

Psalm 19-21

The 19th Ps is about God's revelation of Himself and the corresponding examination that's prompted in man of himself and his need to be right with God. and God has revealed Himself to man in more than 1 way. and As you read through Ps 19 you kinda get the idea that this Ps was inspired in David as he was a young shepherd boy spending his time underneath the open skies of Bethlehem. The 1st ½ of this Ps is all about God's revelation of Himself to man through natural means, the heavens above him, the world around him. These things have a message, they're constantly preaching a silent sermon declaring the reality of Divine design, bearing witness to their Creator. The 2nd ½ of this Ps is all about God's revelation of Himself to man through supernatural means, that is the scripture that's been given to him that bears witness with in him of the holiness and purity of God Vs the sinfulness and the need for the inner cleansing of man (of himself).

So David received instruction from both, he learned from both the skies, and the scriptures, he was counseled by the natural world around him and the word of God given to him. and Wise is the man, wise is the woman who will take the time to contemplate and meditate on both, there's just a healthy perspective of who God is and who we're not that results from taking the time to observe what's around you and by letting the word of God penetrate and permeate in and through you. Remember there in Ps 8:3-4 David said, "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?" David was just blown away at the expanse of creation, the hugeness of our Creator, and then to think that He would be concerned for us or even interested in us is enough to just take us to our knees. Of course we read in Ps 119:11, "Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You." So the world that God has created around us, the word that God has spoken permeating through us, both working together to bring us to that place of total humility before Him, and total dependence upon Him.

Vs1-6 (To the chief musician...)

So this is a section that we might label, "The glory of God." "The heavens declare the glory of God." David considered the heavens above him and truly such a consideration is overwhelming. He could've considered the vast worlds around him or even beneath him and been blown away. You think of the variety and the complexity of the creation around us, the practically innumerable variety of sea life beneath us, from things so small that you can't see them with the naked eye to the massive whale shark that grows up to 40' in length. The length of this stage across the front is about 40', the ceiling is about 16' to give you an idea of how large that is, you could more than double how high the ceiling is here and have another 8' to add to it, that's a big fish. A biologist by the name of Edward O. Wilson claims there may be as many as 1.6 million species of fungi in the world today, 10,000 species of ants, 300,000 species of flowering plants, between 4,000 and 5,000 species of mammals, and approximately 10,000 species of birds. The complexity of even the human anatomy is a mind boggling study.

But with all those #'s, all that variety, all that complexity those things pale in comparison vastness of the heavens.

I'm sure that when David was pondering the heavens above him he was considering images like this (p.point slides) and truly when you take the time to get alone and soak in the wonder of heavens and all that God has done that we're able to enjoy by just looking up you can just be overwhelmed. and You just shrink, you feel so small.

He talks here about the sun, we've spoke about the sun before, it's magnitude. The fact that you would have to line 100 earths side by side to even stretch across it, you could fit about 1 million earths inside it. and It's a fairly small star, you could put 64 suns in Antares, but if you wanted to put that star into a significantly sized star like Hercules you could fit about 110 million Antares into Hercules which is holding 64 suns which is holding at least a million earths. It's no wonder he says, "The heavens declare Your glory." That word glory speaks of splendor, riches, honor, it just shows His splendor.

I mean how vast are the heavens to even be able to contain such monstrosities? Science has tried to calculate such things, and they've done a wonderful job yet there's still so much we don't know. They try to measure things in light years, which is the distance light would travel throughout the course of a year. Light moves at the speed of about 186,287 miles per second. I'll save you the head ache and tell you that light moves at the speed of about 6 trillion miles per yr. (Again a # we can't comprehend)

Now David was thinking about sunsets and sunrises, the stars and the moon, his mind was nowhere near the thought of the expansion of our galaxy. Now our galaxy (the Milky Way) is a relatively small galaxy, it's about 100,000 light yrs across, which means if you could travel at the speed of 186,287 miles per second (or 6 trillion miles per yr) for the next 100,000 yrs you could reach the edge of your celestial neighborhood. and As you were passing by you'd see this guy (Ant Nebula). This is called the ant Nebula and it's around 3-6,000 light yrs away from the earth. So this guy is just a few blocks away, still in your neighborhood, you'd only have to go 6 trillion miles per yr for around 4,000 yrs or so to get a glimpse of him outside the passenger window as you flew by. On out beyond him is this nebula, still in our galaxy (the eagle Nebula) he's about 7,000 light yrs away.

