

Isaiah 40:9-17  
"Behold Your God"

\* Let's remind ourselves of the frailty, the vulnerability & the brevity of life. "All flesh is as grass," "the grass withers, the flower fades." (In the grand scheme of things, it doesn't last long. James said that like this, "*For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.*"<sup>1</sup>) "But the word of our God... (Vs 8) stands forever."

What does that mean? It means there's hope for you & for me. Because it's by His eternal Word that we have been *born again*. Peter put it plainly, "*having been born again, not of corruptible seed* (that which is temporary or somehow transitory) *but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,*"<sup>2</sup>

& This is the message (the good news) that we've been commissioned to share, to preach & proclaim to those who are w/out hope, being w/out God in the world. It's there in Vs 9b, "You who bring good tidings (that's you, you have the hope of the gospel abiding w/in you), Lift up your voice w/strength, lift it up, do not be afraid; \* say to the cities of Judah, "Behold, your God!"

What do you say we bring that right up to where we live, "Say to the city of Joplin, (insert said city in which you live) 'Behold, your God!'" Set your eyes upon Him, study Him, spend some time in examination *of* & meditation *upon* Him...

& In making our way through the remainder of the Ch, there are some things that Isaiah wants to make sure that we don't miss *about* Him. Now, we technically taught through this in our last gathering, but I trust you don't mind if I draw your attention to a few more details here in Vs 10-11...

If you'll allow me to direct your attention to Vs 10, the 1<sup>st</sup> thing he wants you to be assured of concerning your God is the fact that He's coming to rule & reign over this earth!  
Vs 10

So right away we're drawn to the fact that this isn't a reference to the 1<sup>st</sup> coming of Christ (he references *that* in other places/passages, not here). *This* is a reference to the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming. *The return & rule of J.C. over all the earth!* (Btw, I trust we would agree that this is clearly a Messianic reference, yes?) – He says here, "His arm shall rule." Meaning, He (the Messiah) will reign w/resolute & absolute sovereign authority.

The One Isaiah is speaking of here is One who has absolute unwavering authority.

<sup>1</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jas 4:14]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.  
<sup>2</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [1 Pe 1:23]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Recall w/me the words of Jesus. He said, **"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."**<sup>3</sup> The One Isaiah is speaking of here will *reward* those who've been faithful to Him, individually (His reward is w/Him). In Matt 16 we discover the declaration of Jesus when He said, **"For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works."**<sup>4</sup> & Again Rev 22, **"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work."**<sup>5</sup> "& His work before Him." What work? Look at Vs 11.

### Vs 11

The work of *feeding, leading tending to & taking care of* the sheep of His hand. He will *feed His flock* like a *Shepherd*. (& We're gonna spend some time talking about this. But before I get too far into this & too far away from Vs 9, can we just agree that this passage is pointing conclusively, concretely to J.C.?)

Ok. Now, back up to where we began. We brought it right up to where we live presently, it's there in Vs 9, "Say to the cities of (Joplin), 'Behold Your God!' Vs 10, "Behold the Lord *God* shall come..." I trust that you're already picking up what I'm trying to put down here. \* **Even in your OT, the scriptures clearly & candidly declare that the Messiah, the One who would rule & reign over all the earth sovereignly/supremely, who would bring His reward for those faithful to Him individually, who would feed & lead His sheep tenderly would Himself *Personally* be God. Ladies & gentlemen, I'm wanting you to see that from cover to cover the Bible is clear that Jesus is God wrapped/robed in flesh & blood. God became a Man in the Person of J.C. so that as a Man He could redeem mankind unto Himself... For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. That whosoever would believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life... \***

Vs 11, "& He will feed His flock like a Shepherd." All throughout the scriptures we discover that the Lord likens Himself to a shepherd. One who would direct/protect, who would lead & feed the sheep of His hand. & We see various pictures of His role as a Shepherd in other shepherds of the Bible. **All the way back in the beginning w/Abel we see the picture of the shepherd who was slain. The one who would lose his life, whose blood would be shed for no fault of his own. Joseph becomes a picture of Jesus, the persecuted & exalted shepherd. Moses becomes of picture of Jesus. The shepherd who would lead his people out of bondage. David becomes a picture of Jesus, the shepherd king.**

<sup>3</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Mt 28:18). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>4</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Mt 16:27). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>5</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Re 22:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Of course, when we get to the psalms, we read scriptures along the lines of, *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."*<sup>6</sup> The rod was for correction, the sheep would begin to stray & the shepherd would need to pop it back in line. The staff was for protection, to keep predatory animals or that which might seek to somehow harm the sheep, away.

Psalm 95, *"Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand."*<sup>7</sup>

& Btw let's go ahead & put this out there, Jesus said, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."*<sup>8</sup>

\*"& He will feed His flock like a Shepherd." & This is the primary responsibility of a good shepherd, yes? To feed his flock. What's the use in being a shepherd if your flock has died from starvation? The sheep need to be nourished, it's absolutely paramount!

