



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

The LORD Almighty--Omniscient (Isaiah 41:21-29)

APRIL 11, 2012

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Weekly Bible Study Schedule

- **Wednesday, April 11, 7 AM in HHR #5**
-Breakfast Provided
- **No Evening Study for this week.**

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Through our studies this session, we have been discussing Isaiah 40 which may be the most beautiful chapter about God in all of Scripture. From Isaiah 40, we discover that God is the all powerful, Creator and sustainer of the universe. He is all-wise, immense, incomparable, and sovereign over creation, sovereign over the nations. He is a God of much compassion and mercy on His children.

In the remaining weeks of the 2012 Legislative session, we plan to move into Isaiah 41-48. We will not cover every verse as we did in chapter 40, but we will study a number of the passages which reveal other excellent characteristics of God.

INTRODUCTION

“Those who think they know it all are an annoyance to those of us who do.”

The passage we are looking at today is another of those “comparison passages” that were found in Isaiah 40. In 40:15-24, we see that no other thing called ‘god’ compare to Yahweh God in sovereignty. In 40:25-31, we see that no other thing called ‘god’ compare to Yahweh God in power. In our passage today, we will see that no other thing called ‘god’ compare to Yahweh God in knowledge.

Up to this point in chapter 41, Isaiah pointed out again (for these things are covered in the previous chapter) that God is sovereign over kings and nations (41:2-3) and He is eternal (41:4). It is God who calls His people and thus, they should not fear (41:8-11). God is the One who not only calls, but also the One who will take care and provide for His people (41:14-20).

Isaiah 41:21-26 "Present your case," the LORD says. "Bring forward your strong arguments," The King of Jacob says. ²²Let them bring forth and declare to us what is going to take place; As for the former events, declare what they were, That we may consider them and know their outcome. Or announce to us what is coming; ²³Declare the things that are going to come afterward, That we may know that you are gods; Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously look about us and fear together. ²⁴Behold, you are of no account, And your work amounts to nothing; He who chooses you is an abomination. ²⁵I have stirred up one from the north, and he comes-- one from the rising sun who calls on my name. He treads on rulers as if they were mortar, as if he were a potter treading the clay. ²⁶Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know, or beforehand, so we could say, 'He was right'? No one told of this, no one foretold it; no one heard any words from you.

In this passage, God mockingly challenges the idols set up as ‘gods’. They cannot tell the future or even speak of what has already transpired. They cannot do anything good or bad for they are not able to do anything (cf. Psalm 115:4-8; Isaiah 44:10-20). From this passage, we will focus on God’s knowledge and the thoughts surrounding this attribute.

I. THE SCRIPTURE

The truth that God knows all things is one well demonstrated and taught throughout Scripture. Here are just a few!

1 Chronicles 28:9 As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.

Psalm 147:5 Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.

Jeremiah 16:17 "For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes.

CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS & STAFF: TUESDAYS @ 7AM, HEARING ROOM #5

LEGISLATORS: TUESDAYS @ 8:30PM, ROOM #301

TRUMAN BUILDING: THURSDAYS @ 7AM, 4THFLOOR CAFETERIA

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Hebrews 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Isaiah 46:9-10 Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure...'

II. THE DOCTRINE

1 Samuel 2:3 (NIV) Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the LORD is a God who knows...

A quick definition of God's omniscience or attribute of being all-knowing is that "God is infinite in knowledge. He knows Himself and all other things perfectly from all eternity, whether they be actual or merely possible, whether they be past, present, or future."² To flesh out this definition, note:

- God knows Himself perfectly (1 Corinthians 2:10).
- God knows all possibilities (Matthew 11:21-24)
- God sees everything (Proverbs 15:3)
- God knows everything in creation (Psalm 147:5; Matthew 10:29-30; Job 38-41)
- God knows the ways and works of men (Psalm 33:13-15, 139:2-3; Proverbs 5:21)
- God knows all men's words (Psalm 139:5)
- God knows the thoughts and intents of men (Psalm 139:1-2; 1 Chronicles 28:9)
- God knows the sorrows of His people (Exodus 3:7)
- God knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:9-10)
- God knows from eternity what each person will do (Matthew 20:17-19; Exodus 3:19-20; 2 Kings 7:1-2; Psalm 41:9; Galatians 1:15-16)
- God knows from eternity the whole plan of the ages (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1; 46:9-10; Ephesians 1:9-12; 3:3-11; Colossians 1:25-26).³

Note also this quote from A.W. Tozer:

God knows instantly and effortlessly all matter and all matters, all mind and every mind, all spirit and all spirits, all being and every being, all creaturehood and all creatures, every plurality and all pluralities, all law and every law, all relations, all causes, all thoughts, all mysteries, all enigmas, all feeling, all desires, every unuttered secret, all thrones and dominions, all personalities, all things visible and invisible in heaven and in

earth, motion, space, time, life, death, good, evil, heaven, and hell.

