

The Prophets & Kings

From Rehoboam To Zedekiah

Book 1

A Daily Devotional Study Guide

Week 58

“Joy and Rejoicing”

Study: Jeremiah 31:1-17

Reading: Matthew 2:1-18, Galatians 6:1-10

Memory: Isaiah 40:28

Growing up, I loved living in Michigan. I thought it was the best state there was and never imagined not living in it, but God had other plans. Though Wisconsin was a nice place to live and I was an official resident there for many years, I never fully wanted to say that I was from Wisconsin. Then, when God moved me back to Michigan, I was thrilled. I realized the joy of coming “home” because it was the state that I loved. Even though I have traveled to many of the states in America and many countries around the world, I still believe that where I live is one of the greatest places to live.

Today, we are going to read how God pictured a time where the Israelites would arrive back home. During that time there will be great joy and rejoicing.

What Does the Bible Say?

Chapter 31 continues to look towards the future of the nation of Israel. It pictures a time where God is once again the sole God of the land and the people will be wholly committed to following Him. Those who will survive the destruction that will take place will find that even the barren desert will become fruitful. God will give rest to his people because He has always loved them. Even through disaster and destruction He continued to care for them and to be faithful to them. The land will once again be rebuilt and restored. There will be joy and rejoicing in the land. Vineyards will be planted and produce abundant fruit. The hills of Ephraim will be filled with people once again who will all be excited to head to Jerusalem to worship God (vs 1-6).

There will be great praise and rejoicing because God will gather the children of Israel from where they had been dispersed. This regathering will include all types of people from the poorest to the wealthy and they will worship God together. They will come back to the land in humility, weeping over their sin and God will lead them to streams of living water and make their paths easy. God would act as a loving, caring Father to

them which had always been His desire (vs 7-9).

God was the one who had scattered the nation, but God was also the One who was going to gather them back to Himself. God was going to be their Redeemer and rescue His people, causing them to repopulate the land of Israel. The people will realize how good God was to them and will live in daily thankfulness and praise for the goodness of God. They will no longer suffer to find food to eat, but will live in abundance. There will be great dancing and rejoicing among the young and the old. The mourning which the Israelites were currently experiencing will turn into joy. They will feast and make merry (vs 10-14).

Though this was all going to happen in the future, the current picture was not so pretty. There was great weeping from mothers who were giving birth to the children because of the conditions their children were being born into. Many would suffer and die. Matthew referenced this verse as a prediction of what was going to happen when many of the babies of Bethlehem were killed (Mt 2:17-18). Yet all of this destruction and pain was part of God's plan. They were not to lose hope because God would raise great hope out of this time of destruction. The children would return to the land and fill it once again (vs 15-17).

How Does this Apply to Me?

This passage made it very clear that when God was followed and people lived in obedience to Him, the result was great joy. On the other hand, when people lived how they wanted to live and didn't seek after God the result would be the opposite. Though there are certain promises given to Israel that aren't given to us today, the same understanding is very true for us today. When you live how God wants you to live, you will find contentment, fulfillment and rejoicing. When you live how you want to live, it may seem easier at first, but the results will not be what you thought they would be. Your human nature will struggle against God and doing things His way, but you must daily choose to die to yourself and put God's desires first. When you do this, you will find the joy and rejoicing that has been offered to you through Christ.

Thought for the day

What time is being referred to in verse 1?

What will God be (vs 1)?

How would the people find grace in the wilderness (vs 2)?

****This appears to be a pictured of how God would make even the barren desert to thrive with life.*

How is God's love described (vs 3)?

Why it is important to realize that God will be faithful to His people (vs 3)?

What was God going to do for Israel (vs 4)?

What will be restored in the land (vs 5)?

What will the people desire to do (vs 6)?

Why would this be a time of great rejoicing (vs 7)?

Where was God going to gather the Israelites from (vs 8)?

How will the people come back (vs 9)?

What will God do for those who come back (vs 9)?

Why was God going to scatter then gather (vs 10)?

What was God going to do for Israel (vs 11)?

What would be the result (vs 12-13)?

How were they going to be comforted (vs 14)?

What does verse 15 picture?

What is the theme of verses 16-17?

