

How God Speaks to Us

Psalm 19

Main point: God has made Himself known to man through the creation of the world and the revelation of the Scriptures.

Introduction:

C.S. Lewis wrote of Psalm 19, "I take this to be the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world."¹ Indeed, it is hard to disagree with such a judgment, for this psalm combines the most beautiful poetry with some of the most profound biblical theology. There are three soul-shaping, life-altering truths taught to us in Psalm 19.

1. God has written His autograph in the heavens. What does it unveil to us about Him?
2. God has revealed His glory above barriers of language and culture. What does it show us about ourselves?
3. God has spoken His mind in the Scripture. Are our lives in alignment with God's will?

If you desire to hear God speaking to you, come up close now and listen. And as you do, quietly prepare yourself by opening up your mind's eye—for David will paint a familiar but fascinating picture worth a thousand words! Also, inwardly prepare yourself by going within to listen to your conscience—for God's words are meant to *penetrate* and *probe* in the secret places in your heart and confirm what you knew to be true already! But watch out now, God may spark a fire of desire in your soul to help you respond to Him by faith and with praise for His saving grace.

"**Written for the choir director**"—most scholars believe David wrote this psalm in two parts. The first part—a creation hymn (with echoes of Genesis 1-3) which is designed to lift us up to the skies and to the heavens, filling us with awe-struck wonder and praise at the self-revelation of God in nature (*vv.1-6*). The second part—a wisdom hymn which is designed to bring us down-to-earth in prayer for forgiveness and personal alignment with God's will (*vv.7-14*). Its movement takes us from the macro to the micro, from the universe and its glory to the individual in humility before God. Together, Psalm 19 is a symphony that leads us from creation to conscience, to Christ. Let's begin. First, come as David shows us...

A. The Revelation of God in the Heavens (*vv.1-6*)

Explained: The psalm opens not with *praise*, nor even a *call to praise God*, but with a description of the proclamation of praise produced by God's creative acts—particularly in the heavens.

If David were here and leading us in worship, he might say something like this: "*Look up and all around; the heavens are speaking clearly to us!*"

The heavens are telling of the glory of God;
And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.
² Day to day pours forth speech,
And night to night reveals knowledge.

Notice how David personifies or gives life and a voice to inanimate objects like the "**heavens**" and their "**expanse**." The "**heavens**" refer to the *sun, stars, and planets, or the solar system*. Their "**expanse**" refers to

¹ C.S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms*, p.56

the lower atmosphere—the *skies*, the *clouds*, and the *weather* which surrounds the earth. Together the first heaven and the second heaven are “**telling**” (*capfar*) “**declaring...pouring forth speech...and...revealing**” that there is Someone who carries great weight!

These verbs are stacked up on top of each other to hammer home the continuously ongoing nature of the proclamation made. In other words, the praise has not ended, but it continues.

A series of thoughtful questions will help us to unpack meaning.

- **What are heavens and their expanse speaking about? (v.1)**

“The glory of God and the work of His hands.”

What is the glory of God? The Hebrew word for “**glory**” (*kabod*) speaks of a *heaviness*, a *weightiness*, or *the importance of one’s reputation or honor*. Sometimes it referred to *the wealth of a person or what is valued or distinct about a person*. When we think of Bill Gates, we think about how *rich* he is. When we think of Michael Jordan, we think about how *gifted* he was with basketball talent. When we think about Frank Sinatra or Aretha Franklin, we think of the *distinctive voices* that made them two of the greatest singers of all time. Their *money*, their *ability*, and their *voices* set them apart. It was their *glory*. But when you think of God, what testifies of His glory and His importance?

God’s intrinsic glory describes what He is by nature. Glory is the sum total of God’s personal perfections. It is the fullness of His holy character. When Scripture speaks about God’s holiness, goodness, righteousness, justice, love, faithfulness, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, eternity, and His immutability, these attributes describe *what God is* in His essential nature.

