

SBC – March 17, 2024

Psalm 19 (NKJV)
“The Witness of Creation & Scripture”

Psalm 19 (NKJV)
To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

Psalm 19 is another Psalm of David. It is a comprehensive Psalm emphasizing the totality of how God has revealed Himself in nature and through the Word. There is a general (or natural) revelation in nature, and then there is a special revelation, as found in the Bible. David deals with both in Psalm 19.

Repeatedly, in the Psalms David makes a notation in the heading “**To the Chief Musician**”. Some think David actually had God in mind and that this was signifying that he wrote it to the glory of God. Others think the chief musician may have been a leader of choirs or musicians in David’s day (cf. 1 Chron. 6:33, 16:5-7, 25:6).

Slide # 1

Psalm 19

“The Witness of Creation & Scripture”

- vv. 1-6 – General Revelation in Nature
- vv. 7-11 – Special Revelation in the Word
- vv. 12-14 – Application of God’s Word

1 The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.

The heavens and the firmament refer to the sky. As David looked into the vastness of the blue sky at day and into the night sky it spoke to him of the awesome vastness and greatness of God. By day he marveled at the beauty of sunrise and sunset, the sun and the clouds. By night he marveled at night sky with its bright moon and the starry galaxies.

Slide # 2 (Pic Lori Lewton took out of her hospital room)



The vastness and grandeur of it all speaks of the awesome glory of the Creator. If the heavens are this BIG and glorious how glorious must be the One behind it all? How it all works in harmony, the artistry involved, the beauty. Truly the “heavens declare the glory of God”.

Slide # 3

“I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how a man could look up into the heavens and say there is no God.” — **Abraham Lincoln**

2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.

There is verbal communication and then there is non-verbal. In view here is non-verbal communication from God day and night, day in and day out. It is clear and it is consistent!

Mankind comes wired with a God-consciousness as seen in Romans 1. Creation itself inherently testifies of a Creator. The day sky and the night sky consistently reveal the glory, wisdom, power, and creative greatness of God. Even unbelievers are in awe of the starry sky at night. All people marvel at the awesomeness of a glorious sunrise.

On the phrase “utters speech” **James Montgomery Boice** wrote, “This is stronger in the Hebrew text than it appears to be in English, for the image is literally of a gushing spring that copiously pours forth sweet, refreshing waters of revelation.” Day and night we have this copious gushing forth of testimony from creation of the reality of the living God.

On the phrase “reveals knowledge” **Derek Kidner** says, “*Knowledge* is well matched with *night*, since without the night skies man would have known, until recently, nothing but an empty universe.”

3 There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard.

No matter the human language the glory of God in the heavens is being communicated to all - all the time and everywhere throughout the whole

world. It is a message that is continually going out throughout the whole earth.

It is for this reason Paul says this in Romans 1:20..

Slide # 4

Romans 1:20 (NKJV)

20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Robert Jastrow (an astrophysicist) wrote:

Now we see how the astronomical evidence supports the Biblical view of the origin of the world... The essential elements in the astronomical and Biblical accounts of Genesis are the same. Consider the enormosity of the problem: Science has proved that the universe exploded into being at a certain moment. It asks what cause produced this effect? Who or what put the matter and energy into the Universe? And science cannot answer these questions... For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance, he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries." (God and Astronomers [New York: Norton 1978], pp. 14, 114, 116) — **Robert Jastrow**

And the reason we as theologians (and all true believers are theologians) know this is because God has revealed it to us and we take Him at His Word. That is called FAITH!

**4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun,
5 Which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, And rejoices like a strong man to run its race.**

David in poetic language (the language of appearance which we sometimes find in the Bible) described the sun as coming out its tabernacle (tent) in the morning and returning there at night.

In descriptive terms he pictures the sun like a glorious bridegroom leaving his quarters to claim his bride. He goes forth in great glory to do it. And then he uses the image of a strong athlete who runs the race with power and glory.

6 Its rising is from one end of heaven, And its circuit to the other end; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

The whole earth is affected by the sun. It's impact is felt everywhere. As someone pointed out even the blind can feel its heat!