“Creating A New Thing”

Study: Jeremiah 31:18-30

Reading: Hebrews 12:1-29

Memory: Isaiah 40:28

In 2001 a campaign blitz was launched describing how a device would soon be introduced that would revolutionize the way that people lived and traveled. Shortly after that the world was introduced to the Segway. At first, many people were interested in this new mode of transportation, but for a number of reasons, it never fully took off. In 2020, the last of the Segways rolled off the production line and the short run of the Segway was finished without revolutionizing the way that we travel.

Today, we are going to read how God was creating a new thing. Yet, this new thing would not quickly fade but was going to be something that would last.

What Does the Bible Say?

The nation of Israel will understand that the punishment they received was from God because of their sin. They will call on God to restore them and choose to make Him their only God once again. They confessed that they had turned from God and they were sorry for the consequences they suffered. They faced great disgrace for their wrong choices and will reach the point where they will be ashamed of their sins (vs 18-19).

Though God had continually been scolding Israel and announcing judgment on them, this did not mean that He was forgetting them or didn't care about them. The opposite was true, His heart yearned for a relationship with His children and for them to look to Him as their Father. Though they were going to be sent away from the land, God told them to put up road signs to mark the path since they would need to know the way back home. This was probably not meant to be something they were to physically do, but was more of a word picture that revealed how they would be able to return to their homeland. The question God asked Israel had to do with how long they would continue to act like a faithless daughter. He then responded with a very intriguing response to this describing how He was going to do a new thing on the earth and

compared it to a woman encircling a man. Exactly what was meant by that phrase is not completely clear, but it appears to have something to do with the woman being the aggressor in a relationship rather than the man, indicating that the people of Israel would aggressively seek to restore their relationship with God (vs 20-21).

Once this restoration took place, they land and the people who dwelt in it would once again be blessed. The people will be able to live in safety and security no matter where they travel in the land. The weary soul will be strengthened and those who face suffering will be restored. This news brought great peace to Jeremiah and he was able to find comfort and pleasant sleep as a result (vs 22-26).

In this future restoration the number of people and the number of animals in the land would increase exponentially. Just as God has watched them in agony, waiting to destroy them, He would watch them in joy watching them grow. They would no longer use the phrase that was a metaphor for suffering that children faced for their father's actions. Instead, each person will be judged on their own actions rather than have to face the consequences for their father's mistakes (vs 27-30).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Once again we are given a great picture of the restoration of Israel. They were allowed to go back to the land after 70 years of captivity, but they were constantly under the rule of foreign governments after that until Jerusalem was destroyed again around 70 A.D. There was small restoration to the land, but nothing like what was predicted. This gives great future hope to the Jews, though other passages in Scripture make it clear that Jewish blood will not be enough to deliver people from eternal damnation. The main purpose of passages like this are to give hope in the middle of trials and tribulation. This is the same thing that many New Testament passages do as the New Testament writers focus more on our eternal home in Heaven. The common denominator is still the same. When we choose to believe God and submit to His plan, there is great hope waiting for us in the future.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the hope He gives you for the future.*
- * *Ask God to help you learn from the mistakes of the Israelites.*
- * *Praise God because He knows what will happen in the future.*

Who was heard grieving (vs 18)?

****Ephraim is used at times to picture the nation of Israel.*

What were they compared to (vs 18)?

What did they call out to God for (vs 18)?

What will the nation of Israel realize one day (vs 19)?

What did God emphasize about remembering Israel (vs 20)?

What were the exiles told to setup (vs 21)? Why?

What new thing did God say was happening (vs 22)?

What do you think verse 22 means?

What words were going to be used once again (vs 23)?

What will the future look like for Israel (vs 24)?

How was this in direct contrast to what they were experiencing?

What was God going to do for Israel (vs 25)?

How did Jeremiah feel when he woke from this vision (vs 26)?

What was God going to sow Israel with (vs 27)? What do you think this means?

How was God going to watch over them (vs 28)?

What will they no longer say (vs 29)?

What did that phrase mean (vs 29)?

What would everyone do (vs 30)?

“Looking Ahead”

Study: Jeremiah 31:31-40

Reading: Revelation 21:1-27

Memory: Isaiah 40:28

Several years ago when the Lord first provided our property in Michigan, there was only a small trail that went through a completely wooded 10 acre parcel of land. One of the things that brought great excitement to Jen and I was the process of planning out what our property would become in the future as we began cutting trees and designing the layout of our new home. Up to that point in our lives, we had only owned one home for about two years. This added to the great anticipation of what our new home and property would look like.