You remember on Mount Sinai, Moses asked God, “*I pray You, show me Your glory!*” And God said, “*I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you...*” (*Ex.33:18-19a*). Goodness is what God is, and glory is what God is. It is the splendor of His manifested being (*Ex.24:16-18*). It is the bright outshining of His person (*Ps.26:8; 63:2; 85:9*). We cannot *add to* nor *take away* from who God is; it is never *increasing* nor *decreasing*. In Exodus 3:14, “*I AM WHO I AM.*” In Psalm 90:2, Moses said, “*from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.*” That’s intrinsic glory. David said the heavens are telling of the infinite greatness and awesome nature of God! Look up! Look around! Creation is hung like a painting to show us how great He is! Man cannot measure the outer limits of the universe. The dimensions and proportion of the solar system are so vast, and it all is meant to tell us something about God. Calvin called creation, “*a theatre of glory.*” Can you not see it? Can you not hear it?

How does creation do this? By “**declaring**” it *emphatically* and *effectively and authoritatively*. God’s work of creation is asking, “Do you think that there might be a higher power?” No, it is *telling*—He is! (*Heb.11:6*). It is not suggesting, “there could be a Creator.” No, it is *emphatically and effectively* declaring to He lives! God is! God is *infinite*! God is *invisible*! God is *eternal*! God is *divine*! In Romans 1:20, Paul writes that creation renders man without excuse in that it makes clear God’s *unseeable qualities, unlimited ability* and that He is the *uncreated Creator*. The heavens are the most telling evidence which announces the glory of God, and it does so *effectively and authoritatively*.

- **When does creation speak?** Is it during the full moon, the spring equinox, or the summer solstice? David says, “**Day to day...**” that is, all day every day. During the daytime, when the sky is kissed by the sunlight, creation, “... **pours forth speech...**” it literally gushes or spews information. “**Night to night...**” that is when the sun sets on one side of the world, and darkness appears on the

other side, when the light of the moon and stars come out, it doesn't stop speaking. Every night, all night it "... **reveals knowledge**..." that is, it is the revealing of knowledge about God.

- **To whom is creation speaking?** The speech of the heavens has a two-fold audience. First, *it speaks praise to God Himself*. Psalm 148 explains this truth.

Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens;
Praise Him in the heights!
² Praise Him, all His angels;
Praise Him, all His hosts!
³ Praise Him, sun and moon;
Praise Him, all stars of light!
⁴ Praise Him, highest heavens,
And the waters that are above the heavens!
⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
For He commanded and they were created.
⁶ He has also established them forever and ever;
He has made a decree which will not pass away.
⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth,
Sea monsters and all deeps;
⁸ Fire and hail, snow and clouds;
Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;
⁹ Mountains and all hills;
Fruit trees and all cedars;
¹⁰ Beasts and all cattle;
Creeping things and winged fowl;
¹¹ Kings of the earth and all peoples;
Princes and all judges of the earth;
¹² Both young men and virgins;
Old men and children.
¹³ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
For His name alone is exalted;
His glory is above earth and heaven.
¹⁴ And He has lifted up a horn for His people,
Praise for all His godly ones;
Even for the sons of Israel, a people near to Him.
Praise the LORD!

Second, *it speaks to mankind*—to you and to me.

⁴ Their line has gone out through all the earth,
And their utterances to the end of the world.

The word "**line**" here can be "sound." Even though creation does not speak audible words that can be heard, its voice reaches all the nations and is equally accessible wherever human speech and language are spoken. There is a universality of His revelation. No person is without God's self-disclosure in revelation. It reaches to the four corners of the earth. There is no nation, no city, no country, no island, no place on this entire globe where this clear revelation is not given—indiscriminately, authoritatively, emphatically, and effectively. Creation is a pulpit from which God preaches loud and clear.

- **What does creation testify or bear witness of?** Notice how David, the poet, pulls out these paradoxes.

It says that God's glory is *unmistakable*. You can't miss it.

It says that God's glory is *unceasing*. Persistent.

It says that God's glory is *unspoken*. Speechless. Soundless.

It says that God's glory is *universal*. Global. It penetrates to the furthest corner of the earth.