Truly the whole of nature is constantly testifying of the truth of God day in and day out both night and day. And because of this all are without excuse.

But now David switches gears. He turns from natural revelation to special revelation as found in the Bible.

As we study creation we certainly see the wisdom of God as seen in its irreducible complexity. The intricate design in creation speaks of an unfathomable intelligence. The awesome greatness of it all speaks of a power beyond comprehension.

But although from creation we see the reality of God and the evidence of His awesome wisdom and power, yet this tells us nothing of the moral character of God, the love of God, and His plan of salvation. For this we need special revelation. And so God has given us a special BOOK called the Bible in which He has revealed these truths to us.

“He is wisest who reads both the world-book and the Word-book as two volumes of the same work, and feels concerning them, ‘My Father wrote them both.’” -**Charles Spurgeon**

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;

This is most fascinating. When David spoke of God the Creator in verses 1-6, he named God as Elohim, which emphasizes His great power as the Supreme Being. But now in verses 7-14 when he speaks of God's special revelation through His Word He names God as “YHWH”.

This is the personal name of God. The Jews considered it God's most sacred name. It emphasizes His covenant faithfulness – and hence His

love. Seven times in these verses David uses the name YHWH in reference to His special revelation.

The powerful God of Creation is also the personal God of special revelation.

The law, as referenced by the OT writers, could refer to the law of Moses, but it was also used comprehensively of the whole of OT Scriptures.

It is surmised that at this time David would have had Job; the first five books of Moses (Genesis through Deut); Joshua; Judges; a few Psalms; and Ruth. So his collection of the canon of Scripture was still quite limited in terms of the whole book – even in terms of the OT. Still, what he had was enough to bless his heart beyond measure.

David here uses a number of terms to describe the nature of God's Word. It is like God. There are various names given to God – each emphasizing some special attribute from a slightly different angle. And so it is with God's Word – it is rich with meaning.

It is best to see these as poetic terms describing God's written revelation in general, rather than one specific type of revelation (such as only the laws given in the Mosaic law). – **David Guzik**

The first thing David says about God's special revelation (His Word) is that the law of the LORD is perfect.

The word "perfect" means whole, complete, or sufficient. It is comprehensive so as to give us all that we need pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). It is all-sufficient showing us all we need to be saved and then being able to fully equip us for every good work (2 Tim. 3:15-17). Everything you need for your spiritual life is found here!

This single statement right here from the very start emphasizes the ALL-SUFFICIENCY of Scripture.

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul. The Word is powerful! "Converting the soul" is the idea of restoring, reviving, or refreshing, but one of the best nuances is that of transforming. The Word is able to transform people spiritually. To start with it brings them to faith and being born again. There is no greater transformation than this.

Slide # 5

1 Peter 1:23 (NKJV)

23 having been **born again**, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, **through the word of God** which lives and abides forever,

And then what began with being born again continues in sanctification as we grow in the Word (cf. 2 Pet. 3:18).

The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

God's testimony – what God has to say is sure, meaning it is trustworthy. It is reliable and certain. And thus, it imparts wisdom to those who study it. It starts by being able to make one wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15); and then gives you wisdom for godly living all along the way. Want God's wisdom – study His Word. It is the book on spiritual wisdom.

The word “simple” comes from an expression that means “an open door”. It pictures a naive person who doesn't have proper discernment to keep out unhealthy or impure teaching. The simple thus are ignorant, gullible, and undiscerning. Wisdom is knowing how to properly apply the Scriptures to life. That is godly wisdom. And the Bible is able to make the simple wise.

8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;

The statutes of the LORD are His precepts – His principles and guidelines for character and conduct. They are always morally right. They are always practically right and universally right. And for those who follow them, they bring great joy to the heart. There is joy in obedience!

The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The commandment of the LORD is His divine mandate. The Bible is not a book of suggestions but rather that of authoritative commands.

The idea of “pure” is that of “clear”. God's Word is not a book we can't figure out. God's basic message is CLEAR! What God wants us to do is clear! Yes, there are parts that are hard to understand (2 Pet. 3:16), but overall what God wants us to see is clear.

