

The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament shows His handiwork.
² Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals knowledge.
³ *There is no speech nor language*
Where their voice is not heard.
⁴ 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,
⁵ Which *is* like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoices like a strong man to run its race.
⁶ Its rising *is* from one end of heaven,
And its circuit to the other end;
And there is nothing hidden from its heat.
⁷ The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul;
The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple;
⁸ The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes;
⁹ The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.
¹⁰ More to be desired *are they* than gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
¹¹ Moreover by them Your servant is warned,
And in keeping them *there is* great reward.
¹² Who can understand *his* errors?
Cleanse me from secret *faults*.
¹³ 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.
¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight,
O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

Introduction

For this Sunday only we will have a break from 1 Timothy and continue our series in the Psalms. Today we will study Psalm 19.

C.S. Lewis said that Psalm 19 is the greatest poem in the Psalms and one of the greatest lyrics in the world.

The emphasis of this Psalm is about God's revelation of Himself.

The God of the Bible is a God of revelation.

Being a person, He must communicate and reveal Himself to man in many ways.

The Psalmist David tells us that **God reveals Himself through creation, through the moral teaching of the Law, and through Jesus Christ.**

Perhaps this is the best Psalm to teach on such a special occasion as the anniversary of Osaka International Church.

This Psalm neatly divides into three sections, each of these sections gives us more revelation about God.

By the time we have finished exposing this Psalm, we will have God's complete and perfect revelation of Himself.

If you want to know what God is like, please listen carefully today, and make sure that you get a copy of the Japanese or English translation,

1. God reveals Himself through creation and nature - v. 1-6.

David was what we might call an "outdoor man".

He loved to be out and about in the countryside.

Perhaps because he started his life as a Shepherd?

However, David also spent many years on the run from King Saul.

He had to sleep in caves and in the outdoors.

David would probably go to bed when it got dark and wake up as the sun rose.

He would probably watch the sun rising every day.

It is no wonder that David focuses upon the sun as a way that God reveals Himself to us.

v. 5-6 in the N.L.T.

⁵It bursts forth like a radiant bridegroom after his wedding.

It rejoices like a great athlete eager to run the race.

⁶The sun rises at one end of the heavens

and follows its course to the other end.

Nothing can hide from its heat.

David compares the sun to a radiant bridegroom after his wedding and also like an athlete eager to run the race.

Recently I have been waking up very early, sometimes before sun-rise and I have watched the sun rising up from the mountains over Nara. It is a wonderful sight.

Although David focused upon the sun as a way of praising God for the revelation of Himself, we must never forget that although the sun is a big part of God's creation, it is only one part.

God's creation includes everything upon this earth.

This includes the plant and animal worlds on earth, and in the skies, and the waters, the rocks and crystals, and even the things that are so small that we need special equipment to see them.

World – famous biologist Edward O. Wilson, in his book, The Future of Life,

claims that there are as many as 1.6 million species of fungi in the world today.

There are 10,000 species of ants, 300,000 species of flowering plants, between 4-5 thousand species of mammals, and approximately 10,000 species of birds.

David didn't have this sort of information about the world, however just through the sun rising and setting, he was able to be overwhelmed by the glory of God.

Warren Wiersbe, a famous Bible teacher from the U.S. says this:

"Creation is a wordless book that everybody can read because it needs no translation".

God speaks through **creation, day after day, night after night.**

Is God speaking to you?

There are many people throughout the world who acknowledge the wonder of creation, and yet do not acknowledge the creator of all this wonder.

Over 30 years ago when I lived in Kobe, I got up early to have my quiet time in Okurayama Park near my home.

I was shocked to find that I was not alone.

A large number of old people were up and in the park.

The difference was that they were hugging the trees and kissing the leaves and worshipping nature.

They were making an idol of God's creation.

The Jewish people were forbidden to worship the objects in the heavens, nor were they allowed to practice astrology. They worshipped the creator, not the creation.

Exodus 20: v. 4-5, in N.L.T.

⁴“You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. ⁵You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me.

Isaiah 47: v. 13-14, in N.L.T.

¹³All the advice you receive has made you tired.

Where are all your astrologers,
those stargazers who make predictions each month?

Let them stand up and save you from what the future holds.

¹⁴But they are like straw burning in a fire;
they cannot save themselves from the flame.
You will get no help from them at all;
their hearth is no place to sit for warmth.

The existence of creation implies the existence of a creator.

The nature of this world’s creation implies that the creator is wise enough to plan it.

He is also powerful enough to execute His plan.

He is also powerful enough to maintain what He has made.

With such a complex universe and everything in it, this nature demands a creator who can **do anything, who knows everything and who is present everywhere.**

David acknowledged that this creator was the God of the Bible.

David knew that God was speaking to the inhabitants of the earth by means of His creation.

When Paul preached to the community in Athens in Acts 17: v. 22-31, he started with creation and then moved on to the gospel message.

Acts 17: v. 22-31. In N.K.J.

²²Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; ²³for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: ²⁴God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. ²⁵Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. ²⁶And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, ²⁷so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’ ²⁹Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising. ³⁰Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

A famous Bible teacher said this: **“God’s voice of power in creation prepares the way for His voice of grace in the gospel”.**

2. God reveals Himself through the moral teaching of the Law. – v. 7-11.

David realises that although the God of the Bible reveals Himself through creation, the knowledge of creation itself doesn't answer the problem of the human heart.

Where do we get moral and spiritual direction in life?

Can we actually have a relationship with our creator God?

Men and women are moral beings that cry out for an answer to life.

Men and women are also spiritual beings; they want to get in touch with their creator and have a friendship with Him.

