

Pursuing God

In Step with the Psalms

Lesson 12: Psalm 19

God's Unveiled Glory

Stay on the Path ~

On the fourth day of creation, God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth'; and it was so. Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth . . . And God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:14–17, 18b) . Who can fathom the magnificent artistry of God? Look around and be amazed! Whether it's hanging the stars in the heavens, placing the planets in their orbit, or laying out earth's atmospheric conditions, God's handiwork is on display.

In Psalm 19, David gives a reason to praise. He records two means of divine revelation, inviting the reader to extol God by considering the majestic order of the skies and the perfection of the scriptures. God's non-verbal declaration of His power through created nature is contrasted by the supernatural revelation of Himself in His Word. This is divine glory unveiled.

God has made Himself known by His awesome creative power (vv.1–6) and through His written Word (vv.7–14). Both serve as a testimony to who He is and why He created us—to give Him glory! Any other major pursuit in life that becomes a priority—be it money, fame, possessions, pleasure—will fall short and detour us from becoming who and what God intends for us to be.

David reminds us in this psalm to respond appropriately to the truth that God exists and that He has chosen to reveal Himself in ways that are clearly identifiable and irrefutable. His world is a call to worship; His Word is a call to salvation.

Did you know ~

The regular practice of taking God's Word into your heart and mind will produce constant fruitful change in your daily life and in your walk with God. The contemplation and interpretation of the living Word will leave its mark—it is not possible to remain unchanged. "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.'" (C. H. Spurgeon)

Psalm 19

The Perfect Revelation of the Lord

To the Chief Musician.
A Psalm of David.

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

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

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

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.

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

7 The law of the Lord is perfect,
converting the soul;

The testimony of the Lord is sure,
making wise the simple;

8 The statutes of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart;

The commandment of the Lord is
pure, enlightening the eyes;

9 The fear of the Lord is clean,
enduring forever;

The judgments of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether.

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

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

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

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.

(Scripture from the New King James Bible, ©1980 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.)

Open your Bible and lesson each day by beginning with a word of prayer.

Read Psalm 19.

Listen to the psalm ~ First impressions

What is the *tone* of Psalm 19? What stands out to you from your initial reading?

Do you long for God and His Word more than anything else in life? How has your pursuit of Him brought you satisfaction?

Put a psalm in your heart ~ (Memory verse) Psalm 19:14

(Write out the verse in the spaces below. Practice it each time you open your lesson.)

*Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord,
my strength and my Redeemer.*

Learn the lessons of the psalm ~

David first reflects on the glory of God through the creation of the universe that is evident to all.

The word *heavens* (v.1) refers to the planets, sun, stars and all heavenly bodies known to man. These declare the glory of God. The *firmament* or *skies* speaks of the environment of earth's atmosphere that proclaims His handiwork.

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These verses tell us that no one on planet earth is beyond the “voice” of God’s creation. The entire globe is exposed to God’s handiwork being evident: *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*” (Romans 1:20).

2. David states that in the heavens God set a *tabernacle for the sun*, liking it to a tent in which He had placed a torch of light. What else does he say about it in verses 5–6?

The glory of God is clearly visible in the sun constantly at work, warming the four corners of the earth in its orbit. Similarly, God is constantly at work on mankind’s behalf, seeing to it that life is sustained by His gracious provision.

Pause & ponder ~

Think about it: the heavens narrate non-verbally but exquisitely that God exists. As you ponder, what do they tell *you* right now about God’s character (goodness, faithfulness, etc.)?

II. The Word reveals the work of His heart.

In verses 7–14, David shifts his focus to the glory of God revealed in His Word. While the heavens and the atmosphere declare the power of God, the Word of God reveals how to have a personal relationship with Him.

God’s Word is Perfect ~vv. 7–9

David uses six descriptions in speaking of the perfection and sufficiency of God’s Word. The descriptions are listed below; you are to add the action they perform.

v. 7: *The law of the Lord is perfect* _____

v. 7: *The testimony of the Lord is sure* _____

v. 8: *The statutes of the Lord are right* _____

v. 8: *The commandment of the Lord is pure* _____

v. 9: *The fear of the Lord is clean* _____

v. 9: *The judgments of the Lord are true* _____

Personal: The created sun lights our *outer world* while the revealed Word illumines our inner life. Pick one of the previously mentioned descriptions and state how it relates to your situation today.

God's Word is Precious ~v. 10

It is much more desirable than anything this world can offer. What two examples does David use to describe its value?

Personal: We make time for what is most precious to us. What does your quiet time say about the value of God's Word to *you*?

God's Word is Powerful ~vv. 11–14

What safeguard is there in the Word for every believer? v. 11

What benefit? _____

What does Scripture have the power to reveal? v. 12

The question, *Who can understand his errors?* (v.12) implies to us that the person who studies and meditates on God's Word will also receive its correction.

From what type of sin are we able to refrain? v. 13 What does this mean?

The power of the Word is able to protect the believer from participating in sin and preserve them blameless in the Lord's eyes. *Love has been perfected among us in this; that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world* (1 John 4:17).

David concludes the psalm with a prayer: *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight.* When the Word of God is applied through the power of God, the believer's mouth and heart are pleasing to Him.

What do the words *my Rock (strength)* and *Redeemer* (v.14) mean to you?

Touchpoint~

The Bible is the instrument by which God has chosen to reveal Himself to the world. Martin Luther said of it, "The Bible is alive, it speaks to me. It has feet, it runs after me. It has hands, it lays hold of me." As a *living book*, it is God-breathed. It speaks to your heart each time you open it. Take a moment to ponder the truth discovered in Hebrews 4:12 . . .

*The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,
piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow,
and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

In the space below, list the different aspects of God's Word described in this verse.

So powerful that it can discern the thoughts and intents of the heart; so practical that it becomes light on your daily path, counseling you on how you should live. Look up the following references in Psalm 119, noting the part God's Word plays in your spiritual growth.

v. 24 _____

v. 48 _____

v. 99 _____

v. 100 _____

v. 105 _____

v. 130 _____

Live the psalm ~

If you develop the daily discipline of spending time alone with the Lord you will, like David, find that it makes a difference. It revives your soul, makes you wise, brings you joy, gives clarity about sin, and builds godly character. Spending time in His Word creates the desire to want to be like Jesus. What area of your life is God currently working on? What change have you noticed lately?

Pray the psalm ~

If you are struggling about obeying God in an area of your life, note it below, confess it to Him, and ask Him to help you. You will be amazed at the power of His Word when you yield to Him.

Personal: If your path seems too difficult and you feel like giving up, perhaps it's because you do not have the assurance of knowing that you belong to God. Have you ever asked to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? If not, you may do so today by praying this simple prayer:

Lord Jesus, I realize that I am a sinner in need of Your forgiveness. I want to invite You to be the Lord of my life today. Please cleanse me, forgive me, and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Make the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart acceptable to You. Thank You for indwelling me and that I am born again!

Notes