Applied: To the sensitive person—the glory of God in creation may be an overwhelming experience. How many times have you and I caught a glimpse of it in a sunset or sunrise? Perhaps, while hiking or flying and looking over the horizon from an elevated perspective. Or, perhaps the ocean with its grandeur or a flock of birds in "V" formation crossing the sky and you thought,

*O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the world Thy hands have made.
I see the stars; I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee,
How great Thou art. How great Thou art.²*

To the insensitive person—the sky is simply the sky and stars are only stars. They point to nothing beyond. If this is where you are at, then you know what it is to be blinded spiritually, dear friend. But neither David nor I desire for you to stay in the dark.

Now, why did David begin this hymn of praise from creation? It is not his main purpose to draw upon nature as a primary vehicle of revelation. Sin has so muddied our perception of our souls that although the self-disclosure of God declares His genius craftsmanship and His existence and excellencies, we pervert what we see. Instead of seeing beyond it to God, we stop at creation and begin to worship the creation or use it for selfish ends. General revelation is enough to condemn us, but not enough to save us.

No, David did not desire to use creation as a source of knowledge about God apart from the revelation of God in the law or the Scriptures.

Transition:

Having started with the revelation of God in the heavens in part 1 of the hymn, David himself joins *the symphony of praise* by specifically thinking about **the sun**, which represents the whole of creation (*metonymy*). The metaphor begins by picturing the sun residing in **a tent** (outer space), and then the metaphor switches by viewing the sun like a happy "**bridegroom**" (*v.5a*) and a triumphant champion (*v.5b*) who departs his pavilion and runs his course or trip after sweeping through the entire circuit. And his main point is at the end of verse 6, "*And there is nothing hidden from its heat.*" As if to say, if nothing escapes the sun's rays, what chance do you have of escaping God's view?

² Stuart K. Hine, *How Great Thou Art*

Let's briefly open up each image.

In them He has placed a tent for the sun,
⁵ Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber;
It rejoices as a strong man to run his course.
⁶ Its rising is from one end of the heavens,
And its circuit to the other end of them;
And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

Analogy #1: The sun is like a light in the tent. This explains to us that God is awesome. God is so infinite, so immense, so high and lifted up, so exalted that the universe is like a tiny, little, movable tent in the back yard of your house that you set up with your kids to sleep in. And the sun is like that lantern or battery light you hang up at the top of it.

What David is seeking to communicate to us is this: The entire created order—light-years in distance, immeasurable by man—is like the tiny, little camping tent that you set up compared to GOD! That immense sun, which is heating up the entire solar system, is just a little candle or battery light when compared to GOD!

What are we meant to learn? God is awesome. God is so far beyond us that He is indescribable.

- **Isaiah 55:8-8**—"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.
⁹ "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts."

Analogy #2: The sun is like a bridegroom.

⁵ Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber;

The picture is vivid. A bridegroom in this scene is not coming to the wedding, but he is coming out of his chamber, which means he has already been married, and he is on the honeymoon. He has been with his wife in an intimate, biblical, and loving way, and now he comes out of the chamber (honeymoon suite), and his face is lit up with joy, his countenance is radiant with satisfaction and full of happiness.

David is saying the universe is like a little honeymoon suite, and the sun—that immense ball of fire—is like a bridegroom coming out of the suite with light, beaming from his countenance. Happy. Immense. Radiant.

What are we meant to learn? God's glory is immensely happy.

- **Psalms 16:11**—You will make known to me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Analogy #3: The sun is like a strong champion runner running his course. These three metaphors or analogies vividly display his point, but this last one is amazing.

It rejoices as a strong man to run his course.
6 Its rising is from one end of the heavens,
And its circuit to the other end of them;
And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

Some scholars prefer the image of a *warrior*. This strong warrior, like a champion athlete, begins at sunrise and does not stop until sunset—and he runs this course day after day after day. He never becomes weary or slows down. He never drops out of the race. And even when there is cloud cover, he (the sun) still is running his race. Look up in your mind's eye and see how it presses on! He begins at sunrise, "***Its rising is from one end of the heavens...***" and he is running every day toward the finish line of sunset, "***...and its circuit to the other end of them.***" He seems to go down for a while at nightfall. But then, baam! There he is again, running the race—all over again at the beginning of each day. It comes into the stadium of our view and runs its laps all over again, and it (the sun) has been doing so since the beginning of time.

