

## Psalm 19

By Pastor Roy Hogan

Psalm 19 is a psalm of David. We do not know when it was written. Possibly, it was written as a memory of David when he once watched his father's sheep on the hills of Judea and slept beneath the stars above. Perhaps it was written as David lay in the field running as a fugitive being hunted by Saul. Or, possibly it was written when David looked upon the heavens from the balcony of his palace as King of Israel. Nevertheless, it is an amazing tribute to the creation. I believe that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. How can anyone look at the stars of heaven at night and think such a picture is the work of fate? How can anyone looking to the heavens at night and seeing the beautiful stars, and think this happened as the result of an explosion millions of years ago. Once I had the privilege of visiting the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC. There I read the famous words of Abraham Lincoln that I will now paraphrase: *I do not know how anyone can look into the heavens at night and not believe there is a God.*

Have you ever looked up into the heavens on a beautiful clear night? We have a lot of pollution in the heavens today caused by mankind. If you will venture out to the western part of United States, where there is very little population and very little industry, and gaze into the heavens at night you will be stunned. The stars of the heavens are as numerable as the sands of the sea. As a child, it was a wonderful feeling to be able to find the Big Dipper and the Little Dipper.

This Psalm tells us how God revealed himself by virtue of the heavens. He reveals himself to all mankind through our human vision. In this chapter we are also reminded of the great revelation of God through the Scriptures.

19: 1

*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork.*

This verse tells us God is revealed to us through the creation, particularly the night sky. Adam saw God face to face before the fall in the Garden Eden. There, he had the beauty of God's creation surrounding him. God walked with him in the garden. Yet, sin tainted Adam's vision of God. Now, expelled from the garden with his being tainted by sin, he could look upward at night and still see the majesty of Almighty God. I do believe that Adam, in his sin-tainted state, needed a way to see God and to know he still existed. God chose the brilliant night sky as a way to reveal himself to fallen Adam.

I do not worship the creation in any form. Yet, I do believe what this Psalm teaches, and that is, God reveals himself to mankind in the creation. Look into the heavens on a clear night and you will see majestic, all-powerful, God.

9:2

*Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.*

Not many things in life are dependable. Friends come and go. Events begin and stop. Life changes us all. Yet, after 64 years on this planet I can go back to my childhood and see the same night sky that I marveled at as a child. The heavens remained unchanged. The Big Dipper is still there. *Day unto day*, the witness of the existence of God continues onward interrupted. On Sunday night, David saw the stars in heaven. On Monday night, David saw the stars of heaven. Last year, I saw the stars of heaven. Tonight, I will see the stars of heaven. Next year, if the Lord allows me to live, I will look upward and see the stars of heaven. The stars never grow tired of declaring the handiwork of God.

The sun is a vast star. Like the other stars, it is a huge ball of very hot hydrogen fired by a extremely complex reaction. Astronomers

believe that the sun is capable of burning for billions of years with no reduction of heat or size. That testifies to the eternal nature of God. I know folk who have tired of worshiping God. They are tired of attending church. They still know Jesus as Savior, but not as Lord. Yet the stars have not quit. The stars remain faithful and will never, as long as this world exists its present form, stop witnessing that God is omnipotent and eternal.

19:3-6

*There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, 5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. 6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.*

Verse three tells us there is no speech nor language where the voice of the stars is not heard. The folk in China can see the stars. The folk in Africa can see stars. Those who live in Antarctica can see the stars. The stars are visible to those in North America and in South America. God is everywhere, and if you don't believe it just ask the stars. I may never preach in China or in Russia or in many of the 200-plus nations that make up planet earth. Yet, the stars have preached to every nation. The stars have preached to every people. The stars can speak Chinese, and the stars can speak Russian. They have no language barrier.

We see that special star, the sun, mentioned in verse four. The scripture refers to the sun as a *tabernacle*. What is a tabernacle? A tabernacle is a temporal place where God's servants meet with him. The sun is one of God's servants. The sun is one of God's messengers. Once a missionary in a foreign land was speaking to the chief of the village. The chief was very proud of his false gods and his idols. He gladly displayed them to the missionary. The chief then asked the missionary to show him his God. The missionary explained that his God was invisible and cannot see be

seen with the human eye. To see him with the human eye would cause instant death. His glory is that great! The chief was not impressed. "I can see my gods," he said, "but show me your god." The missionary replied "I cannot show you my God, but I can show you one of his messengers." The chief agreed to be blindfolded. He led the chief from his hut blindfolded. He moved the head of the chief in such a fashion as to look toward the sun. When the blindfold was removed, the chief was stunned at the sight of the sun. He had seen one of God's messengers. Truly, we cannot look into the face of God with the human eye. Yet, we see him in the heavens and in the Scripture. The sun spoke a language the chief of understood.

