



## 06 Psalms - Psalm 19 Sweeter than Honey

*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. <sup>2</sup> Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. <sup>3</sup> There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. <sup>4</sup> 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,*

*<sup>5</sup> Which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race. <sup>6</sup> Its rising is from one end of heaven, And its circuit to the other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat. (Psalm 06:1-6, NKJV).*

This sermon was originally intended to be strictly a summary of Hebrew poetry (seeing elements of that poetry in the Word of God). However, after I finished giving the survey of poetry on Wednesday night, something felt lacking. I spoke all about how the structure of poetry was important, but I failed to talk about not only how beautiful God's word is, but also of how powerful and life changing it is. What indeed is said in scripture is powerful, and it is beautiful, but the greatest thing of all is that it is LIFE CHANGING!

The writer of Hebrews tells us, <sup>12</sup> *For 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 discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:12-13, NKJV).*

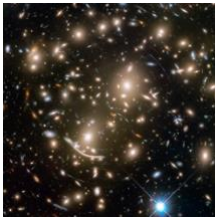


The power of God's word is a marvelous mystery. Somehow when we read the word and ingest it, it is like the download of the greatest software for our souls. As the Word penetrates into your heart and your soul, it transforms you. It is perhaps not the software, but rather the "soulware" that gets laid into the human heart. The writer of Hebrews is telling us that it is so penetrative that it ends up going into our soul and our spirit like

a two edged sword. It goes to a place in us that is deeper than that deepest place where our joints and marrow lie. It finds its way and rests in the deepest most hidden recesses of our essence as humans. And then, what does it do there?

It becomes a total filtering system for everything we think, say, or do. If we listen to its instruction in our soul, it exposes us and it discerns the true motive behind every thought, word, and deed that comes out of our innermost being. This all sounds mysterious because it is mysterious. The power of God is a great mystery.

Psalm 19 is an ancient psalm. Many scholars think that the first seven verses were pre-Israelite Canaanite verses written to the sun god. I don't think that they were. They are part of the great parallelism we find in Hebrew poetry. The psalmist is telling us that God's revelation to us starts in the heavens themselves. Some of the attributes of physical creation are a great parallel to what God's word does in our hearts.



Sometimes at night, I go out onto my driveway, and I look up. I see the GLORY of God. I have a glimpse of His *kavod* (the total heaviness and weight of His importance in the universe). It makes me think of David's words when he said,

*"What is man that You are mindful of him,  
And the son of man that You visit him?  
<sup>5</sup> For You have made him a little lower than the angels,  
And You have crowned him with glory and honor.*

*<sup>6</sup> You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;  
You have put all things under his feet,  
<sup>7</sup> All sheep and oxen—  
Even the beasts of the field,  
<sup>8</sup> The birds of the air,  
And the fish of the sea  
That pass through the paths of the seas." (Psalm 8:4-8, NKJV).*

The heavens truly DO declare the glory of God.

Verse 2-3

The way that day and night occur predictively and repeatedly, are speech in themselves. By simply observing the cycle of the day, great knowledge is learned. There is no need for mere human words in addition to what they show. Creation itself shouts louder than any words of man, and the voice of the heavens is heard not only throughout the earth, but even to the ends of the universe.

This is interesting because scientists now are able to listen to the sounds of radio transmissions, energy bursts, and other mysterious sounds coming from far out in space. If you listen to them, you may find them weird, strange, or beautiful. I've posted a couple of links here so you can listen to them on Youtube:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvRNY77\\_MII](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvRNY77_MII) (spooky sounds from space)

[https://www.nasa.gov/vision/universe/features/halloween\\_sounds.html](https://www.nasa.gov/vision/universe/features/halloween_sounds.html) (NASA)

We may not have the human words for what these sounds might mean, but my dad was a Hebrew scholar, and he used to say, "Son, the mysteries of creation cry out like radio waves. God is broadcasting 24/7 on KGOD, saying, 'I love you and I want a relationship with you.'"