Today, we are going to read a brief description of what the new Jerusalem will look like in the millennial kingdom. This description was meant to give hope to the people and remind them that God still had great plans for them.

What Does the Bible Say?

Looking toward the distant future God described how He was going to make a new covenant with Israel. This would not be like the covenant that He made with them when Moses helped deliver them from Egypt. Israel broke that covenant repeatedly, though He was like a loving husband do to them. This new covenant was not going to be written on stone, but rather it would be written in their hearts. In this new covenant, the people would choose to continually make God their only God and He would shower His blessings on them as His people. No longer would they need people around them to challenge them and encourage them to follow the Lord because that would be the natural desire of their hearts. The whole nation would follow God from their hearts (vs 31-34).

God declared that He was the One who put the sun in place to give light by day and the moon to give light at night. He was the One who caused the waves of the sea to roar. He was the Lord of Hosts. The Ruler of the world. Just as God was not going to change the laws of nature that He established, He was not going to change the way He loved Israel. He was not going to remove them from being a nation. They

would always exist. God would never cast away Israel, just like the stars in the sky can never fully be discovered and the depth of the earth can never fully be explored. (vs 35-37).

There will be a day where all Jerusalem will be rebuilt. This new Jerusalem will not be the same as their current Jerusalem. The city would be much larger. Some of the places mentioned in this passage can not be identified such as the “hill of Gareb” and”Goah.” We do know that the Kidron Valley and the valley of Hinnom (valley of dead bodies and ashes) will be part of the city. These events are still to take place in the future because even to this day, these valleys are not inhabited with dwellings or people (vs 38-40).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Reading through the prophets helps you understand a little more why the disciples thought about the Messiah and the kingdom He would establish the way they did. There are so many prophecies which picture the greatness of the millennial kingdom. Here it is pictured as a kingdom that will be rebuilt in great splendor. Jerusalem will expand allowing for many more people in the city. The picture is one of God’s great favor being extended to the city once again. Things will be much different in the millennial kingdom. This difference will not only be physical, but will be spiritual as well. It appears that those entering into the kingdom will have some type of glorified bodies which will no longer exhibit the sin nature. People will not have to be encouraged to serve God because they will have that natural desire in their hearts. The emphasis in this passage is not to give us full details about the millennial reign, but to simply present a picture of hope for the nation of Israel. The New Testament does this for you as well as presenting the hope of heaven and eternal life. Having the hope of a better future is a great encouragement and help for you to choose to live the way God desires you to live today.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for continually reminding you of your future hope.*
- * *Ask God to help you live each day with eternity in view.*

Thought for the day

What will God make with the house of Judah (vs 31)?

Why are covenants so important in the Bible?

What will this not be like (vs 32)?

What covenant is being referred to in verse 32?

Why do you think God described himself as their “husband” (vs 32)?

What was going to be different about this covenant (vs 33)?

Why do you think the heart is emphasized (vs 33)?

What status would God and the people share (vs 33)?

Why wasn’t this currently happening?

What wouldn’t they need to do anymore (vs 34)?

Who would know God personally and choose to follow Him (vs 34)?

What would God choose not to do (vs 34)?

How did God describe Himself (vs 35)?

Why do you think He described Himself this way?

What did God say about the order He had given (vs 36)?

What was God not going to do (vs 37)?

What was God going to do (vs 38)?

What do the descriptions given in verses 39-40 reveal about the expanded city?

What point was God attempting to make?

“The Amazing Vision”

Study: Ezekiel 1:1-28

Reading: Isaiah 6:1-8, Revelation 1:9-20

Memory: Isaiah 40:28

What Does the Bible Say?

The book of Ezekiel starts with a description of when the book was written. It appears that Ezekiel was in the thirtieth year of his life and it was the fifth year after the deportation to Babylon that took place in 597 B.C. Ezekiel was a priest who had been taken from Jerusalem along with King Jehoiachin and many other Israelites. The place where Nebuchadnezzar had placed them was near the Chebar canal, which was a major canal off the Euphrates river south of Babylon. It was there in the land of Chaldeans that God put his hand upon Ezekiel and began to use him to prophecy to the Israelites in captivity (vs 1-3).

