

PSALM 19: THE WITNESS OF GOD

I. Introduction: Wisdom of God.

A. Recent sermons on Wisdom.

1. Psalms & Proverbs

B. Poetic Literature

1. Modern poetry is usually a **RHYME OF METER AND SOUND**.

- a. One of my favorite poets is Shel Silverstein. When I was young, I got one of his books for Christmas. He has many poems I like but here is a short one that you can note for personal application. Modern poetry also follows some of the Biblical Proverbs which require wisdom of the situation for proper application, i.e. Proverbs 26: 4-5 which instructs a wise person how to answer a fool.

Oh, if you're a bird, be an early bird

And catch the worm for your breakfast plate.

If you're a bird, be an early early bird--

But if you're a worm, sleep late. by Shel Silverstein

- b. Other types of poetry you might be familiar with are the Haiku which has stanzas of varying syllables.

2. Biblical Poetic literature is a **RHYME OF THOUGHT**. In God's genius, knowing that meter and rhyme do not translate, He chose to have the writers record His Poetic revelation in "Rhyme of thought," or Parallelism.

a. **Synonymous** Parallelism; Psalm 24:1; 19:2

b. **Antithetic** Parallelism; Psalm 1:6; 37:9

c. **Synthetic** Parallelism; Psalm 2:6; 19:7

d. **Climactic** Parallelism; Psalm 29:1; 103:1

e. **Emblematic** Parallelism; Psalm 42:1; 25:25

3. How do we understand the Psalms then, since "Thought Rhyming" is not something we are very familiar with?

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a. As with understanding the other genres of Biblical literature, we need to determine the Psalm's **MAIN POINT**.

b. We need to determine the **OCCASION** in which the Psalm was written. Some Psalms were written at a particular event, and the event in which it was written ought to inform our understanding of that Psalm.

Psalm 51 is a Penitential Psalm which King David wrote, and was written after he was confronted by Nathan the Prophet about David's sin with murdering Uriah.

c. Apply the 4 x 8 system

1) **FOUR TYPES** of Psalms and **EIGHT CLASSIFICATIONS**

II. Body: The Witness of God is present to every single person that ever lived and ever will. This truth is evident through creation and the Law of God and is presented in a Wisdom Psalm.

A. Vss. 1-6: The Witness of God is present through use of Personification.

1. When you look at the first six verses you can see the parallelism.

Each verse begins with a Personification of Creation, that is attributing Human characteristics to it, and then follows the first line with a parallel thought to the previous one or ones:

a. Vs. 1 directs us to the sky and how it testifies to God's glory.

b. Vs. 2 Continues the parallelism and personification while adding Merism to indicate the totality of Creation's testimony.

Merism is when two opposites are used to indicate totality such as; Night and Day as we see here. This verse also indicates that this testimony is both complete and continuous. This testimony doesn't just occur one day or one night. This repetition occurs day after day, and night after night.

This testimony of God is **EVER PRESENT IS NEVER-ENDING**.

c. Vs. 3 explains that the testimony is not audible, words are not used. These three clauses are **SYNONYMOUS TO EACH OTHER**,

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explaining that the sky does not speak. It is a literary masterpiece of God where He uses **COMPLEX ALTERNATING PARALLELISM** with verses one and two, to draw our attention to how wonderful His creation is in its Testimony about Himself. This is ever-present, and never-ending Testimony that does not even use sound.

Job 38 is where God question Job by calling Job's attention to creation.

- d. Vs. 4 goes back to personifying the sky as having speech by saying it's "line" or sound is through all the earth. Then an amazing description of the sun begins.
- e. Vs. 5 **PERSONIFIES** the sun as a bridegroom on his wedding night and illustrates the joy of the sun with its light to grow crops and bring pleasure. The marketing images you see on the digital screen for **JOY HAVE BRIGHT, SUNNY DAYS**, not rainy dreary ones. The sun brings joy.
- f. Vs. 6 ends the record of Creation's Testimony in Psalm 19 with **SYNONYMOUS PARALLELISM** and the continues **PERSONIFICATION OF THE SUN.**

The sun and sky continue in their declaration of God's glory on a continual basis. It is important to note that the Christian faith is the only worldview that has a reason to believe that the sun will rise and set, day after day, and night after night. **EVERY SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT DEPENDS ON THE CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW**, a worldview that God will maintain and sustain His creation (Co. 1:16-17). There is no other worldview that has reason to believe that the sun will rise tomorrow, that gravity will exist tomorrow, or that water will be the source of nourishment; except, that they borrow the loving, powerful, God of Christianity to justify their daily lives based on science (science = observing repeating, consistent results from

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experiments which doesn't make sense apart from the God of the Bible).

It is of note to pause here and make mention of the specific testimony of the Sun. One of the amazing properties of the sun is that it is a **TESTIMONY TO EVERYBODY, EVEN BLIND PEOPLE**. The sun penetrates the darkness of blindness with its warmth to testify of God. Even though the light of the sun might be absent, the warmth of the sun on the skin of a blind person is a testimony to God. You see, God provides a witness even to those who cannot see.