All of this is God speaking to us! Can you not hear Him? Can you not see Him?

What is David seeking to teach us about the glory of God in creation?

- God's glory in creation is unmistakable, unceasing, unspoken, and universal.
- God's glory in creation is indescribable—infinitely beyond the indescribability of outer space (a tent).
- God's glory in creation is uplifting like a bridegroom.
- God's glory in creation is unresting and unwearied like a champion.

And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

God's glory in creation is universal in its touch, pouring out its heat on every creature. The light of general revelation pierces everywhere.

Application: if the SUN, which is a small reflection of God's glory, constantly arcs overhead so that none escapes its blessing or judgment (implied by heat), no one has an excuse for failing to recognize His authority as our Creator God. Your response to God will determine whether His revelation warms AND illumines your life, or curses and judges your life.

Now in the second part of David's song, the last clause in verse 6 marks not only the transition, but it serves as the "bobby pin" that fastens them together. Just as the sun dominates the daytime sky—"**and nothing is hidden from its heat**"—so does the Word of God. It dominates human life. Jesus said, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*" (Matt.4:4).

The sun can be both a welcome and terrifying judgment. It can give warmth and be life-giving on one hand, but on the other hand, when it bears down upon you in unrelenting heat, it can scorch, test, and purify. Neither is *indispensable* or *avoidable*. There could be no life on this planet without the sun, and now David is going to show that there can be no true, spiritual, God-honoring life without God's Word.

B. The Revelation of God in the Scriptures (vv.7-14)

The heavens declare *the glory of God to mankind*, but the law declares *the will of God for mankind*. And though the vast firmament so high above *declares God's praise*, it is the Torah of God, the Word of God alone, that *directs our life*.

In one of the most compact, tightly-worded, concise expressions in the Bible, God has given us the most remarkable statement of special revelation.

There are *six descriptions* of God's Word, *six characteristics* of God's Word, and *six effects* of God's Word. In setting these terse yet powerful statements before us, David tells us three things about God's Word.

- God's Word is *perfect* (so we can trust it) (vv.7-9),
- God's Word is *precious* (so we should value it) (v.10), and
- God's Word is *powerful* (so we must employ it) (vv.11-13).

Someone asks, why are the Scriptures sufficient to guide us? David poetically answers...

1. Because the Scriptures are perfect. (vv.7-9)

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

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

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

Notice how David carefully constructs six aspects of the Scripture, which, from a poetic perspective, appear to be synonymous, but from a theological perspective, they are all-embracing. The law, the testimony, the precepts, the commandments, the fear, and the judgment of the Lord are all different ways of speaking of the complete sufficiency of God's Word.

- Why can you trust God's Word? *Because it is the only perfect law that restores the soul.*

⁷The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;

The "law" (*tora*) refers to the *didactic* portion of Scripture. The root meaning of the word "law" is "to teach" and refers to any direction or instruction flowing from the Bible, which unfolds to us essential truths concerning God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, man, sin, salvation, and a number of other topics. The word "**perfect**" (*tamim*) means *whole, complete, without blemish, sufficient, lacking nothing, or comprehensive*. Nothing that we need to know about God, man, sin, Christ, or salvation is missing. It is all found in the book. We do not need to read *blogs, commentaries, articles, or any other book* to find out what we need to know about God and ourselves. The Book of God has it all! It is the treasure of treasures! There are no gaps in it; nothing needs to be amended, edited, nor supplemented. It is perfect as it is. It is so complete that it can "**restore**" or *revive, convert, transform, and refresh* the entire inner person. The Word of God is like a seed that is planted in the heart, and when God chooses to sovereignly regenerate that seed, it brings life to the soul (1 Pet.1:23-25). God's Word has converting power. It can totally and radically convert a person's life. The picture here is of a man on his way to hell, and the Word of God

comes and re-routes the person and leads them toward heaven. But for the believer, the effect is that it causes the “whole being of the soul” to turn or return.