Perhaps you recall, there they were, Jesus & His disciples, it was post resurrection & Jesus would meet up w/them (unbeknownst to them initially) because Peter had denied Him publicly so Jesus would restore him publicly. & As they were sitting around the fire, Jesus looked at Peter & He said, "Peter, do you love Me?" Peter said, "Lord, you know I love You..." He said (Jn 21), "Feed My lambs." "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" "Tend My sheep." "Simon, do you love Me?" "Feed My sheep." He didn't say, "Do you love Me? Then work miracles, perform signs & wonders." "Do you love Me? Heal the sick, raise the dead, prophesy & speak in tongues..." Though those things would be a very real part of the ministry, the priority of a shepherd, is to feed the flock of God. Which translates, teach God's people God's word. (Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God).

Observation, interpretation, application. The principles & precepts. It's my heart for you that you would have a powerful working knowledge of the word of God, that you would obtain/maintain a biblical world view that you would be salt/light in this dark/decaying world. That you would be well equipped for the work of the ministry to which you've been called. \*

<sup>6</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Ps 23:1-4). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>7</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Ps 95:6-7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>8</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Jn 10:11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

\* Jesus referred to Himself as “The Good Shepherd”. Hebrews 13:20 calls Him, “The Great Shepherd”. & Peter called Him, “The Chief Shepherd” (1 Pet 5:4).

& “He will gather the lambs w/His arm, carry them in His bosom, & gently lead those who are w/young.” These things imply relationship, love, kindness, care, compassion & tenderness. The weak aren’t despised, they’re drawn in & carried in His bosom, close to the heart. Maybe you feel like a weak sheep (I know I’ve felt that way). I’m so glad that the Good Shepherd doesn’t despise the weak, He draws them close & cradles them next to His heart. That place of safety & loving-kindness. \*

But not only will the Good Shepherd feed & gently lead His flock, He’ll also separate them from the goats & render judgment to the ungodly. Leave Isaiah 40 & turn w/me to **Matt 25: 31-46**

\* We serve a loving, gentle & tender yet holy & righteous God. A great example for all you husbands/fathers out there. Be holy for the Lord your God is holy, uphold righteousness, yet be a model of tenderness, gentleness, love & compassion to your wife & to your children.\*

**Vs 12**

Let’s recall the initial exhortation, “Behold, your God!” He reigns w/absolute authority, He maintains total & unyielding sovereignty. Yet He Shepherds us intimately/personally/lovingly & tenderly. – Here we’re being drawn to consider His overwhelming, all-encompassing omnipotent majesty.

We’re being challenged to consider creation in all its immensity, its magnitude, its enormity. Yet realize that it’s nothing in comparison God’s omnipotent majesty. & Let’s be clear. We know the Bible teaches (Jesus said) that God is Spirit. He doesn’t have a body in the sense of hands, feet as do we. These are terms that are used to help us understand His character, His attributes. The point that Isaiah is making is that we should stand in awe of the power, the might, the majesty & the glory of God.

When we think of the enormity of the oceans of the earth. God measured them, determined their limits by the “hollow of His hand.” He measured the heavens w/a span. Family,\* I want you to think of the vastness of the heavens. Do you realize that the sun (being a medium sized star) is 93 million miles away from the earth? & The sun is 100xs larger than the earth. You could stretch the earth side by side across the face of the sun 100xs. Pertaining to volume, you could place 1.3 million earths inside the sun...

But then there’s Betelgeuse. You can fit over 1 million suns inside Betelgeuse.

But then there's UY Scuti. Listen to this. You can fit 430 million suns, each containing 1.3 million earths inside UY Scuti. Let me save you the math. You could place the volume of 6 quadrillion 489 trillion earths inside UY Scuti. These are numbers that are beyond our comprehension.

We live in this little neck of the woods of the known universe called the Milky Way Galaxy. It's about 100,000 light years across. Meaning that if you could travel at the speed of light (186,000 miles per second), it would take you 100,000 years to travel from one side to the other. There are (to the best of our ability to calculate) about 100 billion stars contained in our galaxy. But we're only one of over 1-200 billion galaxies (some estimate up to 2 trillion) each containing billions of stars... & Yet the Bible declares of God, *"He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name."*<sup>9</sup> Not only does God know the exact amount of stars there are in the universe, He has a name for each one of them!!!

It causes us to consider the words of David when he said, *"When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?"*<sup>10</sup> He measures heaven w/a span. \*

"Calculates the dust of the earth in a measure." I don't even know the amount of dust in my home, much less in all the earth... "Weighs the mountains in scales & the hills in a balance." God is the One who created the universe & placed it all in a perfect balance. "Weighed it, measured it, calculated it." He didn't need any advice or seek any input from anyone... Look at Vs 13.

