

From the Heavens to the Heart Psalm 19

From the Heavens to the Heart Introduction

- There is something radically wrong with the world.
- A London paper reportedly once asked the question of famous authors,
 - *“What’s wrong with the world today?”*
- G.K. Chesterton responded simply,
 - *“Dear Sir,*
 - *I am.*
 - *Yours, G.K. Chesterton.”*
- We may not normally like to think about it, but each one of us would have to answer in much the same way.
- The world is full of problems.
- And each one of us causes our share.
- In Psalm 19, David the psalmist shows us a path to changing that part of the world for which each of us is most responsible.
- We will take the glory of God revealed from the heavens, through the Scriptures to our own heart.

From the Heavens to the Heart Psalm 19

- *I take this to be the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world.*
 - *C. S. Lewis in Reflections on the Psalms*

Revelation in Nature Psalm 19:1-6

- 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God
- David considers the heavens and sees God’s glory.
- With a creation so overwhelming, how glorious must the Creator be?
- 19:2-4 whose voice is not heard
- This is a speechless testimony.
- It is a wordless witness.
- But it communicates throughout all the earth to any who would be willing to hear.
- Consider first the sheer size and mass of the universe.
- According to astronomers at Cornell, the size of the observable universe is about 14 billion light years across.
- The total mass is roughly the same as 25 billion galaxies the size of the Milky Way.

- We know the universe had a beginning because it is rapidly and constantly expanding.
- One reason we know this is through the redshift observed in the light of stars caused by the Doppler Effect.

- What happens, if the stars are all moving away from us very rapidly and we reverse the process?
- If you go back far enough, they all start at the same point.
- Moving forward, the universe keeps expanding like a large balloon.

- Astronomers see this as evidence for Big Bang
- In other words, the universe had a beginning.
- So how and why did nothing suddenly give birth to everything?
- See Psalm 19:1.

- There is something wrong with the world. So, there is a common error that can arise from natural revelation alone.
- The Israelites saw the sun and (often) worshiped the Lord.
- The Egyptians saw the same sun and worshiped Ra.
- The Greeks worshiped Apollo.
- It is possible to deify creation itself.

- Paul expresses it in Romans 3:25:
- “They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.”
 - *“The Cosmos is all that is or was or ever will be. Our feeblest contemplations of the Cosmos stir us -- there is a tingling in the spine, a catch in the voice, a faint sensation, as if a distant memory, of falling from a height. We know we are approaching the greatest of mysteries.”*
 - — Carl Sagan, in Cosmos

- God gives us a cure for that.
- He gives us more precise revelation in Scripture.

Revelation in Scripture Psalm 19:7-11

- *Here the word ‘law’ should not be interpreted as referring only to a set of rules, but is to be understood in its broadest sense as all the instruction and direction present in the entire written revelation of God’s will.*
 - *Nupanga Weanzana, Bangui Evangelical School of Theology, C.A.R.*

- David sees the divine revelation in its fullness. He sees:
 - The Law
 - Testimony
 - Precepts
 - Commandment
 - Fear
 - Rules, or “Just Decrees” of the Lord

- He also sees its full effect. The Scriptures can:
 - Revive us
 - Make us wise
 - Rejoice us
 - Enlighten us

- Further, they are:
 - Enduring
 - Righteous
 - Sweet
 - More to Be Desired Than Gold!

 - *Eve ... ate the forbidden fruit because it was ‘good for food and pleasing to the eye’ (Gen 3:7) – how much more pleasing is the sweet honey of the Torah, and how much more beautiful the gold of God’s word.*
 - Nupanga Weanzana, Bangui Evangelical School of Theology, C.A.R.

- We should cultivate a deep love for the Scriptures.
- David apparently had that kind of love.
 - *This is ... the language of a man ravished by a moral beauty. If we cannot at all share his experience, we shall be the losers.*
 - C. S. Lewis in Reflections on the Psalms

- That love might be described as a deep appreciation for the sheer excellence of God’s Word.
- The next step after knowing it is trying to live it out.
 - *The Order of the Divine mind, embodied in the Divine Law, is beautiful. What should a man do but try to reproduce it, so far as possible, in his daily life?*
 - C. S. Lewis in Reflections on the Psalms

- But here again are the makings of a possible trap.
- Because there is something wrong with the world – and also with each of us.

- We can love the Bible in an abstract way.
- We can become nothing more than experts and lack the needed experience of a transformed heart.
- The Pharisees saw that many, including certain officers, were impressed by Jesus.
- They, however, remained unimpressed.
- **John 7:47-49** The Pharisees answered them, “Have you also been deceived? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.”
- They were experts that lacked the experience of a transformed heart.
- Psalm 19 reminds us that we have to go deeper still.

Reflection in the Heart Psalm 19:12-14

- Reflection in the Heart Psalm 19:12-14
 - *Thus, down below every life there lies a great dim region of habits and impulses and fleeting emotions, into which it is the rarest thing for a man to go with a candle and see what it is like.*
 - *Alexander Maclaren (1826 – 1910)*
- Just as the sun in v.6 left nothing hidden, we need to let the light of God’s Word into our heart’s inner reaches.
- Those caverns that comprise the deepest part of us need to be explored.
- Unless you are Jesus – or one of the Apostles on your very best day – these places need some serious cleaning.
- The psalmist’s longing is to be pure in heart.
- He wants his motives and hidden faults exposed so that he can deal with them.
- God’s word is to be the measuring line – the standard to which he longs to conform.

From the Heavens to the Heart Conclusions

- *“What’s wrong with the world today?”*
- G.K. Chesterton responded simply,
 - *“Dear Sir,*
 - *I am.*
 - *Yours, G.K. Chesterton.”*
- *“What’s wrong with the world today?”*
- How would we respond?
- Unless each of us is willing to acknowledge that we are the problem we can never be part of the solution.

- Psalm 19 has taken us through:
 - Revelation in Nature
 - Revelation in Scripture
 - Reflection in the Heart
- The goal of the psalm is to take us from the glory of God to a completely transformed heart and life.
- We should never stop longing for a Christianity that is pure.
- We should constantly desire a closer walk with Jesus.
- God's revelation leads us to more than amazement or awe when we encounter natural powers.
- It also leads us far beyond legalistic religion.
- It takes us to an encounter with Christ so personal that our foremost longing can be to become pleasing in God's sight.

*Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight,
LORD, my rock and my redeemer.*