- Why can you trust God’s Word? *Because it is the only trustworthy testimony that makes wise the simple.*

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

The “**testimony**” (*edut*) of the Lord means this is God’s own testimony of Himself. This is not someone’s testimony of God, but God’s own infallible, inerrant, inspired witness of Himself. The word “**sure**” (*aman*) means that it is a *reliable witness—a faithful guide*. It will always give a sure revelation to us. It is not like a broken clock that is right twice a day. The Word of God is right all the time. The “*sure*” Word of the Lord means it is trustworthy or to be trusted. It is unwavering and immovable. Jesus said in John 10:35, “...*the Scripture cannot be broken.*”

The “**simple**” person is the person who is *gullible* because their mind is open, where it should be shut. A simpleton is a person who is *naïve* and who has *no discernment*. They will buy anything. The Word of God can take a simple person and make them *wise*. Wise in what way? Like a highway sign notifying drivers of winding roads or slippery conditions, the Bible provides warning to the faithful of dangerous and slippery conditions that confront them. It is a trustworthy guide. God’s Word faithfully warns us of the ramifications of decisions in life.

- Why can you trust God’s Word? *Because God’s Word provides right direction, which gives real joy.*

⁸The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;

The “**precepts**” (*piqqudim*) of the Lord refers to *the divine guidelines on how to live*. The Word of God gives us principles to practice for life. It is relevant. The Word of God is not *theoretical* or *philosophical* as if it is only related to high-church people of academia who read from the original manuscripts. We thank God for scholars, but the Bible is the most *relevant* and *practical* book in the world! No generation, no nation, no culture, no group is outside of its clear, searching, and life-changing precepts (*Heb.4:12*).

The precepts of the Lord are “**right**” (*yasar*)—that is, they show us *the right path* and lead us down the right way. To listen to others whose words are not in harmony with the Scriptures will lead you down a wrong path. This is why false doctrine is so dangerous. This Word is right. It is the standard. Everything that does not line up with this book is wrong. The Word “*right*” means *straight—God’s Word lays out the proper path to lead us through the complexities of life*. It directs us in a way that may not please people, but it leads us in the right, holy, biblical way that pleases God (*Is.2:3; Jer.6:16*). Now when we displease God, it does not matter who we please, but when we please God, it does not matter who we displease. God’s Word brings joy into the heart. “**Rejoicing**” (*samach*) refers to one internal emotion that expresses itself in some visible or external manner. This is what the Word of God produces regardless of the circumstances the believer finds himself in. Regardless of the dysfunction around you, or the sorrow that you have encountered in life, God’s Word is able to make the heart *rejoice*. It is able to *frame your mind* in such a way so as to give you God’s perspective (*Rom.8:28; Gen.50:20*).

- Why can you trust God's Word? Because God's Word is the supreme authority to open our eyes to see spiritual realities.

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

This is the authoritative Word that dictates to us how we must live to please God. The "**commandment**" (*miswa*) of the Lord is not *advice, suggestions, nor options*. It has supreme authority to bind our conscience and to speak to us about *how we must be saved* and *how we must live* in order to honor God. His commandments are obligatory. It is what we must do.

The word "**pure**" (*bar*) means there is nothing dark or murky about God's Word, but rather, it is clear, lucid, and revealing in its truth. It enables *blind eyes to see* (Ps.36:9). It is a lamp to our feet and light to our path (Ps.119:105). The Reformers referred to this as "the *perspicuity* of the Scriptures," which simply means *the Bible is understandable and brings clarity to the issues of life*. Its contents are not mystifying. The Bible is not hard to understand; it's just hard to swallow.

We live in a dark world, and it is the Word of God that enlightens the path toward heaven and hell. Who are you? Who made you? Why are you here? Where are you going? How can you know for sure? Only the Word of God "**enlightens**" the eyes; that is, it turns the spiritual light on so that we are able to see spiritual realities (Prov.6:23; Acts 26:18, Ps.119:130). It answers these questions with authority, clarity, and complete, trustworthy accuracy (Ps.119:105).

