed to be addressed to the **Jews** themselves in the times of Manasseh, when **idolatry** abounded, or to all idolaters. The prophet had in the previous verses shown the manner in which the idols were made, and the folly of regarding them as objects of worship. He now turns and addresses the worshippers of these idols, as being without excuse. They might have known that these were **NOT the true God**.

From the beginning - Hebrew, 'From the head,' that is, from the very **commencement** of the world. Has it not been communicated by tradition, from age to age, that there is **ONE GOD**, and that he is the **Creator** and upholder of all things? This was particularly the case with the Jews, who had had this knowledge from the very commencement of their history, and they were, therefore, entirely without excuse in their tendencies to idolatry.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/brb/isaiah-40.html>)

Isaiah 40:22-23, *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.

NOTE: It is he that sitteth - Margin, ‘Him that sitteth,’ that is, have you NOT known him? The Hebrew literally means ‘the **sitter**, or **he sitting on the circle of the each;**’ and it may be connected either with Isaiah 40:21, ‘Have ye not known him sitting on the circle of the earth?’ or with Isaiah 40:18, ‘What likeness will ye compare to him that sitteth on the circle of the earth?’ In either case the phrase is designed to show the **majesty** and **glory** of God. The word ‘sitteth’ refers to God as a **sovereign** (supreme [highest in authority] ruler;) or **monarch** (King), making the circle of the earth his throne.

The circle of the earth - Or rather, “above” (לַעֲלֵי 'al) the circle of the earth. The word rendered ‘circle’ (חֹג chûg) denotes “a circle, sphere, or arch”; and is applied to the arch or vault of the heavens, in Proverbs 8:27; Job 22:14. The phrase ‘circle,’ or ‘circuit of the earth,’ here seems to be used in the same sense as the phrase orbis terrarum by the Latins; **not** as denoting a **sphere**, or **not** as implying that the earth was a **globe**, but that it was an EXTENDED PLAIN surrounded by oceans and mighty waters. The globular form of the earth **was then unknown**; and the idea is, that God sat above this extended circuit, or circle; and that the vast earth was beneath his feet.

That bringeth the princes to nothing - That is, **ALL princes and kings**. No matter how great their power, their wealth, and their dignity, they are, by his hand, reduced to nothing before him. The design of this passage is to **contrast** the **majesty of God** with that of princes and nobles, and to show how far he excels them all. The general truth is therefore stated, that all monarchs are by him removed from their thrones, and consigned (delivered) to nothing. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/isaiah-40.html>)

Isaiah 40:24, *Yea, they shall NOT be planted; yea, they shall NOT be sown: yea, their stock (stump of a tree) 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.*

NOTE: Yea, they shall not be planted - The **kings** and **rulers** - especially they who oppose God in the execution of his purposes. The idea in this verse is, that **their name and family** should **become extinct** in the same way as a tree does from which NO SHOOT starts up. Although they were great and mighty, like the TREE that sends out far-spreading branches, and strikes its roots deep, **yet God would so utterly destroy them** that they should have no posterity, and their family become extinct. Princes and kings are often compared to lofty and majestic trees of the forest (compare Psalm 37:35; Daniel 4:7 ff)

Psalm 37:34-36, WAIT on the LORD (Yahweh), and KEEP his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the **wicked are cut off**, thou shalt SEE IT. I have seen the **wicked in GREAT power**, and SPREADING himself like a **green bay TREE**. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

Vitringa supposes that **wicked rulers** are particularly intended here, and that the idea is, that the wicked princes that persecuted his people should be entirely extinct on the earth. He refers particularly to Pharaoh, Antiochus Epiphanes, Nero, Domitian, Decius, Gallus, Galerius, Maxenus, Maximus, and some others, as instances of this kind, whose **families soon became extinct**. It may be remarked, in general, that the **families** of monarchs and princes BECOME EXTINCT usually **much sooner** than others. The fact may be owing in part to the usual luxury and vice in the families of the great, and in part to the direct arrangements of God, by which he designs that power shall NOT be forever perpetuated in one family, or line. The general idea in the passage is, that earthly princes and rulers are as nothing when compared with God, and that he can easily destroy their families and their name. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/isaiah-40.html>)

Isaiah 40:25-26, *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.

