

Back To The Bible (Part IV)

July 16, 2006

Isaiah 40:21-31 (NLT)

Have you never heard or understood? Are you deaf to the words of God—the words he gave before the world began? Are you so ignorant? [22] It is God who sits above the circle of the earth. The people below must seem to him like grasshoppers! He is the one who spreads out the heavens like a curtain and makes his tent from them. [23] He judges the great people of the world and brings them all to nothing. [24] They hardly get started, barely taking root, when he blows on them and their work withers. The wind carries them off like straw.

[25] "To whom will you compare me? Who is my equal?" asks the Holy One.

[26] Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out one after another, calling each by its name. And he counts them to see that none are lost or have strayed away.

[27] O Israel, how can you say the Lord does not see your troubles? How can you say God refuses to hear your case? [28] Have you never heard or understood? Don't you know that the Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth? He never grows faint or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding. [29] He gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak. [30] Even youths will become exhausted, and young men will give up. [31] But those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

For the past three weeks I have been talking about how important it is for you and me to believe that the Bible is God's divine, inspired word. Satan knows that if he can make us doubt that the Bible is God's inspired word then we will have nothing by which to live our lives.

Therefore, he has been doing all that he can do to discredit the Bible.

The Bible says that God created man in His own image. In the garden, God provided everything that man needed to live on this earth and enjoy His blessings. God gave Adam and Eve only one commandment. He told them not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

I believe that God was telling Adam and Eve, "I will tell you all that you need to know. I am going to reveal to you my plan and my purpose and I am going to show you everything you will need to know in order to live forever. Don't lean on your own understanding. Don't try to figure everything out.

Isaiah 55:8-9 (NLT)

"My thoughts are completely different from yours," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. [9] For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

Paul said....

Romans 1:20-21 (NLT)

From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God.

[21] Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. The result was that their minds became dark and confused.

Man has done exactly what God said not to do. He has left God out of his search for understanding and eaten the fruit of human knowledge. He looks at the stars and tries to explain how they got there without recognizing that God created them.

The Psalmist wrote.....

Psalm 19:1-4 (NLT)

The heavens tell of the glory of God.

The skies display his marvelous craftsmanship.

[2] Day after day they continue to speak;
night after night they make him known.

[3] They speak without a sound or a word;
their voice is silent in the skies;

[4] yet their message has gone out to all the earth,
and their words to all the world.

David was a shepherd. He spent many nights looking up into the sky at the millions and millions of stars and he realized that God was a big God. He knew that God created everything he could see in the vastness of space. He said, “the heavens tell of the glory of God. The skies display his marvelous craftsmanship”.

David only saw what he could see with his own eyes. If he could have looked at the stars with one of our modern telescopes, he would have really been amazed.

How did the universe come into existence?

The Bible says that God created it in one glorious instance.

Genesis 1:2-3 (NLT)

The earth was empty, a formless mass cloaked in darkness. And the Spirit of God was hovering over its surface. [3] **Then God said**, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Wow! You talk about power! God didn't have to get a work crew of a million angels to try to construct the universe. He simply spoke. He said, “**Let there be light**” and the whole universe lit up.

When God said, “**Let there be light**” He started something. Light travels at a speed of **186,000 miles per second**. That's beyond my ability to understand or comprehend.

Brad Lidge can throw a fastball 98 MPH. A race car can travel more than 200 MPH. A passenger jet can fly over 500 MPH. A supersonic jet can fly at over 1000 MPH. The space shuttle flies at a speed of 17,500 MPH. But nothing even comes close to the speed of light.

It travels 186,000 miles per SECOND. That's 11,160,000 miles per minute.

How fast is that in miles per hour? Are you ready for this? That's 669,600,000 MPH. WOW!!!

God said, “Let there be light!” and when He did He filled the universe with light traveling at 669,600,000 MPH.

Our sun, which is one of the stars in our galaxy, is **93,000,000 miles away from earth.** God put it right where it had to be. If it were any closer we would burn up. If it were any farther away, we would freeze.

Light traveling from the sun takes eight minutes to reach the earth.

Light travels 5.88 trillion miles in a year. And the universe has been expanding at that speed ever since God said, "**Let there be light**". How big is it by now? I have no idea, only God knows.

But guess what? God is bigger than that! Listen to the proclamation of Isaiah....

Isaiah 40:12 (NIV)

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,
or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens?

Think about it. You cannot measure God's universe with any conventional means of measurement. You can't measure it in inches, or feet, or miles. We have to measure it in light years. The distance light travels in a year. That's what astronomers use to chart their way through the universe.

To God that's just the breadth of His hand.

Isaiah said....

Isaiah 40:14 (NIV)

Whom did the Lord consult to enlighten him,
and who taught him the right way?
Who was it that taught him knowledge
or showed him the path of understanding?

You think that that you are so smart with you PHD. Figure out how God created the universe. He didn't need to go to college. He knows everything about everything.

Isaiah 40:21-22 (NIV)

Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood since the earth was founded?

[22] He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth,
and its people are like grasshoppers.

He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,
and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

Isaiah 40:25-26 (NIV)

"To whom will you compare me?

Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.

[26] Lift your eyes and look to the heavens:

Who created all these?

He who brings out the starry host one by one,
and calls them each by name.

Because of his great power and mighty strength,
not one of them is missing.

The Bible says that not only did God create the stars but He has given each of them a name. Wow!

