



LESSON 9: "GOD TALK"

PSALM 19

BACKGROUND

C. S. Lewis wrote that *Psalm 19* is "the greatest poem in the Psalter and one of the greatest lyrics in the world." This Psalm combines beautiful *poetry* with profound *theology* (the study of God). Psalm 19 was written by King David around 1000 BC and its theme is the *self-revelation* of God. The Psalm has three distinct parts that could be titled: *Knowing God through His World*; *Knowing God through His Word*; *Knowing God through Living His Way*.

When God reveals himself through creation, it is called *natural or general revelation*. When God reveals himself through his Word, it is called *special revelation*.

Psalm 19 is full of "God Talk". This Psalm states that the heavens and the skies are the work of God's hands which continually declares his glory. To see the truth of this statement, go to our website growingtogetherbiblestudy.com and click on "Links" under "Resources". Click on the Hubble link to see some awesome, actual pictures of the heavens. (When you get to the HubbleSite, click on Entire Collection or on one of the Picture Album Categories such as Galaxies, Stars, or Universe. Double-click on one of the pictures and view all the pictures in the album by clicking on Next Image.)

God truly "speaks" through his creation.

DISCUSSION STARTER

- What is the most beautiful, breath-taking view of nature that you have ever seen? Did it speak to you of God? How?

PREPARATION

1. Before you read **Psalm 19**, ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and guide you into all truth (John 16:13). We have been using the prayer, *Holy Spirit, think through me until your ideas become my ideas*, or King David's prayer, *Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your law*.
2. Read **Psalm 19** slowly and thoughtfully in at least *two translations*. As you read and reread, mark any words or phrases that are meaningful to you and put a question mark by anything that you don't understand.
3. If we were to divide this Psalm into three parts called, *Knowing God through His World*; *Knowing God through His Word*; and *Knowing God through Living His Way*, where do you think the **verse divisions** would fall?
God's World - verses _____
God's Word - verses _____
God's Way - verses _____
4. Would you type Psalm 19 as a *Song of Wisdom*, *Song of Praise and Worship*, *Song of Lament* or *Song of Trust*? Why? (Definitions for these Psalms can be found on the first page of the Overview Lesson.)

QUESTIONS

KNOWING GOD THROUGH HIS WORLD

- ♥ Read 19:1 in all four versions of Scripture. When you hear or read the words “heavens” and “skies” what images come to mind?
- 5. What, specifically, do the heavens and the skies do? **19:1,2**

The *glory of God* is the beauty and excellence of his multiple and diverse accomplishments. The glory of God is an attempt to put into words what God is like in his magnificence, beauty and purity. It refers to his infinite and overflowing fullness of all that is good. God's glory is his majesty and splendor. His glory is his beauty that inspires feelings of wonder and joy. It is the perfect harmony of all God's characteristics into one infinitely beautiful and personal being.

- ♥ Why do you think God “shows off” this way?
- 6. How, in particular, do the heavens *declare* the glory of God? **Romans 1:20** may help you in your answer.

- ♥ Read **19:3** in the *NLT and Amplified versions*. What kind of communication does the heavens use? Do you think this type of communication is effective? Why or why not? Can this type of communication be used between God and us? If so, how?
- 7. To *whom* do the heavens and the skies speak? **19:4**

Is the truth about God's glory and handiwork obvious to everyone?
Why do some people hear and see it and others don't?

- 8. What we create as personalities and persons is a reflection of who we are. What do we know about God from observing the work of his hands in the heavens? Consider the heavens and list as many of the revealed characteristics of God that you can think of.

- 9. Reflect on the vastness of the heavens. Some of the starlight we see today left the stars thousands and thousands of years ago. Our galaxy, the Milky Way, has 200 billion stars. The nearest galaxy, Andromeda, is 200 million light years away. David describes the heavens as the work of God's "hands". What is David implying about God by using the image of God's hands?

