

# Word One Bible Study

## The Majesty and Goodness of Our God

by Bo Chapman

Text: Isaiah 40:21-31 for the Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, Lectionary Series B

### OBJECTIVES

- To more fully understand the concept of majesty in regards to God's character
- To imagine what the goodness of God might have looked like in the past to the Israelites, as well as how we perceive it in today's world
- To realize that though God is more than we can imagine, He is not distant from His creation. Instead, He is continuously engaged in the lives of his people

### MAIN THOUGHT/THEME

God is truly majestic, powerful and more than anything we could ever imagine. At the same time, God is also good, loving and actively involved in the lives of His creation. Because of these various attributes of God, we can put our complete trust and hope in Him, knowing that He will never falter.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- A blank piece of paper and a pen/pencil for each participant
- A roll of tape for each small group
- Bibles for each participant

### GROUP GUIDELINES

This Bible study has been developed for a group no larger than 12 individuals. Dependent upon the number of individuals in your group, divide into smaller groups. Within each group, designate a "leader." Look for individuals who will be comfortable keeping their group moving through the Bible study, encouraging the participation of all the members in the group and serving as a timekeeper to avoid the time being dominating by just a few individuals. Participants should always have the freedom to pass if they do not wish to share in the conversation.

### BUILDING COMMUNITY

Each individual in the group will tape a piece of paper to their back. The group members will then walk around to each of the other members in the group and write one word on each person's piece of paper that is a characteristic of the person with the paper on their back. After a few minutes, everyone will be seated again and can take their paper off their back and look at the words people used to describe them. Take a moment and ask each individual if they feel that these words are an accurate description of their character. If yes, what is one other word that they would add? If no, what words do they feel miss the mark.

### LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

Objective: For the participants to get a better understanding of what is meant by the majesty and goodness of God.

To start, have students come up with a working definition of the words *majestic* and *goodness*. Utilize [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) or a similar website to help with a definition, especially if the participants are struggling to come to a consensus.

Have the participants turn to Isaiah 40:21-31. Go in a circle and have each participant read one verse until the full text is read.

- What verses give us a glimpse of God's majesty?
- What verses give us a glimpse of God's goodness?
- What other characteristics of God do we see displayed in this passage?

During the time of Isaiah's prophesying of God's Word, the nation of Israel had seen the demise of their brothers in the Northern Kingdom to the Assyrian army and also had suffered greatly at the hands of the Assyrians themselves. It was only the beginning, though, because they would eventually succumb to the armies of the Babylonians as the prophets foretold.

- As you consider the original hearers of Isaiah's message, especially in the historical context in which it was shared, what kind of emotions and/or reactions do you think it garnered from the Israelites?
- Do you think they focused on God's majesty, His goodness or something completely different?

The topic of God's majesty and goodness is not just an Old Testament concept, but something that we see throughout all of Scripture. Read Hebrews 1:1-3

- In this passage, where do you see God's majesty and goodness revealed?
- Do you think the writer of Hebrews had a reason for mentioning the Old Testament prophets, as well as Jesus? If yes, what do you believe it is?
- In mentioning the atoning work of Jesus for each and every one of us, do we see God's majesty, God's goodness, some other attribute of God or a mix of several of God's attributes? Discuss why you chose the ones you did.

### **REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED**

Throughout Scripture we see God actively involved in the lives of His creation, from the fulfillment of His promises of hope and restoration to the Israelites to the eventual sending of His Son for all people. And even today, we continue to experience the majesty and goodness of our God in so many ways. As He has promised, He is always with us offering hope, peace, strength and so many other blessings. Our God is majestic, and He is also good.

- In one word, what attribute of God resonates most with you and why?
- Are there specific attributes of God that have challenged you to grow more in your faith life?
- How will a deeper understanding of God's majesty and goodness impact your day to day life?

### **Closing**

Have everyone turn to Jude 1:24-25 and hold onto that passage. Then, ask if there are any special prayer requests that people have and then have everyone silently lift up these prayers and any others they might have that weren't mentioned. After a few moments, have everyone read together the passage from Jude to close the time together.