Because God knows all things perfectly, He knows no thing better than any other thing, but all things equally well. He never discovers anything. He is never surprised, never amazed. He never wonders about anything nor (except when drawing men out for their own good) does He seek information or ask questions.⁴

III. THE THOUGHTS

Friend, the thought of God's knowledge brings out many questions, thoughts, and amazements; or it simply leaves one dumbfounded. But before you toss it all into a philosophical quandary for the "great minds" of the world to discuss and ponder in their academic institutions, spend some time in meditation on it. As with other infinite attributes of God, we with finite minds will never be able to fully comprehend. Regardless, though, there are a number of comforts and challenges that face us when we have an understanding that God is omniscient.

GOD NECESSARILY IS OMNISCIENT

In the passage today, Isaiah 41:21-26, "knowledge" is the proof of deity. It is what God calls the other gods to bring to the courtroom to prove to all that they are qualified to be gods. The simple task of telling what has taken place and what will take place is all that has to be done. This is not too much to ask of a being who claims deity.

"NO ONE SHOULD THINK HE CAN PLAY GAMES WITH AN ALL-KNOWING GOD..." **--JOHN MACARTHUR**

God places Himself on the "stand" and shows His ability to tell of the past and the future. The context of this section (Isa. 40-48) is God telling about all that will take place. And when these things happen, God will be shown as truly knowing what is to come.

Concerning this passage, Stephen Charnock wrote, "He (God) puts His Deity to stand or fall upon this account, and this should be the point which should decide the controversy whether He or the heathen idols were the true God. The dispute is managed by this medium: he that knows things to come is God; I know things to come, ergo I am God: the idols know not things to come, therefore they are not gods."⁵

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REMEMBER THIS WHEN YOU PRAY

Matthew 6:7-8 And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him."

Prayer is not informing God of all the calamities and ailments one faces on earth. He is not impressed with words and words and words--along with more words. Instead, He listens to a repentant, righteous heart which offers up requests that conform to His will. He knows what we need (even if we don't--Romans 8:26), but through prayer, we come to Him, who gives liberally and cheerfully, dependent upon His gracious hand to provide. Prayer conforms our will to the will of God.

ALL THINGS WE DO, HE KNOWS

#1--Therefore, hypocrisy is utter foolishness. How foolish is one who thinks he or she is actually getting away with something! How foolish is one when he or she thinks "no one knows"! How foolish is one when he or she asks God to forgive him or her when there is no true sorrow and repentance! God knows the real reason a person is going to church, the real reason a person prays, the real reason why a person helps others. He knows if a person is playing the hypocrite; just "acting out the part."

What is the old saying? "You can fool some of the people all the time and all the people some of the time." But friend, you can never fool God. You may be able to deceive a minister, colleague, spouse, friend, constituent, or someone else, but don't be so foolish as to think you can fool God. "No one should think he can play games with an all-knowing God..."⁶

#2--Confessing sin is telling God something He already knows about. Confessing is actually acknowledging and agreeing with God with His view on that act. You are agreeing with Him that what you did was wrong. He already knows about, therefore it would be foolish to not tell Him. A person is not hurting God, one is hurting oneself by keeping a division in his or her relationship with Him.

#3--Satan's accusations about us fall on deaf ears. In the book of Job, Satan made false accusations about Job concerning his "paid for" loyalties to God. In Revelation 12:10, the "Accuser" (Satan) is still making accusations before God about the people of God. But God knows. Satan can bring nothing to

God about one of His children that will surprise God and cause Him to disqualify a person from His family. God knew Job's heart and knew he would remain faithful in spite of Satan's attacks on him. He also knows the faithfulness of His children.

#4--People may make judgments and assertions about us, but God, who knows our hearts and thoughts, knows. This truth was a comfort to Hannah (1 Samuel 2:2) and it still a comfort for God's children today.