Romans 1:18–21; 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, **19** because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. **20** For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. **21** For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

In Romans 1:18-21, the Apostle Paul reminds his readers that there is no excuse for anybody in all the world for denying the existence of God because creation makes God's existence evident to them. When somebody denies the existence of God, they are suppressing the truth.

Worldviews are the lens that people view the world through. There are agnostic, atheistic, and theistic worldviews with sub-groups in each one. The theistic worldview, for example, includes all religions that believe in a god. However, **THERE IS ONLY ONE WORLDVIEW THAT IS CONSISTENT AND LEGITIMATE AND THAT IS THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW**. This is true because the God of scripture is the only explanation a person can have for believing that the universe we live in is consistent;

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physical matter, laws of thermodynamics. Any **SCIENTIFIC METHODOLOGY DOESN'T EVEN MAKE ANY SENSE WITHOUT THE GOD DESCRIBED IN SCRIPTURE** as your worldview.

B. Vss. 7-10: The Witness of God is present in His Word. David uses “Law,” “Testimony,” “Precepts,” “Commandment,” “Fear,” and “Judgements” to describe the Special Revelation of God, and specifically the Mosaic Law, found only in the Scriptures.

1. Vs. 7, the Law restores the soul. This is the preserving aspect of the scriptures. It makes the morally naïve wise. Those who would sin against God and go astray have their conscience informed by the Law of YHWH.
2. Vs. 8, anybody who has ever been wronged (that’s everyone) has an innate understanding between what is right and wrong. Their conscience may be seared against how they treat others, but they know by their own offenses. The word “**COMMANDMENT**” is singular and is a reminder that the Law is a whole. It cannot be broken. We are instructed in James 2:10 that if you keep the entire Law of God and stumble in just one itsy-bitsy little point that you have broken the whole Law of God. There is no such thing as a “white lie” or “stretching the truth” in the Law of God.

James 2:10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.

3. Vs. 9 uses “Fear” as a synonym for God’s Law and likely points to teaching a person how to demonstrate proper reverence for the Law (cf. Ps. 111:10).
4. Vs. 10, after seeing how great and just the Law of God is, a person can have either a positive or negative reaction. A negative reaction is what many people have toward God’s requirements and perceive God as a “kill-joy” or “task-master.” They forget that they have the same requirements of Justice for others to behave toward them, that the Law has for them as an individual.

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David has the positive view of the Law of God that it is the most precious of all possessions. In the book and movies, "The Lord of the Ring" the character Spiegel (Gollum) looks at the "Ring of Power" and is enamored by it, calling it – "Precious." That is how King David looks at the Law of God – PRECIOUS.

Not as valuable as gold, but **MORE VALUABLE!**

Not as delightful as honey, but **MORE DELIGHTFUL!**

C. Vss. 11-14: The response to God's witness is either to suppress it or submit to it.

1. Vs. 11, David has looked at Creation. David has looked at the Law of God. Now David looks at himself. He sees the Law of God and he sees the guidance for pure morality in it. He also sees that there is a reward for maintaining that moral excellence.
2. Vs. 12, David asks a rhetorical question, "Who can discern the errors of his way?" He knows the answer already and even though the book of Jeremiah was written hundreds of years after David dies, we can look there to know the answer to this question for us.

Je 17:9–10 "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.

Sometimes people will say that "their heart" is in the right place" or "they have peace" in themselves" when they are making a decision. I have a problem when Christians make these statements. Christians don't need to say, "I have peace" about a decision when the scripture clearly says to do something different. If I have a moral decision to make and it aligns with God's Word, then the Scripture is my basis for my decision, not my deceitful heart. I digress, let's get back to Psalm 19.

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3. Vs. 12, in your Bible it might read, “Hide me from hidden faults” or errors.
4. Vs. 13 Then, as we read in verse 13 there are “presumptuous sins.”
A “Presumptuous Sin” is a sin that you commit knowingly. You see, in the Law of Moses a person could be going along in their life and then come to a point where they find out that they committed a sin. Once that person found out that they committed a sin they would confess and make the appropriate sin offering for it. However, there is no individual offering for a sin that is knowingly committed, a Presumptuous Sin (except perhaps the Day of Atonement made for entire nation).
By God’s gracious provision a person can walk in relationship with Him and they will be kept from presumptuous sin. They can walk blameless before God.
5. Vs. 14, David ends this Psalm of Wisdom with a prayer for holiness before God. Whether this is asking for God to empower David for holiness or a prayer of Thanksgiving to God for the renewing of his mind through meditating on god’s Word; David is declaring that he does not have it in his own ability to live a holy life before God, in his own strength.

III. Conclusion: Live in the light of God’s multifaceted witness.

A. God’s provision in Creation

1. Power of God
2. Provision of God
3. Character of God

B. God’s provision in His Word

1. Moral perfection, greatest ever given.
2. Describes God’s requirements for a relationship, reconciliation, and restoration.
 - a. The Fall; The sacrifices of the Law

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- b. Confession is required for the offense committed
- C. God's provision in People
 - 1. Conscience of right & wrong
 - 2. Knowledge of the Creator
- D. Begin or be present in a Relationship with God