A couple of weeks ago, **Bob Erikson** gave me a DVD by **Louie Giglio** who was preaching about all of this and on that DVD he showed some incredible pictures of our universe. I want to show some of them to you today.

Picture of the Milky Way Galaxy.

That's where we live in this vast universe. It's called the Milky Way Galaxy.

It's 100 thousand light years from one side to the other.

This picture was taken of the inside of the Milky Way galaxy. Our sun is just one of billions of stars in our subdivision of the universe. It's not the biggest or the grandest or the brightest. It's just one of the stars.

How many stars are there in our galaxy? The estimate is one trillion. God has given each of them a name.

God is greater and bigger than we could ever imagine.

No wonder when David looked up at the stars he said.....

Psalm 8:1 (NIV)

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.

Psalm 8:3-4 (NIV)

When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
[4] what is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him?

That's a good question. What is man that God should care for us. Especially in the vastness of all He has created?

Our sun is just one of a trillion stars in our galaxy. Our galaxy is only one of hundreds of billions of galaxies. And that's just the universe we can see with our greatest telescopes.

Scientists tell us that relative to the size of the universe our galaxy is the size of a quarter in a space as big as North America. That's our little home. Somewhere in that little quarter sized galaxy there is a star called the sun and rotating around that star is our little planet called the earth.

Show the picture of the earth.

This picture of the earth was taken by the astronauts on Apollo 17.

You can see the tip of Africa, etc.

What you cannot see are mountains or skyscrapers or houses or cars or people. You just see the earth. It makes you feel real small doesn't it?

Let me show you a picture that will really make you feel small.

In 1977, America sent out a space craft named “Voyager” to photograph the farthest planets in our solar system...Saturn...Uranus... Neptune...Pluto. “Voyager” did an amazing job.

Since 1977, its been traveling farther and farther away from the sun. In 1990, it had already achieved an astounding distance of 3.7 billion miles from the earth and scientists sent it a message on Valentine’s Day and said, “Before you leave our solar system, turn around and take a picture of the planets you have visited on your journey.

Voyager was traveling at a speed of 40,000 MPH away from the sun and it turned around and took an amazing photograph. The photograph is a composite of 60 images taken by “Voyager”. Each image contains 640,000 pixels. It took 5 1/2 hours for each pixel to make the journey from “Voyager” back to earth. It took months for the images to come back. When it finally was completed it stunned the whole world. Here it is. The picture that came back from 3,7 billion miles in space.

Show the photograph.

The beams of color are reflections of the sun reflecting off of “Voyager” and suspended in one of those beams of light is a little, tiny dot. Can you see it?

Let me show you a bigger picture. Can you see it now?

Carl Sagan gave the photograph a name. He called it “The Pale Blue Dot”. Carl Sagan was a very popular astronomer here in the U.S. He was the host and writer of the award-winning television series Cosmos, the most watched PBS program of all time. He died in 1996.

He wrote these words about the pale blue dot:

... Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in

love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every "superstar," every "supreme leader," every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there - on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.

The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors, so that, in glory and triumph, they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot.

Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner, how frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light.

Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. **In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.**

The Earth is the only world known so far to harbor life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate. Visit, yes. Settle, not yet. Like it or not, for the moment the Earth is where we make our stand.

It has been said that astronomy is a humbling and character building experience. There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known."

I agree with all of what Carl Sagan said about this planet we live on except the part where he said, "**In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.**"

Earth is a very, very, very small place in the universe. It is located in what is a small galaxy compared to others that are out there.

Of course there are no pictures of our galaxy, but scientists think it must look something like this.

Show picture.

They think our galaxy has a banded center nucleus with many spiral arms.

They think it is about 1000 light years thick. They think that the earth is located somewhere in this area. There is no way that we could put a dot small enough to represent it on this picture. We couldn't even put a dot small enough to represent our solar system on this picture.

Our neighborhood is 1000 light years across and it is only one of the billions of solar systems that God has created in the universe.

Show picture.

Those are not stars. Those are **galaxies** in the known universe.

Carl Sagan said, "In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves."

Carl Sagan was wrong.

Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, came to this pale blue dot to save us from ourselves. For some inexplicable reason," God loves us so much that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

He created each of us in His own image. We look like Him. And just as he knows the names of all the stars in the universe, he knows your name and He knows my name.

Chris Tomlin wrote a song that expresses it about as well as it can be expressed. It's called "**Indescribable**". Let me read the words to you.

From the highest of heights to the depths of the sea
Creation's revealing Your majesty

From the colors of fall to the fragrance of spring
Every creature unique in the song that it sings
All exclaiming

Indescribable, uncontainable,
You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name.
You are amazing God
All powerful, untameable,
Awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim
You are amazing God

Who has told every lightning bolt where it should go
Or seen heavenly storehouses laden with snow
Who imagined the sun and gives source to its light
Yet conceals it to bring us the coolness of night
None can fathom

Indescribable, uncontainable,
You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name
You are amazing God
All powerful, untameable,
Awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim
You are amazing God
You are amazing God

Indescribable, uncontainable,
You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name.
You are amazing God
All powerful, untameable,
Awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim
You are amazing God
Indescribable, uncontainable,
You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name.
You are amazing God
Incomparable, unchangeable
You see the depths of my heart and You love me the same
You are amazing God
You are amazing God.

This indescribable, uncontainable, all powerful, untameable, uncontainable, unchangeable God sees the depths of your heart and He loves you just the same. He is an amazing God. And I'll tell you something else. He's grace is also amazing. And He loves you.

Give invitation!