

Foundations of the Earth

Key Verse: “*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.*”
—Isaiah 40:28

Selected Scripture:
Isaiah 40:21-31

The idolaters invested a great deal of their time and money to have their gods crafted. More time and money were wasted in service to these gods. However, such gods were lifeless and therefore useless. They were merely objects of stone or wood that could do nothing for those who worshipped them. “We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.”—I Cor. 8:4

Israel’s idolatry was a misguided use of their resources. The Lord speaks to them, seeking to encourage

OUR KEY VERSE REPEATS

the opening questions posed in Isaiah 40:21. The questions beckon to those Israelites who had given themselves over to idolatry. The vanity of idolatry is identified earlier in this chapter: “As for the idol, a craftsman casts it, A goldsmith plates it with gold, And a silversmith fashions chains of silver. He who is too impoverished for such an offering selects a tree that does not rot; He seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman to prepare an idol that will not totter.” (vss. 19,20, *New American Standard Bible*)

heart-searching reflection. “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? 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.” (Isa. 40:21-23) In essence God is saying to them, “Leave your idols behind, because they are all for naught!”

Thus God expresses his omnipotence. He is the Creator who laid the foundation of the earth—a feat beyond the power of any idol. He is the Lord who sits far above the earth, its people, rulers, and concerns. He is tireless and never grows weary. His understanding of all things is unfathomable. He is the living God who can bless mankind with true riches, peace, and life abundant. No idol of wood or stone can provide these things.

We, like the Israelites in our lesson, may be tempted to covet things made by a modern “craftsman,” “goldsmith,” and “silversmith” in the hope that they will bring us happiness. In this manner, the things of this earth can become idols to us. Yet, the joys obtained through material goods are often short-lived. The things that we may idolize quickly lose their luster. How wise and apropos is the Apostle John’s benedictory counsel in his first epistle, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”—I John 5:21

As Christians, we realize that God alone can bless. Nothing in this world even comes close to the comfort we receive from communion with God in prayer and study of his Word. Let us not waste our time and resources on earthly vanities. The final verse of our lesson is one of the most precious promises in the Bible. “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.” (Isa. 40:31) May our faith thus rest only upon foundations laid by God. ■