Verse five likens the rising of the sun to the bridegroom coming out of his chamber. There is no greater thrill than to have a good night of rest and arise to see the sun shining faithfully. The joy of knowing God has made us another day is refreshing. The sun rises as a strong man running a race. The sun does not get tired. God does not get tired. The sun is dependable. God is dependable. The sun shows us our way. God shows man the way of life. Truly, the sun is a magnificent tabernacle declaring the handiwork of God and is a strong man running a race. The sun rises in China. The sun rises in Russia. The Chinese and the Russians and the Africans and the Indians and all humanity are recipients of the heat of the sun lest they die in a frozen state. No sun- no people. No God- no people. Without God man would be in ruins. To get a glimpse of what it would be like without God, imagine the sun removed from the heavens.

19:7

*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*

The Bible is perfect. If God says it, it is true. If God says it, it will come to pass. If God says it, you had better take heed. The word of God is perfect. The sun is not perfect. The sun dwells in the second heavens. The second heaven was tainted by the sin of mankind in

the Garden of Eden. Yet, the imperfect sun bears forth the message of a perfect God. We as preachers, teachers, and witnesses of God are imperfect. Yet, gracious God allows us to speak for him. I have stammering speech, but gracious God uses me to bear forth his message. Always pray for the messenger. I cannot share with you the burden that I feel when I stand behind the podium and try to speak concerning the infallible Word of God. Why is this? I am a fallible human speaking concerning an infallible Gospel.

The word *converting* means bringing him back. We see a good picture of converting as we watch the sun rise in the morning and set in the evening. I am thankful the Word of God converts a soul. The word of God brings back a sinner separated from God due to the fall in the garden of Eden. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Have you been converted?

The testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple. The philosopher may confuse you. The psychiatrist may confuse you. Your spouse may confuse you, and your children most likely will confuse you. But the Word of God has a power of enlightenment that goes beyond the lips of the philosopher, the psychiatrist, the doctor, the scientist, and the engineer. Blessed be the Word of God for its converting power Blessed be the testimony of the Lord that gives the simple, that is, the unlearned, the wisdom to call on the Lord in salvation. Only God could have written a single verse that would save the world. That verse is John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.” The fool need not ere therein. A simple man can be saved. I am evidence of that. The Holy Ghost revealed to me that I a black-hearted sinner could have a white heart through the application of the red blood of Jesus Christ. Bless the name of the Lord.

19:8

*The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

I am a human being. I am a speck on a massive planet. I am an unknown to the vast majority of this world. Most of the time I feel like a nobody. However, with my connection to God, which is my Bible, my heart can be made to rejoice. The Word of God makes me, a nobody, feel like somebody. The Bible makes me, a failure, feel like a success.

Everyone likes to rejoice. I see many products for sale that promise to give you energy and put you in a “better mood.” What they don’t tell you is that they may keep you up all night and destroy your liver. They are just not *right* for me. My relationship with my doctor is hit or miss. Sometimes, his prescription works. Sometimes, his prescription does not work. But, *the statutes of the LORD are right*. If I say anything that differs from God’s Word, it is right, and I am wrong. If my family differs from the Word of God, they are wrong, and it is right. If the President of the United States differs from the Word of God, it is right, and he is wrong.

The Word of God enlightens. Listen to this quote from Martin Luther concerning his finding of the Biblical phrase *The just shall live by faith*: “Before those words broke up on my mind, I hated God and was angry with him because, not content with frightening sinners by the law and by the miseries of life, he still further increased our torture by the gospel. But when, by the Spirit of God, I understood those words *the just shall live by faith* I felt born-again, like a new man. I entered by the open doors into the very Paradise of God. In very truth this text was to me the true *gate of paradise*.”

Religion confuses but the Word of God makes the simple wise.