Ezekiel saw a great storm coming from the north, but this was no ordinary storm. It wasn't dark like most storm clouds, but was surrounded by brightness with constant flashing fire. In the middle of this fire he saw something that looked like gleaming metal. From this came out something that looked like four living creatures. They looked like humans in the way they were erect, but each one had four different faces and four different wings. Their legs looked like pillars and their feet looked like the feet of calves. Human hands extended from under each of the four wings. Their wings extended to the wings of the next being and they all moved forward in a straight line, but did not turn around (vs 4-9).

Each had four faces, but the faces were not all the same. There was a face of a human, a lion, an ox and an eagle. Two of the four wings stretched out while the other two covered their bodies. He mentioned again in verse 12 that they all went in a straight line and moved forward, but also went in different directions without turning around. These were not dull looking creatures, but glowed like coals of fire and like torches that were on the move. Their movements were very quick as they darted in different directions like flashes of lightning (vs 10-14).

Ezekiel first noticed the creatures, but then he noticed that there was a wheel on the earth beside each of the four creatures. These wheels

looked like gleaming beryl (some type of precious stone) and they all looked the same. Each wheel also had a second wheel turning inside of it in a direction that was horizontal instead of vertical. The rims of these wheels were covered with eyes all around them, picturing that they could see everything. Once again, in verse 17, Ezekiel mentioned that the creatures could move any direction, but did not need to turn around. It appears the emphasis was that they were always looking straight ahead and did not need to turn their heads to turn their bodies (vs 15-18).

The wheels followed these creatures around wherever they went. They were somehow being led by a spirit which was in the wheels. The Spirit led both the wheels and the creatures. Everything moved together based on the leading of the spirit (vs 19-21).

Above these spirits was a surface that was like the sky, but it also glittered like crystals. The sound the wings made when the creatures flew was like that of a crashing wave or the shout of a mighty army. They flew for a while, but when they stopped, their wings lowered and Ezekiel could hear a voice that was coming from above the crystal sky (vs 22-25).

Ezekiel saw a magnificent throne and on that throne there sat something that resembled a man. This was not an ordinary man because from his waist there were flames flickering upwards and downwards. All around him was something that was like a glowing halo or rainbow in the sky. Ezekiel recognized this as the glory of the Lord in all of His splendor. The only response Ezekiel could give was to fall down with his face on the ground in great humility. He continued in that position until he heard a voice speak to him (vs 26-28).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Many artists have tried to render what Ezekiel described, but capturing what he explained in this vision is very difficult. This is because he was trying to describe something he had never seen before and that doesn't really exist in the human realm since this was a supernatural vision. Many of the items seen in this vision will be talked about later in the book as they represent the character of God. One of the great lessons to be learned from this whole vision is the response of Ezekiel to the vision. Throughout Scripture, whenever anyone catches a glimpse of the presence of God, their response is always one of humility. They have a new appreciation for the greatness and majesty of God. It is so easy as humans to think we are great, until we see or experience something that reminds us how insignificant we are.

Where was Ezekiel (vs 1)?

When did this vision take place (vs 2)?

What did Ezekiel first see (vs 4)?

Give a summary of how Ezekiel described these creatures in verses 5-9.

What four faces did these creatures have (vs 10)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What did they do with their wings (vs 11)?

How were they led (vs 12)?

What was the appearance of these creatures (vs 13-14)?

How are the wheels described (vs 15-19)?

How were the wheels led (vs 20-21)?

What was over the heads of the creatures (vs 22)?

What did Ezekiel see above the creatures (vs 26)?

What was unique about this image (vs 27-28)?

How did Jeremiah respond to this image (vs 28)?

“Eat The Scroll”

Study: Ezekiel 2:1-3:3

Reading: Psalm 19:7-14, Revelation 10:1-11

Memory: Isaiah 40:28

I am not sure if they still make it or not, but one of the things that fascinated me as a child was gum where you could also eat the wrapper the gum came in. I don't think it ever tasted that good since it felt like you were eating wax, but there was something about the novelty of not having to throw your wrapper away, but eating the gum and the wrapper together. Actually, the thought of it now makes me somewhat cringe, but as a kid, it seemed to be a neat experience.

