



"As a human being, one has been endowed with just enough intelligence to be able to see clearly how utterly inadequate that intelligence is."

—Albert Einstein

**21-Jan-11**

## **The Unique Greatness of Our God (Part Three)**

A description of God's greatness similar to [Isaiah 40:26](#) is found in [Psalm 147:4-5](#): "He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite." This is a truly incredible, mind-boggling, almost mind-numbing idea to think about—that [God](#) has numbered, counted, and named all the stars in the universe. Can we really grasp the enormity of this assertion?

Following through on this concept really expands the mind. When we gather all the information, it becomes clear that astronomers have no idea how many stars there are—although they have some widely varying estimates. Men have designated and numbered more than a billion space objects (not all of which are stars), and star charts and catalogs are available both as books and online, the largest compiled by the U.S. Naval Observatory. Recently, the journal *Nature* published an article in which researchers at Harvard and Yale give their reasons for increasing the estimate of the universe's stars to 300 sextillion. That is a three followed by 23 zeroes!

We will take this number of stars at face value. Remember that God not only made and numbered them all, but He also *named* them. It has been estimated that the average person can, with work, identify about 1,000 people by name, and in a great many people, that ability is quite stunted. Most people have trouble remembering five hundred names and their corresponding faces. In truth, we all have empty thimbles for brains in comparison to God!

Perhaps this will help to increase our awe for God. To begin, we will assume that fifty billion people eventually enter the [Kingdom of God](#), becoming God-beings. After all the dust has settled, God says to them, "My sons and daughters, as part of your reward, I am giving you all an equal number of stars and planets to develop, beautify, and rule. Here are your stars!" What a tremendous gift! The question is, how many stars would He have given each of His children?

We once thought that we might be given one star or solar system. However, knowing what the present estimates are, the number of stars that we may one day receive from God can be intimidating! The number is stupefying: six *trillion* stars! This nearly unfathomable number does not even include the planets that orbit them! Contemplating such huge numbers, we can catch a glimpse of the vast amount of work that will be required to finish and beautify the universe.

If, when it all winds up, there are indeed fifty billion sons of God, how many galaxies will we each inherit? If we consider the Milky Way to be an average-sized galaxy, and the low-end estimate of its number of stars is 100 billion, then each child of God will govern sixty *galaxies* equal to the size of our own. And we are intimidated by the possibility of ruling a few cities during the Millennium? How about multiple *galaxies*? That is the vision God has in mind for us.

What about God's ability to plan future events? We know about His overall plan that He designed millennia ago to bring many sons to glory, but what about all the little details? When we plan for the future, our finite minds are bound to fail to account for myriads of minor details, possibilities, and unintended consequences of intervening events. Thus, our plans tend to be tentative and subject to frequent change as new information comes to our

attention. Does God work that way? Or does He plot out all the little details and account for all the possibilities?

We can learn a bit about the intricate mind of God from [Job 38:22-23](#), where God says to him, "Have you entered the treasury of snow, or have you seen the treasury of hail, which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war?" This is the kind of God we worship—One who prepares reserves of snow and hail just in case He will need them in a time of trouble, such as a battle or other event that warrants such miraculous intervention.

The Bible tells us of a few instances when these treasuries of snow and hail were or will be put to use. Notice the record of [Exodus 9:22-24](#):

Then the LORD said to [Moses](#), "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt—on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt." And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the LORD sent thunder and hail [making use of His treasury], and fire darted to the ground. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

If we were God, we would probably say, "Quick! Moses just asked for hail. Let us go make some!" Our God, however, had this event planned long in advance, and He had the treasury of hail ready for a time of trouble as it was in Egypt when the children of Israel were about to be freed from slavery. God's mind plans far in advance; He does not just play things off the cuff.

God will make use of His treasury of hail again in the near future. Knowing Him, He has probably been stocking His hail hoard in recent years because He knows He will need it shortly, as [Revelation 16:17](#), 20-21 prophesies:

Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air. . . . Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail from heaven fell upon men, every hailstone about the weight of a talent. And men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.

Not only has He been stockpiling hail, God has been crafting extra-large hailstones for this occasion! John says that these hailstones will weigh about a talent. Translating that weight into its modern equivalent, these hailstones, which God has been saving for just a time as this, will weigh between 44 and 48 pounds apiece! Our God is a farsighted yet very detail-oriented God.

He is also a faithful Creator ([1 Peter 4:19](#)), and this means that He is faithful to all of His creation. He also maintains it—and, in fact, one could say that this is what it means to be a faithful Creator. He has not only created us, the earth and the heavens, and all that is in them, but He also makes sure that they all continue. He will also ensure that man, especially, will reach his fullest potential and that His purpose will resolve as He intends. In turn, we have to have [faith](#) in Him because He is working out our salvation with us ([Philippians 2:12-13](#)).

He did not, as Deists suppose, make everything and then retire to some nice corner of the universe to sit and drink mint juleps for eternity. No, He is very involved. The author of Hebrews writes that God is "upholding all things by the word of His power" ([Hebrews 1:3](#)). He is very active in His creation—if He were not, according to the laws of nature, everything would degenerate very quickly. We can be thankful that God is on His throne.

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

---

## From the Archives: Featured Sermon

### [Is God a Magician?](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Will technology really improves our character or quality of life? Are we really better people because we ride around in cars rather than walk? Technology, because of the spin it puts on expectations, can be a great source of discouragement and disillusionment when applying this heightened sense of expectation to God's seemingly slow and deliberate performance. Technology makes us susceptible to the 'quick fix' mentality, expecting dramatic, miraculous solutions to all problems, making us susceptible to

frauds and even deceptive demonic influence. When it comes to developing character, a quick fix miracle will not substitute for patient overcoming. God only works miracles consistent with His purpose (bearing witness to truth), not for any selfish desires on our part.

---

## **From the Archives: Featured Article**

### **[The Sovereignty of God: Part Four](#)**

by John W. Ritenbaugh

God not only rules in heaven, but He is also sovereign on earth! He is not an absentee landlord, but One who is actively involved in administering His creation.

---

If you would like to subscribe to the C.G.G. Weekly newsletter, please visit our [Email Subscriptions page](#).

---