I read of a preacher who said when he came to a hard part that he could not figure out he would simply take his hat off (so to speak) out of reverence for the text and go on. There are those passages, but in the main what God commands us is clear, enlightening the eyes.

Slide # 6**Acts 17:30 (NKJV)**

30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now **commands all** men everywhere to repent,

1 John 3:23 (NKJV)

23 And this is His **commandment**: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

This is not difficult!

Scripture, because of its absolute clarity, brings understanding where there is ignorance, order where there is confusion, and light where there is spiritual darkness. It stands in stark contrast to the muddled musings of unredeemed men, who themselves are blind and unable to discern truth or live righteously. – **John MacArthur**

9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

The Word of the LORD is intimately connected to the awe and majesty of the LORD. It brings about a proper fear or reverence for God. A fear for God speaks of reverential awe that causes us to worship.

Slide # 7**Deuteronomy 4:10 (NKJV)**

10 especially concerning the day you stood before the LORD your God in Horeb, when the LORD said to me, ‘Gather the people to Me, and I will let them **hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me** all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.’

Scripture is “clean” meaning it is absent of all impurity, defilement, or imperfection (cf. Ps. 12:6). As such it endures forever! Many have tried to get rid of the Bible. They are all gone, but the Bible remains. God has sovereignly ordained it to remain forever.

Slide # 8



Mark 13:31 (NKJV)

31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

There is no qualifying statement here as there were for the previous 5 descriptions. For David it was enough to simply say the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether in their totality. There is nothing false in the Word, there is nothing wrong in the Word. It is totally true and righteous!

Whether it speaks of origins, the purpose of life, morality, life, death, eternity, heaven and hell, security or any other fundamental or spiritual issue. You can drive a stake down – the Word of God is TRUE through and through.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

The value of Scripture is incomparable – more valuable than anything else this world has to offer.

“This is strictly true; but who believes it? By most men *gold* is preferred both to *God* and his *judgments*; and they will barter every heavenly portion for gold and silver!” - **Adam Clarke**

What Clarke is saying is that in practical reality most people by how they live put gold (finances) above God. Sadly, too often, this is true!

Furthermore, the Word is sweeter than honey. Yes, honey is sweet, but God’s Word is able to satisfy spiritually as nothing else can do and there is a pleasantness to it!

I have a friend who collects rare Bibles. He owns a wonderful collection, with one Bible dating back to the fourth century. But my favorite is a Bible from sixteenth-century England, one of the earliest printed copies of God’s Word. The top third of this Bible is covered

with the blood of its original owner. My friend let me hold it in my hands, and tears came to my eyes as I leafed through it.

How did blood get on the pages of that Bible? When Bloody Mary ruled England, she terrorized Protestants, murdering as many as she could.

Her soldiers would spill the person's blood, then take his Bible and dip it deep into the blood. A few of those Bibles have been preserved and are known as Martyrs' Bibles. Scientists have tested the paper and confirmed that the dark stains on every page of my friend's Bible are human blood.

I examined that Bible carefully, page by page. I could see where it was well worn from being studied. There are water stains, as if from tears, and places where a thumb had frayed favorite pages. This was someone's most valuable possession, and his or her blood is there to prove it. – *John MacArthur*

It is easy to take the Bible for granted but in truth it is our most valuable possession. How privileged we are to have our own copy of it.

11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward.

Thank God for the warnings of Scripture. It is there for our spiritual good. The warning signs of the Scriptures concerning our spiritual lives are everywhere. Read the Proverbs. Almost every other verse is a wisdom principle to keep us on track.

The Bible warns us of our vulnerability to sin; of dangers that we cannot see; of our need to stay close to the Shepherd and His people. And on and on.

And there is great reward in keeping the Word of God. God blesses and rewards obedience. It has a reward in this life, but beyond that for all eternity.

Note the way David states this the emphasis is that obedience itself becomes its own reward. How blessed is a clear conscience, that brings with it piece of mind. This is a little piece of heaven on earth!

12 Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults.