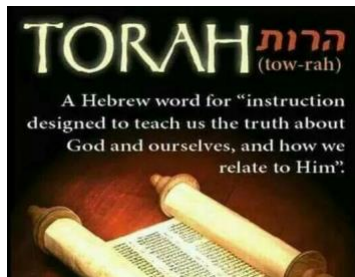
The psalmist continues saying that God has set up the solar system and the universe like a giant tent that contains the sun, the moon, the stars, and the galaxies. The planets and stars are on the move. The sun presents itself like a precious handsome bridegroom coming out of his chamber. The sun comes up and is seen all day until it once again sets and NOTHING is hidden from its heat. So too, is the Word of God. It is present. It comes out. And it exposes and reveals, and NOTHING is hidden from its power and transforming nature.

In verse 7 the psalmist then turns from the splendor of God's creation to the tremendous value and worth of the word of God. Physical revelation declares much about the glory and majesty of the Lord, but it cannot match the impact of specific revelation. The message of verses 7-11 come close to wisdom or *torah* literature, emphasizing scripture.

<sup>7</sup>The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul;  
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;  
<sup>8</sup>The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;  
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;  
<sup>9</sup>The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;  
The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.  
<sup>10</sup>More to be desired are they than gold,  
Yea, than much fine gold;  
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.  
<sup>11</sup>Moreover by them Your servant is warned,  
And in keeping them there is great reward.

<sup>12</sup>Who can understand his errors?  
Cleanse me from secret faults.  
<sup>13</sup>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.

<sup>14</sup>Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
Be acceptable in Your sight,  
O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer. (Psalm 19:7-14, NKJV).



v.7-9 Notice the parallelism. The psalmist is saying the same thing, but saying it in different ways. Each time he points out qualities of God's word. The Lord's **Torah** (תּוֹרָת יְהוָה) is perfect (תְּמִימָה = means it has divine integrity), and it **CONVERTS THE SOUL** (Hebrew here means 'brings a person back'). The "*torah*" here means any and all revelation of instruction and truth of God. Remember the writer of Hebrews tells us, it is "alive and powerful".

His **testimony** (עֲדוּת = covenant) is sure (נֶאֱמָנָה = trustworthy), and it can make even a simple person wise. The **statutes** of the Lord (פְּקֻדֵי יְהוָה = appointments, meaning what He directs you to do) are upright and clear and exact. Living out God's appointments and directions results in sheer joy! It makes the heart glad. Lastly, the **commandments** (מִצְוֹת יְהוָה = all of His provisions and ways) are pure (בְּרָה = without imperfection of pollution). Following God's commandments is living clean before Him. It will have everlasting consequences. He says this kind of life is worth far more than gold. It is like refined gold!

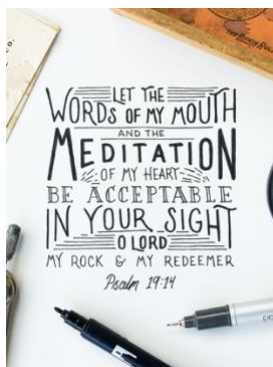
v. 10 This part of the psalm tells us that the word of the Lord is so enjoyable and desirable because it is the secret to living a life that is pleasing to the Lord. Following God's word and ways is not only valuable, but it is sweet. It is sweet like honey in the honeycomb. It is the good stuff. I don't think much explanation is needed about how wonderfully sweet a full mouth of honey is. THAT'S the way the word of God is.

vv. 11-12 David now tells us the good that comes from the word of God. God's word tells us not only what we should do, but what we should not do. He tells us that they warn us (give us the heads up) about what will result in following God's word. David is saying that God's instructions are so sweet and desirable because they give us a warning. They tell us how to prevent the ruining of our lives and the lives of those who surround us. They promise a good outcome for listening to and heeding the blessings and curses that come in following or not following God's instruction for our lives.

vv. 12-14 So how should we respond to God's word? The proper response is confession of our sins, repentance, and the desire to be 'acceptable to God.' One of the things that endeared David to God was David's attribute of being quick to repent. When David realized that he was being wayward, he was quick to acknowledge his sin and ask for God's forgiveness. This is what made him a "man after God's own heart." God is not looking for us to be perfect. He is looking for us to be genuine and honest.

