

We are wise if we read both the *WORLD-book* and the *WORD-book* as two volumes of the same work — and you then respond: “My Father wrote both of them!” (Charles Spurgeon)

Background to Psalm 19

- **Author:** David
- **Type of Psalm:** A *Psalm* (plucking for a string instrument) &
- **Purpose/Subscript:** for the Choir Director (title to Ps 20; intention: to be sung, memorized, hidden in the heart).
- Ps 19 is ***David at his finest***. It is Hebrew, poetic, literary, rhetorical, structural masterpiece in Hebrew. No wonder Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn were influenced by *this psalm* in their music.
- Paul loved Psalm 19. The outline, flow & themes of Ps 19 seem to impact the structure & flow of Romans.
- Also: Ps 19 specifically impacted Romans 1:18-32 and Romans 10:18 (calling for universal praise!).

Psalm 19 Outline & Structure

- vv. 1-6 — God’s glory in the Skies ; (the *WORLD book*) // Focus on “God” (1x) // General revelation [all men everywhere]
- vv. 7-14 — God’s glory in Scriptures; (the *WORD book*) // Focus on “LORD”/Yahweh// Special revelation [in Scripture; to save]

THESIS — This psalm speaks & sings & shouts forth that *God Has Revealed Himself!* And he has done so in *2 wonderful ways...*

I. GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF IN THE VISIBLE WORLD (1-6)

A. in vv.1-6 — God’s Heavens Actively Shout: “Look at This Powerful Creator!”

★**HOW?? God reveals/proclaims himself ...**

1. celestially (1) - the heavens/expanse (skies)
2. daily (2a) - day & night
3. clearly (2-3) -
4. orderly (4) (line by line/utterance - order, skill, design) -
5. mightily (5) -
6. expansively (6) -

From God’s revelation in the visible world...

1. we know God exists (every single person!)
2. all people everywhere have this visual knowledge (none excluded)
3. creation informs all that God is powerful and glorious Creator
4. the superstitious who are enslaved to the worship of nature are idolatrous (cf. Rom 1.25)
5. The intelligent secularist and elite atheist see less than the heavens reveal (they are blind)

Psalm 19 — "God Has Revealed Himself!"

- What must you do???
- 1. PONDER him!**
- 2. PRAISE him!**
- 3. PROCLAIM him!**
- 4. PRESUPPOSE him!**

II. GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF IN THE WRITTEN WORD (7-14)**A. v.7-9—The ATTRIBUTES of Scripture**

- Note the structure of each of the 6 poetic lines:
- *identification* (Law of the Lord) >> *description* (is perfect) >> then *action* (converting the soul)

O LORD, give us affections toward your holy Word in some measure that is proportioned to its supreme excellence. For we can never love TOO MUCH what we can never admire enough. Oh let us elevate our appreciation for the Word and our affection and submission to the WORD. It is the very communication-breath of God Himself.
(George Horne)

B. v.10-11 —The APPRECIATION of Scripture

A Christian should read this precious Book every day with earnest prayer and meditation. (George Mueller)

Since God's WORD is like this...

- ★ read it humbly
- ★ study it systematically
- ★ teach it consistently
- ★ cherish it preeminently
- ★ obey it happily

C. v.12-14—The APPLICATION of Scripture

- ✓ *None are so wise — as those taught by the wisdom of Scripture*
- ✓ *None are so happy — as those who hear & obey the blessednesses of Scripture*
- ✓ *None are so protected — as those who cling to the promises of God*
- ✓ *None are so other-worldly — as those who imbibe the wisdom from above*

GENERAL REVELATION *and* SPECIAL REVELATION

edited & adapted from Joel Beeke, RC Sproul, R. Fowler White

Christianity is not based on moralisms or speculative philosophy; it is a *revealed* faith. But it makes a distinction between *general* revelation (in creation) and *special* revelation (in the Bible).

General revelation: the universal disclosure of God in nature, in providential history and in moral law within the heart (conscience), whereby all persons at all times and places gain a rudimentary understanding of the Creator and his moral demands. (Romans 1:18-20).