Presuming you made it to the outer reaches of our galaxy and you wanted to keep moving 186,287 miles per second for about the next 28 million yrs, you could visit this galaxy, the Sombrero galaxy. Now this galaxy has 800 billion suns, and is 50,000 light yrs across. If you had another 9 million light yrs to spare at that rate of speed you could jam on over to this galaxy, it's 37 million light yrs from the earth known as the whirlpool galaxy. and If you had, oh say another 77 million light yrs with nothing to do, you could check out these interacting spiral galaxies which are 114 million light yrs from the earth.

Oh and by the way when you're in the whirlpool galaxy make sure to visit it's core, it's nucleus, what's at the very heart of it you might find it interesting (Cross core), "The heaven's declare the glory of God; and the firmament (the expanse of heavens) shows His handiwork." Ps 147:4 declares, "He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name."

Oh and when you get out there a ways, about 4 billion miles (a fraction of a single light yr) look back over your shoulder to get a glimpse of the earth, this is what you'll get. (Earth from voyager)

We're just a spec of dust on a spec of dust. How big is our God, how great is our God? Isa 40:12, "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance?" and Again, "Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together." Isa 48:13

Vs2-6

Now the word "where" in Vs 3 isn't in the original it was added for clarity but really confused it. It should read, "There is no speech nor language, their voice is not heard." (Or more literally, not is heard, their voice). The idea being that though creation doesn't say a word, it's speaking very clearly about the Creator.

We might say it's shouting a silent sermon to all the inhabitants of the earth. We might understand Vs 4 to be saying that their influence has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. and The beautiful thing about creations language is that it needs no translation, it can be understood by any people in any culture. and This is what Paul was speaking about when he said there in the book of Romans, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 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," Rom 1:18-20 God reveals the reality of His existence in creation to any and all who are open to see it. and The message of His power and glory as shared in creation prepares the heart of man to hear the message of the gospel of His grace as seen in JESUS CHRIST

Vs7-11

So he moves from the revelation of creation, and the world around us, to the revelation of the scriptures, the word before us. Because although creation does an incredible job declaring the glory, the majesty, and the power of God. It really teaches us nothing about the love of God, or the grace and mercy of God, or the holiness and perfect righteousness of God. It doesn't share with us or show to us the standard of acceptance in the sight of God. and As to where He uses the name, "El" for God there in Vs 1, which is the general name that speaks of the power and might of God, "In the beginning 'Elohim' created the heavens and the earth"

here in Vs 7 he uses the name “LORD” which is the name “Yahweh” or the personal covenant name of God that He revealed to the nation of Israel, there’s more of an intimacy here.

He speaks here of 6 different attributes or characteristics of the Word of God and it’s ministry in the lives of those who will receive it and obey it. 1st of all we read in Vs 7, “The law of the Lord (or the word of God) is perfect, converting the soul.” Or “restoring” the soul, even “delivering” the soul. How does the law of God convert the soul? By showing us our need for a Savior. Paul would say that the Law is like a tutor helping us find our way to Jesus. It holds up God’s standards, shows us we can’t meet those standards and we need someone to save us, to be there and stand in the gap on behalf of us and that’s where Jesus comes in. Paul said, “...before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” Gal 3:23-24 and Of course as we’ve been reminded the last couple of Sunday’s faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. So God’s word not only exposes our need, it imparts life, converts the soul. James said, “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.” James 1:21 We read in, 1 Peter 1:23, “...having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,” “The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.”

