

THE PSALMS IN HUMAN LIFE

PART 6

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PSALM 19

1 *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.*

2 *Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.*

3 *There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.*

4 *Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun,*

5 *which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.*

6 *It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat.*

7 *The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.*

8 *The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.*

9 *The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring for ever. The ordinances of*

the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.

10 *They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.*

11 *By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*

12 *Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.*

13 *Keep your servant also from wilful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression.*

14 *May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

During our consideration of this *Psalm*, we shall see the definite aspects of the nature of the work of God. In penning this poem the *psalmist* touches on the works of God with regard to the heavens, the law, and also man. It is a wonderful *Psalm* to read because of the way the *psalmist* has set out each section of verses.

In my times of meditation on this *Psalm*, I have discovered that there is much in it that relates to human life. An analysis of the *Psalm* is vital if we are to gain any benefit from it, which will help to equip, and enable us to live the way God intended us to, and also receive from Him the good that is imparted as a result of applying His word.

It can be noticed that as the heavens is the place where God manifests His handiwork and shows **His Glory**. So human life is the place where God manifests His word and shows **His Grace**.

A.F. Kirkparick says “In the first part God is styled EL. ‘The God of Power’. In the second part he is styled as Jehovah (Seven times repeated) the name by which He made Himself known as the covenant God of Israel, the God of Grace and Redemption”. Let’s note the verses to prove the point.

In the *Psalm* God is revealed in two ways. He is revealed first in nature, and then in His Word. **His Glory** is manifested in the heavens and **His Grace** is manifested in the law. We will note the following.

1. THE DECLARATION OF HIS HANDIWORK. (verse 1)

“*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.*” The Christian song says: “It took a miracle to put the world in space,

it took a miracle to put the stars in place, but when he saved my soul, cleansed and made me whole, it took a miracle of love and grace”.

Who but God could have designed and put such a wonderful universe together? The position of each star and the precision of their movement through the vast expanse of space is quite astounding. There is order and accuracy that declares the uniqueness of the heavens. There is stability in the heavens and the order the stars and planets move in is a fixed order. No interference from man, however pressurised it is, can change the place and position of one single star. Man is powerless to change the order of the universe. Think for a moment if man could alter the location of the sun, or the timing of the moon, and think of the catastrophic consequences of such a thing. What I have said so far is not only **The Declaration of His Handiwork**, but also.

2. A DESCRIPTION OF HIS HANDIWORK. (verses 2 to 6)

The poet describes the heavens in beautiful terms. The fact is that the heavens remain unspoiled. The hymnist wrote *“All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all”*.

Look now at how the *psalmist* describes the heavens.

It has a Language: *“Day unto day it utters speech, night unto night shows knowledge”*.

It has Beauty: *“In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat”*.

It has Order. *“It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat”*.

In this *Psalm* the poet is making known that the handiwork of God is shown in the heavens. Firstly he concentrates on that which is external, pointing out to us that the heavens are demonstrating day and night the creative artwork of God.

In **Psalm 121** it says *“I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help, my help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth”*.

Here is a small verse that I have put together.

“The Beautiful heavens; the beautiful earth.

The bountiful blessings of believing His word.

How great and marvellous, how good and kind.

Is God the creator, Father of mankind’.

The first part of the *Psalm* is the revelation of **God in Nature**.

The second part is the revelation of **God through His word**.

Next let us see what is revealed to us from **verse 7 to 11**, regarding what it says about **the Law**. I think that what is expressed in these verses is worth some consideration, because they relate so much to **the Law**, and its value in human life.

3. THE LAW - FROM WHOM IT PROCEEDED.

John 1 v 17 *“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”*.

When it says here *“the Law was given by Moses”*, it does not mean that **the Law** proceeded from Moses; it does not mean that it originated in him. The words *“For the law was given by Moses”*, actually means, that Moses was the man who delivered **the Law** to the people, or Moses was the man who dished it out to the people.

During a meal in a restaurant, a waiter who gives to you the meal is not the one who prepared it, it proceeded from the chef. **The Law** proceeded from God,

it was in God who prepared it, and then handed it to Moses for him to deliver to the people. So **the Law proceeded from God.**

The Law. The following is a quotation from the 'Holman Bible Dictionary' and is included for you to observe.

“TORAH (*Toh' ruh*) Hebrew word normally translated “law” which eventually became a title for the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament.