I love this verse. After spending deep time in the Word one becomes very aware of their sin and shortcomings. We begin to realize that no one really begins to understand the extent of their errors. I mean the Holy God looks at the heart. He considers all things involving thoughts, words, and deeds. How short we come of His holy standards on a continual basis.

And so I have often prayed with David, “Cleanse me from secret faults.” I realize, as did David, that there are all kinds of faults that I don’t even realize. How often have you looked back on your life and thought, “Oh yeah, I think I was out of line there.” Or, “I could really have handled that better.” Or, “Was that really Christlike in what I did there?”

All of us are here. But God knows our hearts and I believe that the person who sincerely asks God to cleanse them of secret faults reveals a heart that desires to be right with God and God honors this prayer.

We are talking about maintenance here – like 1 John 1:9 maintenance. In terms of our position we have been forever cleansed from the penalty of sin once and for all at the moment of saving faith. But in terms of our walk, we need maintenance and when we mess up we need to confess it to God.

13 Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression.

In the OT there were sins of ignorance and sins of presumption. Provision in the sacrificial system was made for sins of ignorance but not for those of presumption (cf. Lev. 4:2-3).

Sins of presumption are intentional sins. Sins where the person knows better but flagrantly goes ahead with it.

Slide # 9

Numbers 15:29–31 (NKJV)

29 You shall have one law for him who sins **unintentionally**, for him who is native-born among the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwells among them.

30 ‘But the person who does **anything presumptuously**, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the LORD, and he shall be cut off from among his people.

31 Because he has **despised the word of the LORD**, and has **broken His commandment**, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be upon him.' ”

Realize, David as a saint was praying this prayer. He did not want to get off track spiritually in a way that could be detrimental to his spiritual well being. And so he asked God for help to this end.

Paul exhorted the believers in the NT to not let sin reign in your mortal body (Rom. 6:12). There is always danger when sin can take over. Again, Paul said, “let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” (1 Cor. 10:12).

I often think about the warning in 1 Tim. 3 to not put a novice in the position of elder lest being filled with pride he fall “into the same condemnation of the devil” (1 Tim. 3:6). This is not saying that this person as a believer can be lost, but rather he can fall from his lofty position of honor into a place of permanent disgrace (in this life) just like the devil fell from his position. That is most tragic.

All this to say, that believers can fall. They can even fall into presumptuous sins to where they have dominion over them and bring about great spiritual ruin. That is a disaster.

Slide # 10

Deuteronomy 17:12 (NKJV)

12 Now the man who **acts presumptuously and will not heed** the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall **die**. So you shall put away the evil from Israel.

I believe in some ways this corresponds to a sin unto death in the NT which is the sin of a rebellious believer in the NT.

Slide # 11

1 John 5:16 (NKJV)

16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. **There is sin leading to death**. I do not say that he should pray about that.

If a believer persists in flagrant sin there comes a point where there is nothing more to do, other than give it over to God. This is presumptuous

sin, where the person knows better, and has been duly warned, and yet refused to repent. At some point God takes them home – and I doubt they will hear “Well done!”

David’s sincere prayer is that God would keep him from such sin and then he would be blameless and innocent of great transgression. I believe God honors this kind of prayer.

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

What a great prayer! David is asking that his very thoughts (the mediation of his heart) and the words of his mouth would be acceptable in God’s sight.

At the end of the day we serve an audience of ONE. What matters is God’s evaluation.

David asks for cleansing from secret faults, that God keep him from presumptuous sin, and that his words and meditation be acceptable to God.

And then David in humble prayer recognizes that the LORD is his strength and his redeemer.

Redeemer is the Hebrew word *goel* that means “kinsman-redeemer”. It was the kinsman-redeemer that bought his relative out of slavery allowing him to go free. In David looking to God to be his “kinsman-redeemer” we have an echo in the OT that looks forward to Jesus Who is the redeemer of all those who believe on Him.

This psalm has run a glorious course. It begins with recognizing the glory of God in creation, and then the glory of His written revelation. Next to this great God and His great works, David knew himself to be small and sinful. Yet this great God would also be David’s strength and Redeemer as David put his trust in Him.

– **David Guzik**