“The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” That word testimony speaks of a witness. God’s witness of who you are, who I am, and who He is, is certain, it’s sure, it’s 100% reliable. Paul told Timothy, “...from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Tim 3:15-17 God’s word makes wise the simple.

Vs8

The word of God (statutes, precepts) is right, that is it’s upright, it’s not untrustworthy, it’s full of integrity, some of the statutes of man are burdensome, the statutes of God are a blessing, they bring joy to the heart. and The commandment of the Lord, (those things that God requires of us) is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Of course what we’re talking about here is the blessing that comes from seeing things through the lens of the scripture, and that God enlightens us, gives us proper perspective. and WITH regard to the commandments of the Lord the idea is that we’re blessed in being not a hearer of the word only, but a doer of it, we’re to be doers of the word.

Vs9

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. If you’ve been around here very long you’ve probably heard me quote this Vs more than once. I find myself coming back to it over and over again.

The fear of God will keep you in check, keep you out of trouble, lengthen your days and keep you free from unnecessary baggage. and Of course it's the word of God that teaches us a healthy fear of God. I think that sometimes we pastors and preachers can sell the idea of the fear of God short. and It's true that we're talking about a solid and holy reverence and respect. But it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. I mean often times it's the fear of dad that keeps kids from making wrong decision, they weigh out the pro's and con's and decide it's just not worth it to venture down a particular path (doesn't mean there's not a love relationship there), it keeps them clean. and The fear of God will do that for you and me, God will not be mocked, if we sow it we'll reap it. Best to fear God and just steer clear. "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

Vs10-11

David placed a premium on the word of God, said it was more valuable to him than the most precious metals of the earth, it was sweeter to him than honey, and the honeycomb. Or another way to understand that it was the most precious possession, and the highest priority of his life. What place (priority-wise) does the word of God take in your life? It's usually fairly easy to tell by just taking a look at someone's bible, if it looks brand new and you've had it for 5yrs believe it's not that great of a priority to you. Oh how we should feed on the word of God, God help us to maintain time spent in His word as a precious priority. I would challenge you to pray and ask God to help you make His word a priority of your life. Pick out a book of the bible and try to spend time reading it everyday, the pray over what you've read. and I'm not talking about a legal trip, if you forget a day don't freak out, but make a concerted effort to prioritize God's word, it'll bless your life.

Vs12-13

We've talked about the glory of God in the 1st 6 Vs, this last ½ we're considering the grace of God. God's word reveals so much to us about who we're not, who He is and our need for Him and His work in our lives. and After showing us all of the breakdown and obvious sinful tendencies in the heart of man we realize that there's still so much that we're completely oblivious to. Ways in which we violate God of which we have no idea, David is being led here to examine himself in the light of God's glory, in the light of His revelation in His word, and he sees the need to just be made clean. Oh, he's not walking in any obvious sin, but even those secret faults, those things that he doesn't even know he's done, those presumptuous sins. Sins of arrogance, just presuming it's no big deal. He says, "Lord I don't want even sins of ignorance to have dominion over me, I want to be blameless, innocent." In Ps 139:23-24 he said it like this, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting."

Vs14

Of course what pours forth from our mouth reveals what's in our heart, and so David is praying for both an outward (mouth) and an inward (meditation of my heart) transformation.

There where he uses the words “my strength, and my Redeemer” the word “Redeemer” is “Goel.” It speaks of the kinsman redeemer. and Basically the kinsman redeemer was the guy who if you got yourself in any trouble, or in debt, according to the lay your next of kin could come and bail you out, take care of your debt.

That’s exactly what happened in JESUS CHRIST He is our Kinsman Redeemer having become a Man, God come in the flesh that He might serve as the kinsman to humanity who could bail us out and pay off our debt.

Ps 20

Ps 20-21 are connected, Ps 20 seems to be a prayer type dedication ceremony prior to battle and Ps 21 is the praise given proceeding the battle. and It’s believed that maybe the priests or the people who assembled would recite these 1st 5 Vs and then between Vs 5-6 perhaps the sacrifice would take place and then in Vs 6 the king declares his confidence in God hearing his prayer and that God will grant them victory.