- Why can you trust God's Word? Because God's Word helps you to take God seriously, which has eternal consequences.

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

This is a title for Scripture because it is the Word of God that *instills the fear of God within us*. Why bring your children to church? Why come to Bible study and worship? Why small groups? Why have a daily quiet time? Because "*the fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death*" (Prov.14:27). The "**fear**" (*yira*) of the Lord simply means that you take God very seriously. It means that there are reverence and awe in your heart at the thought of God. It also means there is a holy trembling at the idea of offending or disobeying Him. The fear of God causes you to sit up straight in your chair or pew and pay attention whenever His Word is being taught or preached!

The word "**clean**" (*tahor*) means it has no impurity, filthiness, defilement, nor imperfections. This word affirms its *inerrancy*. Scripture is flawless, unadulterated truth without any errors. And what this produces in those who believe is *ethically and morally* clean lives. *The Word of God is permanent*. You can stake your life on His truth. In Matthew 5:18, Jesus said, "*for truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*"

- **Isaiah 40:8**—The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.

Society is changing. Culture is changing. Morals are changing. Everything is changing. But NOT GOD'S WORD. God's Word not only *endures forever*, but it also produces enduring results. It does not leave an imprint that lasts for a weekend. It brings true change at the depth of our being. Lasting change that will take us all the way to glory.

- Why can you trust God's Word? Because God's Word gives the final verdict on our destination.

The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

God's written Word is called "**judgments**" (*mishpat*) because here we have *God's divine verdicts on man's behavior*. If we obey God, He promises *reward* (v.11). If we disobey God and choose to go our own way, the Bible *specifically* points out what will be waiting for us—for believers, *chastisement* and *discipline* (Heb.12:4-17); for unbelievers, *condemnation* and *damnation* (Prov.14:12). The judgments of God are contained in the written Word to affirm to us that God *not only backs up what He says by putting it in writing, but He also means what He says by putting it in a book*. Reward if we follow, retribution if we refuse to follow.

What this means is that God's Word produces comprehensive righteousness. God's Word not only reveals to us what makes a man right, or "**righteous**" (*tsadaq*) with God, but it also gathers up every aspect pertaining to life and godliness as a unit and delivers it to us as a gift of God's divine grace.

The simple point from the six-fold description of God's special revelation is this: *nothing has the ability to execute God's purposes in our lives like the Word of God*. It is perfect. If we never had a PowerPoint, a library, or the internet, the Word of God all by itself would be sufficient to bring about God's purposes. Not drama, not radio, not illustrations, not television, not conferences, not retreats, not fellowships, not camps—nothing can affect your life like the Word of the Living God!

2. Because the Scriptures are precious. (v.10)

¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;

Why is the Word of God more valuable than gold? Because gold cannot tell you where to find God. Gold can ruin your life; only God can redeem your life. Gold can be stolen, but God can secure your soul in life and for eternity. What David means here is that God's Word is infinitely more valuable than anything this world has to offer. The verb used for "**desirable**" (*hamad*) often carries with it a negative color. It is a verb of the tenth commandment, "*You shall not covet*" (Ex.20:17). It describes what Eve contemplated as "desirable" to make her wise (Gen.3:6). It is a verb that Achan used in confession as to why he squirreled away the forbidden spoils in Jericho (Josh.7:21). The point is, there are many things in this world that we ought not to desire, but God's Word is a treasure that we should covet with holy ambition because of its saving and sanctifying benefits!

Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

Honey was the sweetest thing that David could think of in his world. But he was not just thinking of sweetness, but what was *pleasurable*. The sweetest thing on earth in our day is a sweet little leaf called Stevia—300 times sweeter than sugar. But if that doesn't cause you to cringe in your taste buds, just think of your favorite dessert. What is that sweet indulgence that you enjoy from time to time that just makes you...HAPPY?