David knew that sometimes it was just hard to assess oneself. He writes here, "who can understand his errors?" He is saying that it's hard to see yourself truly as you are. God's word will help you to do that. And God's word will in time show you your sins of omission. Those are the sins that you don't even realize are sins. David is saying that as we meditate on God's word, even the sins we don't realize are wrongdoing will be revealed to us and brought to the forefront of our minds.

David then prays for preservation from presumptuous sins. So, what is he talking about? He is asking God to hold him back from sins of "boiling over" or being "arrogant." That means of overstepping his boundaries. All believers need to be held back from sinning in prideful and arrogant ways. This is what we do when we are so sure of ourselves that we come off as self-righteous prigs. These sins of pride are the ones that can easily take dominion of us. They can turn us into slaves. Without the Lord's help, we can become captivated and dominated by sins that would enslave us: addictions (alcohol, drugs, sex, pornography, work, education). We need to keep God's perspective of ourselves. David begins to wrap it up by saying that if God can keep him from committing sins of omission AND sins of commission, then he will stand blameless before God. The word used in the Hebrew for "great transgression" is serious acts of rebellion against God.



v. 14 David is praying that all of his words and the meditation of his heart would be acceptable to the Lord. He has taken the reader through the process of listening coupled with obedience. He says we should "listen" closely as we observe the glories of creation. Looking into the stars should be our first observation that there is something out there way bigger than us. If we look closely at creation, we can hear the voice of God telling us that He loves us and He wants us to draw closer to Him. We are able to do that by studying diligently and then committing ourselves to living in the manner that He desires for us to live and commands for us to live.

These verses also remind me that it all begins in the mind. I once heard it said that there is a battle for our minds. It is in my mind that my sinful nature first whispers to me. It is in my mind that I formulate thoughts and ideas that are contrary to God's *Torah* (His way and instruction) for my life. It is not long until my thoughts and meditations become my words. David knows this connection. Franz Delitzsch (Old Testament commentator) said, "Prayer is a

sacrifice offered by the inner man. The heart meditates and fashions it; and the mouth presents it, by uttering that which is put into the form of words.”<sup>1</sup> Sin operates in the same way. It is born in the mind, and it is manifested in words which in time bring forth deeds if left unchecked.

I will remind you that thoughts become words. Words become actions. Actions become habits. Habits define character. And your character becomes your legacy. David is praying that his mind will not wander to places that are not pleasing to God. In doing so, there will be great heavenly and earthly reward.

The psalm now ends with David addressing the Lord as "my rock and my redeemer." Allen Ross, one of the greatest Hebrew scholars to write a commentary on the psalms, gives a great summation of what that all means.

"The figure of the rock was used in verse 2 in the context of describing the sovereign God of creation as the one who delivers and protects from the enemies. Modern versions tend to translate it as "my strength" alone; but the significance of the figure is broader than that because it represents God as the solid foundation of his life, his place of security and safety, and his strength."

The term "my redeemer" (יְלֹאֵ) is a multi-layered term. At the human Hebrew level, it referred to the kinsman redeemer who protected and provided for family members (paying off debts, marrying widows, etc.). At the divine level, it talks about a God who protects and delivers his faithful followers. The combination of God being our "rock" and our "redeemer" provides a powerful summary of the nature and provision that God gives to each of us as believers.

The greatest protection and deliverance for believers is the blood of Jesus, God's perfect provision for each of us. David didn't enjoy the full knowledge that to really stand blameless before God required more than living a sinless life (which was impossible), or keeping the words and meditations of his heart acceptable to God. Fully revealed scripture tells us that we have all sinned and come short of God's glory (Romans 3:23). The penalty for that sin is eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23). But God loved us so much even before we cleaned up our act He came in the form of a man and He allowed that man to be subjected to the hatred and ridicule of mankind, by dying on a cross (Romans 5:8). In dying on the cross, an eternal transaction was made that restores us to communion and fellowship with Him when we receive Jesus as our Savior (Romans 10:9-10). Have you ever done this? If you haven't, today is the day of your salvation.

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at [uniongrove362@gmail.com](mailto:uniongrove362@gmail.com) or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.

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<sup>1</sup> The Pentateuch: By CF Keil and Franz Delitzsch (1864)