God's general revelation is called *general* because it is given to every human being in the entire world. It is given in and through *nature* and through the human conscience (which is why it is sometimes called "*natural* revelation"). "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1). God has given all human beings a sense of right and wrong (Rom. 2:14-15). General revelation does *not* reveal God's work as *Redeemer*, only His work as *Creator*. One cannot study a sunset and see the heavens declaring God's plan of salvation; which is precisely why God's special revelation in the Bible is necessary for salvation.

Special revelation: God's self-disclosure in redemptive history and in the interpretive word of Scripture whereby He makes Himself and His truth known at specific times and to specific people. God cannot be known redemptively except as He reveals Himself to us. Jesus is the culmination of God's self-disclosure to man and since Jesus cannot be separated from His word, the Scriptures are the ultimate form of divine revelation from God to us, for without them, we would know nothing certain about Jesus or any of the Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity.

Jesus Christ is the Incarnate Word (John 1:1, 14), the One who embodies the very Word of God (Heb. 1:1-2). Jesus said to His disciples: "he who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). The chief of all Apostles, the One whom God chose as His ultimate vehicle of self-disclosure, is Christ Himself. In Christ we meet the fullness of the revelation of the Father, and it is only through Scripture that we meet Christ.

The Bible gives us no reason to expect that God will speak to His children today apart from the Scriptures. Those who teach otherwise need to explain to God's children how these words "freshly spoken from heaven" can be so necessary and strategic to God's highest purposes for their lives when their Father does nothing to ensure that they will ever actually hear those words. Indeed, they must explain why this is not quenching the Spirit. Moreover, the promise of such guidance inevitably diverts attention from the Scriptures, particularly in the practical and pressing concerns of life. Let us never underestimate just how serious this diversion really is. In the Bible the church hears God's true voice; in the Scriptures, we know that He is speaking His very words to us. Advocates of words "freshly spoken from heaven" should beware: By diverting attention from the Scriptures, they quench the Spirit who is speaking therein.

✓ "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world" (Rom. 10:18).

✓ "The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory." (Psalm 97:6)

✓ "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2).

Implications:

1. God Has Spoken, So We Must Obey Him
2. God Has Spoken, So We Must Teach Others of Him
3. God Has Spoken, So We Must Glorify Him

HOW GREAT THOU ART!

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
 Consider all the worlds 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!
 Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
 How great thou art! How great thou art!*

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
 And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,
 When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
 And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
 Sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
 That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
 He bled and died to take away my sin.

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
 And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
 Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
 And there proclaim, "My God, how great thou art!"

Our songs are not the cause of our loss of the sense of God's greatness, though songs are surprisingly influential. No, our songs reflect this loss. Singing God-centered hymns is desirable, but more than that is needed. We sing what we feel, what we believe. When once we rediscover the greatness of God (in the Word), we will sing it. Our song will echo our conviction. (Tom Wells)

PSALM 19: *The Psalter* (Isaac Watts)

Tune: Crown Him with Many Crowns

Behold, the lofty sky
 Declares its Maker, God;
 All all the starry worlds on high,
 Proclaim his power abroad.
 The darkness and the light
 Still keep their course the same;
 While night to day, and day to night,
 Divinely teach God's name.

In every different land,
 Their general voice is known;
 They show the wonders of his hand,
 And orders of his throne.
 While of thy works I sing,
 Thy glory to proclaim,
 Accept the praise, my God, my king,
 In my Redeemer's name.

How perfect is thy word!
 and all thy judgments just!
 Forever sure thy promise, Lord,
 in which we surely trust.
 I hear thy word with love,
 and I'll truly obey;
 send thy good Spirit from above
 to guide me lest I stray.

O who can ever find
 the errors of their ways?
 Yet with a bold, presumptuous mind
 I would not dare transgress.
 While with my heart and tongue
 I spread thy praise abroad,
 Accept the worship and the song,
 My Savior and my God!