Today, we are going to read how Ezekiel was told by God to eat a scroll which contained the words of God's judgement. We will be reminded of the importance of obeying God even when we may not be very excited about the plan He has for us.

What Does the Bible Say?

The sight of the glory of God overwhelmed Ezekiel and caused him to fall on his face in humility and awe. Ezekiel then heard a voice telling him to stand up so he could be spoken to. Ezekiel felt the Holy Spirit entering into him and lift him up, causing him to stand on his feet. The voice then told Ezekiel that he was going to be sent to the nations of those who had rebelled against God. The current generation had followed the sins of their fathers and walked in a way that was opposite of what God desired. These people were very stubborn and there was a good chance that they would not listen to the words that God was going to share with them through Ezekiel. The job of Ezekiel was not to change the people or force them to listen. It was to declare God's truth to them so they would know that God had sent a messenger among them (vs 1-5).

That challenge that God gave Ezekiel was not to be afraid of what the people would say or do to him. The words and the actions of some of the people would be like thorns and would sting like a scorpion. His job was not going to be easy, but he was told not to let their looks or words deter him from the task that God had called him to do. Ezekiel's job was to speak the words of God to the people regardless if they chose to listen or

not listen. He knew they were rebellious, but He wanted them to hear the truth so they would be without excuse (vs 6-7).

The people were rebellious, but God did not want Ezekiel to be rebellious to the call that God had given him. The next thing God asked Ezekiel to do was to open his mouth and eat what He was about to give him. Ezekiel saw the hand of God reaching out with a scroll in it. The scroll was then spread out and had writing on the front and the back. The words that he read on the scroll were words of sadness and destruction (vs 8-10).

The command that came next was to eat the scroll and then go and speak to the house of Israel. Ezekiel did not want to be rebellious so he opened his mouth and God fed him the scroll. Ezekiel did not reject the scroll, but ate it as God had commanded him. When he ate it, he found that the scroll tasted very sweet in his mouth. Though this message was one of judgement, it was not a bitter message. There was a sweetness about the scroll because they contained the very words of God (vs 1-3).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you willing to share the truth of the Word of God with others? It is easy to get the mind set that people will not listen to the message that God has to say and choose not to share the message because you don't believe they will hear. One thing that God made clear to Ezekiel and many of His other servants was that it was their job to share the truth. No, you don't have to do this in the exact same way that Ezekiel did or the way another believer does, but God wants you to boldly share His truth with others. Messages like this can be a relief to you because you are reminded that you are not responsible for the result. You are not responsible to change hearts or lives, but your responsibility is to carry out the will of God for your life. God has different plans for His children and uses them in different ways. One thing that all believers should have in common is their choice to obey Him and carry out His plan for them regardless of how their obedience is received.

Thought for the day

Why was Ezekiel not on his feet (See Ezek 1:28)?

Why did God want him to stand (vs 1)?

How was Ezekiel able to stand (vs 2)?

What do you think God was attempting to teach Ezekiel by causing him to stand?

Who was God sending Ezekiel to (vs 3)?

How deep was the sin of Israel (vs 3)?

How did God describe Israel (vs 4)?

What was Ezekiel to declare to them (vs 4)?

What did God want the people to know (vs 5)?

What was Ezekiel told not to be afraid of (vs 6)?

Why is it natural to be afraid when carrying out the plan of God?

What command did God reiterate (vs 7)?

What did God not want Ezekiel to be like (vs 8)?

What did God tell Ezekiel to eat (vs 9)?

How is the scroll described (vs 10)?

What did God tell Ezekiel to do (vs 1)?

Why do you think God was telling Ezekiel to do this?

How did Ezekiel respond (vs 2)?

How did the scroll taste (vs 3)? What point was being made by this illustration?

“Harder Than Flint”

Study: Ezekiel 3:4-13

Reading: Revelation 5:1-14, Exodus 4:1-17

Memory: Isaiah 40:28

My wife graduated Bible college with a degree in biblical counseling. We often joke about some of the views both she and I had about serving God and ministering to people when we graduated college. In many of her classes, she was given case studies where a person would have a problem and she would have to counsel that person in the right actions. The understanding was that the counselee would be open to the counsel, change their actions and everything would be great. In many of my classes, I was taught how to share biblical truth with people and had the assumption that when I did, people would immediately respond and change. As we entered into ministry, we found that dealing with people in real life was much different than solving people’s problems on paper. We quickly realized that if we were going to be in the ministry the rest of our lives, we couldn’t serve God based on the results, but had to make the choice to rely on the Holy Spirit to give us strength to live in obedience.