David is saying in plain language: *God's Word supernaturally counteracts the bitterness of our lives and makes it sweet*. Not easy, but more *enjoyable*. What are we being led to see? David doesn't just

want us to see what God's Word is like in its character, he wants us to desire it more than anything else in this world!

3. Because the Scriptures are powerful. (vv.11-13)

Now this closing section is something of a prayer that all of us should make today. David knows something that we all know, and that is, his response to God's Word has negative or positive consequences.

¹¹ Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;
In keeping them there is great reward.

The Word of God rebukes sin. If I am on the wrong path, warning is good. It is the Scriptures which reveal to us that there are negative consequences for choices and decision that are out of line with God's will (*Prov.14:12*). But there is also a reward to come. God will crown His own works in and through us (*1 Cor.3:11-15; Col.3:23-25*).

The Word of God reveals sin.

¹² Who can discern *his* errors? Acquit me of hidden *faults*.

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer. No one can see all who own mistakes nor the sin that lurks within our hearts. "Errors" here speak of *voluntary* or *involuntary* deviations from the truth. "Hidden faults" describes sin that is present but hidden, not from other people, but from ourselves. We are not sharp enough to see all the cracks in our lives, but in the Bible, God has given us the perfect mirror. No man can discern all his errors, and no man can cleanse himself of his hidden faults. His secret sins, secret imaginations, secret pride, secret hypocrisies, secret filthiness, secret unbelief—these are the things that we cannot see. God's Word not only *exposes* them; but points us to the One in whom we may find the forgiveness of sins.

The Word of God rebukes sin. The Word of God reveals sin. The Word of God also restrains sin.

¹³ Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous *sins*;

Presumptuous sins are peculiarly dangerous. They are defiant, deliberate, eyes-wide-open sins. Spurgeon said,

All sins are great sins, but yet some sins are greater than others. Every sin has in it the very venom of rebellion...but there are some sins which have in them a greater development of the essential mischief of rebellion, and which wear upon their faces more of the brazen pride which defies the Most High...the presumptuous sins of our text are just the chief and worse of all sins: they rank head and foremost in the list of iniquities.

Because they are the kind of sins that result in apostasy. Notice the progress. Errors that deviate from truth. Hidden faults that blind us to truth. Arrogant and flagrant sins that defy God and result in falling away from truth.

Are you saying to yourself, "O I would never do that!" Or perhaps, you feel the weight of God's words. Then pray...

*Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace now like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
Prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.³*

Conclusion: David is examining himself, and we should do the same.

Because God's glory is *unmistakably revealed in the heavens*, we have no excuse for not acknowledging Him. But just as the sun arcs overhead bathing all in its heat, we cannot escape God's awareness of all that we say and do. But *Yahweh has not left us in the dark as to what He expects of us*. He has provided a *perfect* and *reliable* guide in His Word. If we follow it, we can avoid great transgression and experience the kind of *wholeness* of relationship that God intends. In light of this, what must we do? We must do what David did.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight,

He sought to align his life with God's will by looking at his integrity. The outside—*the words of my mouth*. The inside—*the meditation of his heart*. David is submitting everything to the will and purpose of God.

But...he recognizes that submission is not enough. He needs a Savior—a Kinsman-redeemer.

O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

Who is this Redeemer? Who is the One who finds us on the slavery market of sin, chained and enslaved to a power which we cannot free ourselves from? Who is this that comes and unlocks the iron chain of sin so that we are free to be who we ought to be and do what we ought to do? It is not Moses! It is not Satan! It is not religion! There is only One who breaks the power of canceled sin—and sets the prisoners free! But He first carried our sin on the cross, bearing our shame and the penalty that we rightly deserve. His blood—which is more powerful than any detergent in this world—can make the foulest, dirtiest sinner clean! It avails, it works in washing away guilt!

We cannot perfectly measure up to the law of God, but there was One who did. He kept all its commands, fulfilled all its promises, rose victoriously from the grave, and lives and saves all who come to Him by faith. He is God's final spoken Word. His name is Jesus. God has spoken. How will you respond today?

³ Robert Robinson, *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

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