NOTE: Concerning the **idols** worshipped by the heathen, they were merely the objects of human craftsmanship (Isa. 40:18-20) As Paul declared centuries later to the Athenians, "We ought not to think that the **Godhead** (the Supreme Being) is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device" (Acts 17:29).
(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator*, Union Press Publication- Christian Life Series)

Thought 1. The church at Corinth was told, by Paul, more important truths about idols that were being worshipped. He said worshipping idols was to fellowship with demons.

1 Corinthians 10:18-22, Behold **Israel** after the flesh: are NOT they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the **idol** is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to **idols** is any thing? But *I say*, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to **DEVILS (dæmonic being)**, and NOT to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of **devils**: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke **the Lord (the supreme authority)** to **jealousy?** are we stronger than he?

Isaiah 40:27-28, *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 (Jehovah [Yahweh])**, the **Creator** of the ends of the earth, **fainteth not**, neither is weary? there is **NO SEARCHING** of his understanding.*

No Searching defined 2714, enumeration (an account of a number of things, in which mention is made of every particular article).

Thought 1. As you can see, the definition makes clear that we can't know everything about God's understanding. But, the Holy Spirit uses God's word and manifestations of the supernatural, like discerning of spirits, a word of knowledge, and a word of wisdom to give us great understanding of our Father and the Lord Jesus. One easy way of understanding him is reading about Jesus in God's Word. Since he and his Father are in perfect agreement (oneness, unity), when we see him, we also see the Father. (John 14:9) He said only what his Father taught him to say. And this is the way we're supposed to be. You do know that we have the mind of Christ? (1 Cor. 2:16) This means we have his intellect: readiness of comprehension; faculty of thinking.

Ephesians 1:15-18, Wherefore I also, after I heard of your **faith** in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and **revelation** in the **knowledge** of him: the **EYES** of your **understanding** being enlightened; that ye may KNOW what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints...

Jeremiah 9:24 ...let him that glorieth **glory** in this, that he **understandeth** and knoweth me, That I am the Lord which exercise **lovingkindness**, **judgment** (authority, justice [punishment, exoneration, GOOD, praise, approval]), and **righteousness**, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

Proverbs 9:10, The **FEAR (reverence)** of the LORD (Yahweh) is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the **holy (God)** is **understanding**.

Isaiah 40:29, He giveth **POWER** to the **faint**; and to them that have NO might **HE increaseth STRENGTH**.

Thought 1. Notice, the source of our strength is NOT trials and tribulations. We should be settled in this truth and NOT be distracted to look elsewhere for HELP! Below are a few more verses of scripture that also confirm that this is the truth.

Psalms 18:32, It is **God** that girdeth ME with **strength**..

Psalms 27:1, The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the **STRENGTH** of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Isaiah 25:4, For thou hast been a **strength** to the poor, a **STRENGTH** to the needy in his distress, a REFUGE from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

Luke 22:41-43, And he (*Jesus*) was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be **willing**, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, NOT my will, but thine, be done.
And there appeared an **ANGEL** unto him from heaven, **STRENGTHENING** him.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 ...he said unto me, My GRACE) is sufficient for thee: for my **STRENGTH** is made perfect in **WEAKNESS** (condition of being feeble [as, infants are feeble at their birth]). Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities (that the **POWER** of Christ may **REST upon me**).

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am **WEAK** (feeble [as, infants are feeble at their birth]), then am I **STRONG**.

Philippians 4:13, I can DO **ALL** things through **Christ** which **strengtheneth** me.

NOTE: He gives strength and power to his people, and helps them by enabling them to help themselves. He that is the strong God is the **strength of Israel**. (1.) He can help the weak, Isaiah 40:29. Many a time he gives power to the faint, to those that are ready to faint away and to those that have no might he not only gives, but **increases strength**, as there is more and more occasion for it. Many out of bodily weakness are wonderfully recovered, and made strong, by the providence of God: and many that are feeble in spirit, timorous (fearful of danger; timid) and faint-hearted, unfit for services and sufferings, are yet **strengthened** by the **grace of God** with **all might** in the INWARD MAN.