There is a hole in everybody's heart that can't be filled by themselves.

David knows the answer and he wants to communicate it with us in v. 7-11.

In these verses David talks about the Law of God in 6 different ways.

This helps us to understand the benefits of God's Law.

- a) First David says in v.7, the **LAW** of the Lord.
This Hebrew word "Torah" means divine instruction and teaching.
It is complete, nothing is left out.
It speaks to all of our needs and is also able to convert or restore our soul.

- b) Secondly David uses the word "**Testimony**" in v. 7. The Hebrew word means "The witness of God's nature". The 10 commandments were known by this name and they were the basis for God's Law. It is dependable, it doesn't change according to circumstances. God's truth is never variable.
2 Timothy 3 V. 15
¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

- c) Thirdly in v. 8 the English word "**Precepts or Statutes**" is used.
This Hebrew word is concerning God's will that is expressed in a particular way.
These are detailed instructions concerning practical matters of everyday life.
For the Old Testament Jew there were specific instructions concerning what to do practically concerning foods and many other things.
David explains that **there is a joy in your heart** when you know what you believe is right.
If you are a Christian believer, **then your heart should rejoice when you hear truth preached and taught.**

- d) Fourthly David talks about the "**commandment**" of the Lord in v.8 .
David is saying here that if we obey God's commandments, then our conscience is **enlightened**.
If we disobey, then our heart becomes dull and hardened!!!!

- e) Finally, David talks about God's Law bringing "**fear and judgement**".
God's Law does challenge mankind to obedience, because there are consequences for disobedience to God's Law.
Also the Hebrew word suggests that we must **show respect and reverence** for God's word. We must not take God's word lightly.
We must not be selective in what we obey and what we care to ignore!!!

So we can see how a revelation of God's word, is a revelation of Himself.

David says that to know and desire God's word is **sweeter than honey and better than possessing gold.**

David also says that keeping God's Law will bring the person great reward.

Society today will not teach you about God's Law.

Creation can't be hidden in any way, but man does his best to hide and destroy even the knowledge of God's Law.

Countries all over the world have tried to ban and destroy the Bible.

Today in China they realise that they can't destroy the Bible, so they are trying to change it to fit in with other religions.

Perhaps this is the start of the one world religion before the second coming of Jesus?

Whatever the world tries to do to destroy the Bible, God will never allow His Word to be totally destroyed.

3. God reveals Himself through Jesus Christ. – v. 12-14.

In this last section David declares in v.14 that God is his strength and his "**Redeemer**".

A redeemer is somebody who buys you back from captivity.

David somehow knew of God's plan **for his redemption through Jesus Christ.**

He acknowledged in v. 12 that he had sins in his life that needed cleansing and even asked God to cleanse him from his secret faults.

David did not want to be bound or dominated by sin.

He wanted his heart and his speech to be glorifying to God.

Unless we have a personal relationship with the Lord God of the Bible as our heavenly father, then what we see in creation and nature, and what we read in the Bible about God's Law, will not do us much good.

You need to know Jesus to know God.

Christmas is only 9 weeks away, and the story of the "Magi" (Three Kings).

Matthew Chapter 2: v. 1-12 gives us an example of what David is saying in this Psalm.

The Magi followed God's Star, it was a **special message in the sky** to direct them.

They then **consulted God's word** and discovered that the King was to be born in Bethlehem. Then when they got to Bethlehem **they discovered Jesus.**

All three aspects of God's revelation were used.

When you study God's creation with a Bible in your hand, you can't help but see Jesus.

Jesus is seen as the **vine** in John Chapter 15. – John 15: v. 5.

⁵ "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Jesus is seen as the **sun** in John 8: v. 12 –John 8: v. 12.

¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Jesus is seen as a **Star** in Numbers 24: v. 17

¹⁷ "I see Him, but not now;

I behold Him, but not near;

A Star shall come out of Jacob;

A Scepter shall rise out of Israel,

And batter the brow of Moab,

And destroy all the sons of tumult.

Jesus is seen as the **lamb** in John 1: v. 29.

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

The word of God in your hand is great, the word in your head is better, **but it is the word in your heart that will transform you** and make you a mature believer in Jesus Christ.

Application for us today at O.I.C.

So from what we have heard from God's word today, what can we take home and apply to our lives this week.

1. **If you are not yet a Christian**, then you need to consider God's wonderful creation here in Japan. Soon we will be in Autumn with beautiful leaves, then later Cherry blossom time. Then there is the rising of the sun and all of God's nature to consider. Who do you think made it? Until you acknowledge that the God of the Bible created the earth and the Universe, you will never benefit from what God has to say to you in the Bible.
Open your heart to your creator God and let Him in, ask him to teach you through the Bible, all about Himself.
(free copies of John's Gospel and the book of Romans available today)
People are available today to help you and pray with you.
Don't leave this room disappointed, cry out to God for a Revelation of Himself.
Look at creation, read God's word, consider Jesus!!!
2. If you are a Christian today, you have much to thank Jesus for. However, the challenge is to serve Jesus.
Are you a channel for God's blessing?
You are if you have surrendered your life fully to Him and let Him choose your ministry.
God is not looking for our **ability**.
God is looking for our **availability**.

1 Corinthians 15: v. 58 in N.K.J.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

As we enter another year in the life of O.I.C. I want to challenge ALL of us, including ME, to do the work OF the LORD.

Anybody can work for Jesus, but to do the **work OF THE LORD, requires full surrender to His will and His plans for our lives.**

May God bless us abundantly as we seek to be **humble instruments in His hands**, The God of the Bible is our great creator and redeemer.

Amen.