Today, we are going to read how Ezekiel was told that his task would be difficult, but that he was going to be given the strength to carry it out.

What Does the Bible Say?

After Ezekiel ate the scroll, God told him to go to the children of Israel and declare His words to them. God wasn’t sending him to a group of people where there would be a language barrier, but was sending him to people who could clearly understand what he was saying. Sadly, God declared that if hHe had sent Ezekiel to people who did speak a different language, they would be more understanding and accepting of the message than the children of Israel were going to be. The children of Israel would not be willing to listen to Ezekiel, because they were not willing to listen to God. They were described as stubborn hearted people who had hard heads (vs 4-7).

The task that Ezekiel was called to perform was a difficult one, but God was going to make his head just as hard as the heads of those he was

declaring the truth to. God emphasized the fact that Ezekiel’s head would be like the hardest stone. This indicated how the strength that God would give him would give Ezekiel greater resolve and commitment than the stubborn Israelites had. This was to encourage Ezekiel not to be fearful or discouraged at their rejection of him. God wanted Ezekiel to first hear the message himself and let it sink in his heart before he shared the message with others. He wanted Ezekiel to truly believe everything for himself before he tried to share it with others. He wasn’t just to be a puppet used by God, but was to be a man who was led and directed by God, following God from the heart. This would help give him boldness to go to the people and declare the message of truth regardless of the outcome (vs 8-11).

In verse 12, Ezekiel described how the Spirit lifted him up. This is probably more than just standing up as he did earlier, but probably was lifted in the air. After being lifted up, he heard a great voice like an earthquake come from behind him. This voice declared praise to God. He realized the voice was coming from the wings of the creatures (vs 12-13).

How Does this Apply to Me?

What task is God calling you to do? There are some people who romanticize the call of God on their lives and picture them doing great and mighty things, seeing incredible results for their labor. There are other people who fear doing the work of God because they believe it will be difficult and lead to a miserable life. These thoughts and fears can stand in the way of living out God’s plan for you. Ezekiel was told that following God wasn’t going to be easy, but God would make him strong and give him the ability to perform the task. He didn’t have any visions for personal glory, knowing that many would not listen to him. It is important for you to carry out God’s task without the fear of being miserable. When you live for God, you will face difficulties, but He has promised you strength and will give you the joy in the process. You must also approach your task with the reality that you are an obedient servant and that God is responsible for the results. This will help you avoid becoming discouraged because you know the results are in God’s hands.

Suggestions for Prayer

* *Ask God to help you live in obedience to His plan for your life.*

Where was Ezekiel told to go (vs 4)?

Who was God not sending Ezekiel to (vs 5)?

What would foreigners have done if Ezekiel's message was declared to them (vs 6)?

What point do you think God was trying to make?

Why wouldn't the Israelites listen to Ezekiel (vs 7)?

How is this similar to what John 15:18 declares?

What was God going to do for Ezekiel (vs 8)?

Why was this necessary?

What was God going to make Ezekiel's head like (vs 9)?

What two things was Ezekiel told not to do (vs 9)?

- 1.
- 2.

What did God tell Ezekiel to do with the words he heard?

Why do you think this was important?

What command was Ezekiel given (vs 11)?

Why is obedience more important than results?

Why is this often a hurdle to many followers of Christ?

What did Ezekiel hear behind him (vs 12)?

Why do you think this was included in the vision?

Where was the sound coming from (vs 13)?

Memory Verses

Isaiah 40:10 Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd. He will carry the lambs in his arms, holding them close to his heart. He will gently lead the mother sheep with their young. 12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? 13 Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel? 14 Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? 15 Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust. 16 Lebanon would not suffice for fuel, nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering. 17 All the nations are as nothing before him, they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness. 18 To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? 19 An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains. 20 He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move. 21 Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? 22 It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; 23 who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness. 24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. 25 To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. 27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.