Colossians 1:10-11, That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto ALL PLEASING, being fruitful in every good work, and **increasing** in the knowledge of God; **Strengthened** with **all might (miraculous power)**, according to his glorious **power**, unto ALL patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

To those who are sensible of their **weakness**, and ready to acknowledge they have no might, God does in a special manner INCREASE STRENGTH for, when we are WEAK in ourselves, then are we **STRONG** in the Lord. (2.) He will **help the willing**, will help those who, in a **humble dependence** upon him, **help themselves**, and will do well for those who do their best, Isaiah 40:30, 31.

(Source: <https://www.study-light.org/commentaries/mhm/isaiah-40.html>)

Isaiah 40:30-31, Even the **youths** shall faint and be weary, and the **young men** shall utterly fall: but they that **WAIT** upon **the LORD (Jehovah [Yahweh])** 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.

Wait defined 6960, qavah pronounced kaw-vaw'; (figuratively) **to EXPECT**: gather (together), **LOOK** (1. to expect 2. to apply the MIND or understanding).

Wait, to **REST** in expectation and patience (the act or quality of WAITING long for justice or EXPECTED good without discontent).

Thought 1. As we can see from the definition, "WAIT" does not mean to wait on God as if we were waiters, serving food, etc. But, it actually means to expect; REST expecting.

Romans 8:24-25, For we are **saved** by **HOPE: (expectation)** but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we **hope (expect)** for that we see not, **then** do we with **patience (cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy)** **WAIT (expect fully, look)** for it.

Hebrews 6:10-12 ...God is NOT unrighteous to forget your **work** and **labour** of LOVE... and we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of **hope** unto the end. That ye be not **slothful (lazy)**, but **followers (imitator)** of them who through **faith** and **PATIENCE** inherit the promises.

Patience defined 3115, Longanimity (disposition [frame of MIND] to endure long under offenses), **(obj.) forbearance** (the act of forbearing or WAITING; the exercise of patience. **or (subj.) fortitude** (that strength or firmness of MIND which enables a person to encounter danger with coolness and courage, or to bear pain or adversity WITHOUT murmuring, depression, or **DESPONDENCY** [loss of hope and cessation: stop of effort]; resolute [determined, convinced] endurance. *1913 Webster's Dictionary*).

Hebrews 6:13-19, For when God made **PROMISE** to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he **swore** by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, **after** he had **PATIENTLY endured**, he **obtained** the **promise**. For men verily swear by the greater: and an OATH for confirmation is to them an end of all **strife (dispute)**. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the **immutability** (impossibility to change) of his **counsel (will)**, confirmed it by an **oath**:

That by two immutable things, (*promise & oath*) in which it was **impossible** for God to **lie**, we might have strong consolation (COMFORT), who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the **HOPE** set before us. Which **hope** we have as an anchor of the **soul (MIND)**, both sure and steadfast...

Isaiah 26:3-4, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose **MIND** is **stayed** on THEE: because he **trusteth** in thee.

Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH IS everlasting **strength**...

Hebrews 12:1-3 ...seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every **weight**, and the **sin** which doth so easily beset us, and let us **run** with **PATIENCE** the race that is set before us, **Looking** unto **Jesus** the author and finisher of our faith; who for the **JOY** that was set before him endured the cross, **despising** the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For CONSIDER HIM that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be **WEARIED** and **FAINT** in your **MINDS**.

Patience defined 5281, cheerful [or hopeful] endurance (standing, peace of mind, self-restraint, ice water in one's veins, persistence).

Faint defined 1590, to relax [GIVE UP: STOP].

Psalms 16:9-10, Therefore my heart is **glad**, and my glory **rejoiceth**: my **flesh** also shall **REST** in **HOPE (trust)**. For thou wilt not leave my soul in **hell**; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see **corruption**. (*Only 3 days & 3 nights, dead*)