Old Testament Though universally translated “law” in the KJV, *torah* also carries the sense of “teaching” or “instruction,” as reflected in more recent translations (Job 22v22; Ps. 78v1; Prov. 1v8; 4v2; 13v14; Isa. 30v9). The meaning, *law*, is certainly present in the Old Testament. *Torah*, for example, is used in connection with terms for requirements, commands, and decrees (Gen. 26v5; Ex. 18v16). The Torah was given to Moses (Ex. 24v12) and commanded to be kept (Ex. 16v28; Deut. 17v19; Ezek. 44v24).

Within the Book of Deuteronomy, *torah* is used to represent the body of the Deuteronomic code (Deut. 4v8; 30v10; 32v46), that is, the essence of Israel’s responsibilities under the covenant. Subsequent Old Testament writings continue to speak of Torah as “The Law” in this sense (Isa. 5v24; Jer. 32v23; 44v10; Dan. 9v11), often as “the book of the law,” the “law of Moses,” or a combination (Josh. 1v8; 8vs31-32, 34; 2 Kings 14v6). The “book of the law” found in the Temple which fuelled Josiah’s reforms (2 Kings 22vs8-13) is often regarded to be roughly equivalent to the Book of Deuteronomy. By the time of Ezra and Nehemiah “the book of the law of Moses” (Neh. 8v1) included more material than the Deuteronomic code. Ezra cited the “law which the Lord had commanded by Moses” concerning the feast of booths, which is prescribed in Leviticus (23vs33-43). Eventually the name *Torah* came to be applied to the entire Pentateuch, the five books traditionally ascribed to Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In rabbinical Judaism, the scope of Torah is sometimes expanded to include all of the Scriptures or even the entirety of God’s revelation”.

It seems that the O.T. was divided into three sections. **The Law, The Prophets** and **The Psalms**. This is confirmed by Jesus when speaking to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Luke 24 v 44 *“And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me”.*

According to the 'International Dictionary of the Christian Church' the Law consisted of two parts. **The Written** and **The Oral**. The Torah contains 613 precepts, 365 being negative and 248 positive.

4. THE LAW – TO WHOM IT PROCEEDED.

It is clear from **verses 7 to 11** that **the Law** was issued by God for the benefit of mankind. There is a law that governs everything, and the consequences of breaking the law are inevitable, for there is always a negative outcome for disregarding the law even though it may not seem evident at the time the law is broken.

If one considers the words expressed in the *Psalm* relating to **the Law**, then the present and permanent value is clearly stated. Further, **the Law** of God is not bitter to the taste, as some man made laws are, particularly when a man made law is made into a statute contrary to God given precepts. Look what it says in **Ezekiel 3 vs 1 to 3**. *“And he said to me, “Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat. Then he said to me, “Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.” So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth”.*

5. THE LAW – WHY IT PROCEEDED.

It is essential for there be parameters set for humanity, so that each one can live without being in danger all the time. If there was no limit on what is permissible, and everything was a free for all, we would be living in a totally liberal world, and the end result would be chaos. God, in His infinite wisdom, issued **the Law** for the benefit of humanity, because **the Law** of God is a blessing.

To know the God who issued **the Law** is a wonderful blessing for we who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ into our lives, are the most blessed people on the face of the earth.

We recognise that as the heavens declare **the Glory of God**, and humanity declares **the Grace of God**.

6. THE DECLARATION OF THE PSALMIST'S DESIRE. (verses 12 to 14)

The one thing the *psalmist* wants to do above all else is to live a life that pleases the Lord. David asks the question “*Who can understand his errors*”.

Paul said on one occasion. **Romans 7 v 21** “*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me*”. The best advice that can be given is stated by David in this *Psalm*. Pray about it! Do not ignore what is happening, pray about it! Make your feelings known to the Lord and tell Him exactly how you feel. If you feel you are at the end of yourself then tell the Lord, and let Him plead your cause.

Let the Lord know the struggle you are having with the various things you are faced with. Let Him know that you want to serve Him, live for Him, please Him in all you do. However, tell Him how hard it is sometimes. Put all your difficulties in a prayer basket and place it before the Lord. You will find, like the *psalmist*, He is your strength and your redeemer.

Let the Lord know that as the heavens declare His Glory, you too want your life to declare the various facets of His Grace.