IT MAKES US MARVEL AT GOD'S LOVE

Think about this: God knows every word one has ever said, every deed one has ever done and every thought one has ever had. He knows every dirty little secret someone may be hiding from others; and He knows every hidden sin that every person has ever committed. And yet, He still loves.

Can you see how this makes the love of God has so much more precious? We cannot put up a façade with God. At times, we all may put up a false front with others so that they will like us. But we cannot pull that off with God for He is a God who knows. And He still loves, in spite of knowing every single dirty, rotten, stinking, ugly sinful thing we have ever done against Him! This may be the most incredible thing about God: the fact that He knows us and yet, still loves us.

And this adds weight to what Paul wrote concerning God's love,

Romans 8:38-39 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

How could he say that? Because he knows that nothing is going to pop up and surprise God to disqualify a child of God from His love. No one, not even Satan, will be able to give God evidence that He has not already seen to make Him change His mind. There is nothing that one can confess to Him that will cause Him to revoke His love. He knows each person's weaknesses, sins, habits, thoughts, failures, shortcomings, and all of these that will take place in the future; yet still He loves.

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HE IS THE PERFECT GUIDE

As one continues to walk through life and enter into the future, the Christian has a guide that already knows the future. And the Guide is good and holy; therefore, there is no room for fear in the life of a follower.

Friend, please follow me here: you may be in the middle of pain, suffering or confusion, and you may think “How can it be worse?”, “How can this be what is best for me?” Be assured that God is not sitting around in heaven letting you suffer needlessly. God does permit trials to occur for reasons we do not understand and may never understand until we get to heaven, but these are ultimately for the good of the believer (Romans 8:28-30). He has the wisdom to work what is best for He knows all things. We only see the here and now. It is God who knows what is to come and He is moving us toward that which will bring Him the most glory and is best for His children. Joseph (Genesis 50:19-20) and Paul (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) are great witnesses to this comforting truth.

And this shows us the foolishness of those things God addressed in Isaiah 41:24. Trusting in something that cannot tell of what has already happened, let alone what will take place in the future is not wise. In fact, it profanes the One who truly knows, and so is an abomination. Now, lest one think, “That verse is talking about statutes and images.” Literally speaking, it is discussing idols. But the principle is there—anything or anyone a person may trust or love more than God is an idol; and thus, an abomination to God.

CONCLUSION

Let the knowledge of God’s vast knowledge comfort you, warn you, challenge you, and cause you to seek His wisdom in all you do. Let it cause you to move forward in boldness knowing He is an all-knowing guide. Let it cause you to draw near to Him for refuge. Praise Him for He is a God who knows.

Two thoughtful quotes to conclude:

These ‘omni’ attributes of God operate in tandem with each other. For instance, God can do anything He wants to do (He’s omnipotent) anywhere He wants to do it because He’s everywhere (He’s omnipresent). God knows everything there is to know (He’s omniscient) because all knowledge originates from somewhere, and God is present in every one of those places. More than that, God can do with that knowledge whatever He chooses because His omnipotence gives Him the power to act on

what He knows. And since He is omnipresent, He is always wherever He needs to be to do whatever needs to be done.⁷

And,

**The infinite knowledge of God should fill us with amazement.
The infinite knowledge of God ought to fill us with holy awe.
The apprehension of God’s infinite knowledge should fill the
Christian with adoration.**

--A.W. Pink

This all-knowing God can forgive your sins; are you interested?

Psalm 139:1-12 O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways. Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all. You have enclosed me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is too high, I cannot attain to it. Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me. If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, And the light around me will be night," Even the darkness is not dark to You, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.

¹Other passages include, but are not limited to 1 Samuel 2:1-3; 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; Psalm 33:13-15; 90:8; 94:11; 139:1-6, 13-16; Proverbs. 15:3; Isaiah 40:13-14, 27-28; Luke 16:15; John 6:64; 21:17; Romans 11:33-36.

² Andrew Snider, “TH605 Theology 1” (unpublished class syllabus, The Master’s Seminary, Fall 2005), 83.

³ Much of this list was taken from R.A. Torrey, *The God of the Bible* (New Kensington, Penn.: Whitaker House, 1999), 127-42.

⁴ A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1961), 56.

⁵ Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1996), vol. 1, 431.

⁶ John MacArthur, *God: Coming Face to Face With His Majesty* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1993), 55. The rest of Dr. MacArthur’s sentence reads: “...for God ‘will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil’ (Eccl. 12:14).”

⁷ Tony Evans, *Our Awesome God* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 143.