- ♥ When a person truly sees the work of God's hands, what would be a reasonable response?
- ♥ How can you become more attentive to what God is declaring through creation?
- 10. In **19:4-6**, David describes the sun and its role in the heavens as a metaphor for God. Why is the sun a good *metaphor* for God and how is God "like" the sun?

- ♥ What is the advantage of David focusing on the *heavens* and *skies* to demonstrate God's majesty and glory rather than some earthly beauty?
 - ♥ What in creation impresses you most with a sense of God's glory? What effect does it have on you?
11. When we realize the vastness of the heavens, it naturally makes us feel small and insignificant. David responds to this dilemma in **Psalm 8:3-9**. Are we insignificant? What is our place in creation?
 12. List two or three of the biggest concerns you are dealing with in your life right now, either personally or with your loved ones. (You won't be asked to share these unless you want to.)

Is the intelligent, powerful, creative God that made with his "hands" the vast and beautiful universe able to "handle" the problems you've listed above? Are any of these situations too difficult for him? Do any of them baffle his intelligence, creativity or power? *Write a short prayer* praising him for his abilities as you place these concerns in his "hands" for him to work out.

- ♥ What images come to mind as you picture your problems passing from your hands to God's hands?

KNOWING GOD THROUGH HIS WORD

13. God revealing himself in nature is wonderful, but it is limited. What are some things we would never know about God and our relationship to him through nature alone?
14. Besides creation, what other ways has God revealed himself and his truth to us?
15. What synonyms does David use for God's Word in **19:7-9**?
- ♥ Why do you think David uses several synonyms for the Word of God? What do these words reveal about the role of Scripture?
16. What *adjectives* does David use to describe the *character* of God's Word in **19:7-9**?
- ♥ Why is it important to know these things about Scripture?
17. In **19:7-9**, what four effects can the Word of God have on our lives? (Refer to at least two versions of Scripture.)

- ♥ *Why* and *how* does God's Word affect us this way?
 - ♥ What are some specific ways you have been changed through God's Word?
18. Are the effects of **19:7-9** automatic for someone reading and studying God's Word? Consider **19:11, 14** in your answer.

- ♥ Which of the blessings in **19:7-9** would you like to experience in greater measure? Why?

19. In **19:10**, David expresses the *value* of God's Word in his life. Put this verse into your own words.

- ♥ Practically, how can the Scripture be more valuable than your most precious possessions and sweeter than your greatest pleasures?
- ♥ What "wealth" and "luxuries" are you tempted to make more important than God's Word?

20. *Why* does David consider God's Word to be so valuable? **19:11**

- ♥ Give an example of how you have been *warned* or *rewarded* through Scripture.

KNOWING GOD THROUGH LIVING HIS WAY

As we know and experience God through his *creation* and his *Word*, our hearts will desire to please him.

21. In **19:12-13**, what two kinds of sins does David pray to be delivered from?

What is the difference between these types of sins?

- ♥ Why do we need God's help when dealing with both types of sin?

22. What two things does David request in **19:14**?

- ♥ According to **Ephesians 4:29, 5:4** and **Philippians 4:8**, which words and thoughts are pleasing to God and which are not?
- ♥ What do you think is more important to God: Our *thoughts* or our *words* or our *deeds*? Why?

23. Why does David refer to God as his Rock in **19:14**? **Psalms 18:2**

- ♥ How is God your Rock?

- ♥ We think of Jesus as our Redeemer, but David lived before Christ. According to **Deuteronomy 9:26**, why does David call God his Redeemer? How is God your Redeemer?

RESPONSE

Psalm 19 ends with one of the most beautiful and powerful prayers found in all the Psalms. If you memorized only one verse from the Psalms, this would be a good one! *Write this verse out on a card and keep in visible for one week.* Pray it over and over when your mind is free. Meditate on the phrases in this verse. **Ponder what God desires from you. Ponder on what God wants to give you.** Share with your small group next week how God spoke to you through this verse.