### Vs 13-14

Can we be honest here? We all have! Or at least we've tried ☺. Every time you pray, every time I pray & say, "God, would You \_\_\_?" Or, "God, I'm asking You to \_\_\_\_." "I really need You to \_\_\_\_." We're seeking to direct the Spirit of the Lord! We try to counsel God, give Him advice as though we know what really needs to happen. After all, He's got a lot going on. He may not be aware of the details happening real time in our lives...

Now, we'd never say that out loud, & perhaps we'd never really believe that even if were a fleeting thought that passed through our minds. But the way we behave & direct our prayers sometimes seem to imply it.

But what do we see here? If Vs 12 brings into focus for us the *omnipotence* of God...

<sup>9</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ps 147:4]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>10</sup> *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ps 8:3-4]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Vs 13-14 draws our attention to the *omniscience* of God. His unending wisdom & knowledge w/out measure. (This is where you write it down so you can read it later, Job Ch 38-39).

\* What's the take home from this section of scripture? The question to consider isn't, how big are our problems? But rather, how big is our God? We get the feeling here that Isaiah is seeking to encourage his reader in this way, "If God is above & beyond all of creation, if there is no one like Him, none who are even beside Him, if He's infinite in power & might, infinite in wisdom & knowledge, what part of your problem is He unable to handle?" Someone has described "circumstances" as "those nasty things you see when you get your eyes off of God."

Quick question. Is there anything you've ever seen that God has never seen? Of course there is. Your equal. God has never seen His equal. He alone is worthy of all blessing & honor, all glory & power. – \*

How many times we've sought to show God "the way of understanding". *Those of you who are parents, have you ever had your child (say they were 4-5) try to help you assemble a toy (perhaps on Christmas morning)? You've done it before, but they insist on showing you how to do it... & truth be told they hinder you way more than they help you, but you allow them to direct you here & there. Sometimes we're kinda like that w/God. He knows what He's doing, but we insist on Him trying things our way (as if we can teach Him something.)*

Listen, we don't counsel God, God counsels *us* through the principles & precepts of His word... Ps 119, *"Your testimonies also are my delight And my counselors."*<sup>11</sup> Now, don't misunderstand me, there's nothing wrong with pouring out our heart before the Lord and talking to Him about our problems. *But let's not think we're informing Him of something He didn't already know... & Yes, we're to bring our requests to Him, our petitions to Him, but let's remember that our heavenly Father knows best & He knows the right thing to do. So nevertheless, not my will, Your will be done.*

### Vs 15-17

One more scripture for you. Ps 2. *"Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,*

<sup>11</sup> *The New King James Version*, (1982). [Ps 119:24]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

*"Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision."*<sup>12</sup>

The military might of the nations is something that impresses us. I'll never forget when my wife & I (early 20's) were at a 4<sup>th</sup> of July type festival in St. Louis. There we were by the arch, the Mississippi river flowing by, thousands of people along the shore & in the park. & Suddenly this Harrier jet comes flying in. It's going slow, & it begins to hover right in front of us, it starts to lower down toward the river, water is spraying, the engine is roaring, it's turbines (or whatever they're called) turn down, the body points up & it takes off back into flight. The feeling of raw power was overwhelming. I told my wife, "I'm gonna sleep easier tonight knowing those things are out there protecting this nation..." ☺ It was just 1 jet in a sea of who knows how many were at the ready. My point being that the power of the nations can be an awesome thing to behold...

\* "Behold your God." The *nations* (not just our nation, every nation on earth combined) are as a drop in a bucket, counted as the small dust on the scales..." They're nothing compared to the greatness & glory of God! Close

In ancient marketplaces, before you bought your lb of wheat, or flour or whatever, the merchant would blow the dust off his scales so that you knew you weren't paying for something you weren't getting. You're paying for flour, not dust. Isaiah is telling us that the nations are like the dust on the scales to God, insignificant, inconsequential compared to His might.

All the wood of Lebanon was insufficient to make a burnt offering to Him, all the animals of its forest aren't enough, the best that man could provide isn't enough to satisfy the worth & the honor & glory of God!

The nations before Him are as nothing, & counted by Him as less than nothing & worthless... The pomp & the pride of the godless nations of the world is an offense to the holiness & the righteousness of God.

& Yet for all of that, God demonstrates His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Behold what *manner of love* the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Oh, how we should humble our hearts before the Living God. God *resists* the proud, but gives grace to the humble... Let's turn our hearts to the Lord, humble our hearts before the Lord, even now... \*

**Prayer Points:**

God, we humble our hearts before You. As we *behold* You. God show us Your glory... Pour out Your Spirit upon us, empower & embolden us to be salt & light in this contaminated culture to which You've called us. May we run the race to win, may we finish well. Being good & faithful servants unto our Good, our Great, to the Chief Shepherd & Overseer of our souls.

If anyone be in Christ he's a new creation, old things pass away, all things are made new. We spoke today of the omnipotent power of God. God has the power to make you new. You can be "born again" as by the Spirit of God. Believe on the Lord J.C. & you'll be saved.