

Jehovah-Bara

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.*
²⁹ *He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases strength.*
³⁰ *Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;*
³¹ *but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint. — Isaiah 40:27-31 ESV*

YHWH-bārā' – “The LORD the Creator.” This name of God paints a powerful image that is intended to provide the covenant people of Israel with comfort and security. Yahweh is the Creator God who “created the ends of the earth.” That phrase is a merism, a rhetorical term for a pair of contrasting words or phrases (such as near and far, body and soul, life and death) used to express totality or completeness. Isaiah is saying that God is the creator of the whole earth. He made it all. He also reminds them that their God “sits above the circle of the earth,” (Isaiah 40:22 NLT). He is above and beyond, the transcendent God who looks down on all He has made. From His lofty vantage point, God sees man, whom He made in His own image as little more than grasshoppers in His sight. This is not a statement meant to deny the value of humanity but to stress the immense difference between the Creator and the creation.

To further enhance his point, Isaiah cleverly reverses the vantage point and challenges the “grasshoppers” to look up at the night sky.

*Look up into the heavens.
Who created all the stars?
He brings them out like an army, one after another,
calling each by its name.
Because of his great power and incomparable strength,
not a single one is missing. — Isaiah 40:26 NLT*

The stars in their vast numbers appear like a celestial army in the sky. There are too many to count and yet Yahweh made them all and knows them by name. He not only made them but He maintains them. Yahweh the Creator is powerful and incomparable in strength.

This entire chapter is meant to provide comfort and assurance to the people of God. It begins with the words, “Comfort, comfort my people, says your God” (Isaiah 40:1 ESV). He has instructed Isaiah to bring good news to the people of Israel

*“Speak tenderly to Jerusalem.
Tell her that her sad days are gone
and her sins are pardoned.
Yes, the Lord has punished her twice over
for all her sins.” – Isaiah 40:2 NLT*

God had punished the nation of Israel for its sin and rebellion. The northern kingdom of Israel had already fallen to the Assyrians hundreds of years earlier and the southern kingdom of Israel was about to fall to the Babylonians, which would result in the deportment of tens of thousands of its citizens.

But before the inevitable happened, Yahweh assured them that His covenant love would continue; He would not abandon them. Things were going to get bad but there was good news on the horizon because “the word of our God stands forever.” (Isaiah 40:8 NLT). Yahweh is not only the Creator-God, He is the covenant-keeping God. He had made promises to Israel and He was going to keep them. That is why Isaiah is instructed to declare:

*“Your God is coming!”
Yes, the Sovereign Lord is coming in power.
He will rule with a powerful arm.
See, he brings his reward with him as he comes.
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. – Isaiah 40:9-11 NLT*

What makes this promise so powerful is its basis in God’s creative nature. Not only were the Israelites descendants of Adam, whom God had formed from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7) but they were the descendants of Abraham, the pagan, idol-worshiping Gentile from Ur of the Chaldeas. Yahweh had literally “formed” the nation of Israel from an old man and his equally elderly wife who just happened to be barren. When Yahweh called Abraham, He promised to transform an elderly barren couple into a mighty nation.

“Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” – Genesis 12:1-3 ESV

Yahweh made a covenant with Abraham and He kept it. The descendants of Abraham became a mighty nation and filled the land of Canaan that God had promised to give Abraham as his inheritance (Genesis 17:1-8). For hundreds of years, they enjoyed the fruits of the Promised Land. But they had repeatedly rebelled against God, violating their covenant commitments and giving their affections to the false gods of the Canaanites. For this, God punished them. But now He was promising to restore them.

For the Israelites facing the imminent fall of their nation and their own exile into captivity, Isaiah's words sounded like empty promises. So, he backed them up with visual references to Yahweh's creative power.

*Who else has held the oceans in his hand?
Who has measured off the heavens with his fingers?
Who else knows the weight of the earth
or has weighed the mountains and hills on a scale? – Isaiah 40:12 NLT*

But he also stressed Yahweh's unparalleled wisdom.

*Who is able to advise the Spirit of the Lord?
Who knows enough to give him advice or teach him?
Has the Lord ever needed anyone's advice?
Does he need instruction about what is good?
Did someone teach him what is right
or show him the path of justice? – Isaiah 40:13-14 NLT*

Then, to top it all off, Isaiah emphasized Yahweh's His sovereign control over all things, including the nations of the earth.

*No, for all the nations of the world
are but a drop in the bucket.
They are nothing more
than dust on the scales.
He picks up the whole earth
as though it were a grain of sand. – Isaiah 40:15 NLT*

*He judges the great people of the world
and brings them all to nothing.
They hardly get started, barely taking root,
when he blows on them and they wither.
The wind carries them off like chaff. – Isaiah 40:23-24 NLT*

Their God was beyond powerful and fully capable of caring for all their needs and remedying all their problems. He would show up and never give up until each of His promises for them was fulfilled. They could count on Yahweh because He is "the eternal God" who "never grows weak

or weary” (Isaiah 40:28 NLT). They would go into exile but He would be around when it was time for them to return and He would make it happen – because He is Jehovah-Bara, the Lord the Creator.

Isaiah’s final word on the matter stresses Yahweh’s capacity to create what is needed for the moment. He created the universe out of nothing, so He could create power, strength, and resilience for His suffering people just when they needed it.

*He gives power to the weak
and strength to the powerless.
Even youths will become weak and tired,
and young men will fall in exhaustion.
But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength.
They will soar high on wings like eagles.
They will run and not grow weary.
They will walk and not faint. – Isaiah 40:29-31 NLT*

They could trust in Yahweh’s power to *bārā’* (create). They would not need to bring their own strength, He would provide it. They would not be required to muster up the energy, He would supply His own. Jehovah-*bārā’* is able to meet all their needs. He is the same God who “created [*bārā’*] the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1 ESV). He is the same God who “created [*bārā’*] the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind” (Genesis 1:21 ESV). And He is the same God who “created [*bārā’*] man in his own image, in the image of God he created [*bārā’*] him; male and female he created [*bārā’*] them” (Genesis 1:27 ESV).

*Have you never heard?
Have you never understood?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of all the earth.
He never grows weak or weary. – Isaiah 40:28 NLT*

Jehovah-Bara stands ready to create on behalf of His people; to shape, fashion, and form, just as He did heaven and earth – out of nothing. The same Jehovah-Bara who created man can also create new conditions and circumstances. He is also the creator of transformations, just as the apostle Paul reminds us.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. – 2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

But Jehovah-Bara is not done. There is one more act of creation that will complete His redemptive plan for mankind and the entire universe. The apostle John describes it in the Book of Revelation. In the closing chapter of that book, he describes a vision he received from the Lord.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. – Revelation 21:1-2 NLT

Jehovah-Bara will recreate heaven and earth but He will also unveil the New Jerusalem, the city that will become the home of God's chosen for all eternity. Then John records the following declaration from the throne of God in heaven:

"Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them." – Revelation 21:3 NLT

To wrap up this incredible vision, John reports Jehovah-Bara's promise regarding His final act of creation.

And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" And then he said to me, "Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true." And he also said, "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children." – Revelation 21:5-7 NLT

Jehovah-Bara lives among His people, using His vast creative powers to transform hearts, minds, and circumstances. He regularly renews our minds through the power of His Word. At salvation, He places a new heart within us. He turns the darkness of our lives into light. He produces life from death. He removes our sins as far as the East is from the West and replaces them with the righteousness of Christ. And one day, He will make all things new, replacing this temporal, sin-marred, and fading world with His eternal Kingdom.