19:9-10

*The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: 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.*

The words of the old hymnal are beautiful: “What can wash away my sin, nothing but the blood of Jesus.” John 15:3 *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.* Nothing can make a person feel dirtier than sin can. I did not have a great fear of hell when I was a sinner. I did not have a great longing in my heart for Heaven when I was a sinner. The one thing that bothered me most as a sinner was my feeling of guilt and the feeling of being unclean. I had a feeling of condemnation. When I got saved that Sunday morning, I did not know anything about a gate of pearl or a wall of jasper. I did not know much about a street of gold that one day I would walk upon. But one thing I did know, I finally felt clean.

Zacchaeus was a dirty sinner. He stole from the poor and gave to the rich. He was a dirty man. But when he met Christ, he was cleansed. He repaid fourfold that which he had stolen. He gave half of his possessions to the poor. Why did he do such a thing? Because he was dirty and it felt so good to finally be clean.

Men strive with one another and even kill one another for the possession of gold. The love of money is the root of all evil. If men did not love money, that would be no drug problem. If men did not love money, the strong drink industry would not be a trillion-dollar business worldwide. If men did not love money, no one would be likely to break into your home tonight. God has something more to be desired than fine gold. God has something sweeter than honey. What God has is *cleansing* and *righteousness* and true *judgments*.

19:11

*Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*

The world is a wicked place tainted by sin. If there is any morality in this world, it can be attributed to the Bible. By the Word of God, we know not to steal, we know not to kill, and we know not to take another person’s spouse away from them. Aside from the Bible, how do men know morality? Remove the Word of God from the

face of this planet, and we will instantly become a planet of 7.4 billion barbarians. I am warned by the Word of God not to kill you. I am warned by the word of God not to steal from you.

Some folk are wonderful teachers of the Bible while others cannot teach the Bible. Song can sing and others cannot. So, you may say “I cannot teach or preach or teach, so how can I receive a reward from God.” The answer is simple and is found in verse 11. You will receive a reward in this life and in the life hereafter by simply obeying the commands of God. Now, how can anyone beat that deal! God will bless you for doing what is right. Does the local Police Department reward you for obeying the speed limit?

19:12

*Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

What if I asked you to make a list of all your error made today. You may think that would be an impossible task and it is. Some things you do you do not think are wrong, and yet, they may be wrong in God’s eye. What a powerful statement: *who can understand his errors?* I prefer to think I don’t make any errors. I prefer, in my human nature, to think that I’m pretty much a perfect person. I believe that is the mindset of most people and the Bible verify this notion man has of himself: Proverbs 14:12 *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

So, how do we sort out right from wrong? We let the Word of God do the sorting. What a pitiful society we would have, and we’re almost there today, when people begin to think they’re perfect and do no wrong. People think it’s okay to have purple hair and wire in your eyebrows and a ball bearing in their nose. People think it’s okay to deface their body with tattoos. If you are born again, your body is the dwelling place, the temple, of the Holy Spirit. Your body is not yours; it is bought with a price. It belongs to God, and

if he wants it painted, he will not hire some sleazy tattoo parlor in a back alley to do the painting.

*Cleanse me from my secret faults.* Cleanse me from those things I did in the closet where no one could see me. Have an open mind toward God. Serve God with your palms up, nothing hidden. If you want to know whether or not you're right about a matter, God will be glad to tell you. Again, the fool need not ere therein.

19:13-14

*13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. 14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.*

A lady once asked a captain of a ship if he knew where all the rocks and shallows waters were. As he pointed to his chart, the captain replied "oh no, but I know where the deep water is."

What are presumption sins? The 1828 Webster's dictionary defines presumptuous as "bold and confident to excess; adventuring without reasonable ground for success." One of the most difficult truths for a Christian to accept is that they are their own worst enemy. David's sin with Bathsheba was presumptuous. In his own state of pride, he was blinded to what he was about to do. His sin was presumptuous. He surely knew pregnancy was a possibility. He surely knew he was about to destroy a home. He knew God was watching, and he would have to answer to God. He did it anyway! There was a very slim chance he would get away with what he did, but he did it anyway! His sin was presumptuous.

Verse 19 is, in my opinion, one of the most beloved verses in the word of God. What a simple prayer in one verse. If the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart are right with God, most everything else in life will take care of itself.