Vs1-3

A plea, or a prayer for help in the day of trouble, and of course anytime you’re going to battle it’s a day of trouble. and It’s good to know that we serve a God who will be there for us and be a shield about us in the day of trouble. We read in the 46th Ps, “God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling.” Ps 46:1-3 “and May the name of the God of Jacob defend you;” now as you know Jacob was a bit of a rascal, his name means “deceiver” and he lived up to his name. One day God broke him, changed his name to Israel which means “Governed by God.” and Every now and then you’ll see in scripture where the name “God of Israel” is used and other places where the phrase, “God of Jacob” is used. “God of Israel” suggests God governing them, leading them, them being submitted to Him, “God of Jacob” speaks more to the side of human weakness, having needs which go beyond my ability to cope and deal with. and So the idea is that you may be weak but God who goes before you and fights for you is not and may He defend you.

Vs4-5

So you see the people would pray that as David (or the king) sought the Lord, prayed to and petitioned the Lord for His battle plans that God would grant favor and victory accordingly in the battle, and fulfill all his petitions. and When Vs 5 speaks of the setting up of the banners, that was a sign of victory, the thought being that the battle had been won before it had been fought because the plans had been immersed in prayer.

and Again whether or not a sacrifice took place at this point is up for debate but we have here the kings affirmation. The people crying out, “May the Lord answer you, and fulfill your petitions.” and The king answering, “I know that the Lord has heard and he will answer.”

Remember John said, “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.” 1 John 5:14-15

Vs6-7

Of course the reference there would be to the “King of kings” and of course we have to draw attention to Vs 7 before we move on here. (Read). The idea being that if God be for us, who can be against us, “God is on my side, I will not be afraid, what can man do to me?” and as we remember His past faithfulness it serves to encourage us in our present situation.

God gave to Israel an incredible military, yet it wasn’t to their own might that they looked, they knew where their strength came from and they were careful to acknowledge the Lord in their battles. We do well to do the same, it’s not our great will power, or having a lot of money that will get you through tough times and difficult days, we will remember, look to and trust in the name of the Lord our God.

Ch 21

Vs1-2

Remember Vs 4 of Ch 20? “May He grant you according to your heart’s desire.” A reference to victory in battle, deliverance from the enemy. and Again Vs 5 of Ch 20, “May the Lord fulfill all your petitions.” and Here David is just praising God for delivering him, fulfilling his petitions. and I think it’s good to remember that when God delivers us, when He faithfully surrounds us and sees us through those times of tribulation that we thank Him and praise Him for His goodness and His mercy in delivering us in the day of our trouble.

Vs3-4

and Of course it’s easy to see the association here with the ultimate deliverance that God grants us, deliverance from sin, the crown of life, eternal life, forever and ever.

Vs5-12

Again you can see the eternal implications here as well as the practical interpretation. God delights in and delivers the righteous, and deals with the wicked in judgment. Best to simply surrender to and be found in Christ rather than try and make it on your own, because no one can. and If you’re not covered in the righteousness of Christ, you reap the reward of the wicked. and Even as God is true to grant eternal life, He’s equally true to bring eternal condemnation on those who stand against Him, and reject the offer of forgiveness and salvation through Christ.

Vs13

Again the acknowledgment that salvation and deliverance is of the Lord, and He alone is worthy to receive all blessing and honor and glory and power, forever and ever!”

Prayer points:

God we're so thankful for Your faithfulness, that You are a very present help in time of trouble. and Father as we consider Your vastness, the overwhelming magnitude of Your creation and then consider that You hold it all in the span of Your hand, that You know the stars by name, the # of hairs on our head; we're ashamed at how easily we falter in our faith. Help us to trust You more, You've never not been there for us in the past, may we always trust You in the present. and We thank You for the goodness of Your Word, may it be of utmost priority in our lives, may we feed on it, think through it, and be changed by it, by Your grace, and the work of Your Spirit in our lives.