



“Revelation and Response”

Psalm 19

God speaks. He reveals Himself. The question is, what is your response? When you see His glory in creation and read of His goodness in His Word, what do you do?

In our passage, we are privileged to have King David's insight into what it means to hear and see God's revelation in the world and in His Word. Further, David lays out for us a template of how to respond to God's revelation.

General Revelation – Wordless Revelation (verses 1-6)

Verses 1-2

- From God's creation in the world, we can know that God exists and is powerful. The heavens declare the glory or the weightiness of God. They declare His power and presence in the world.
- They pour out speech. This image is of an unstoppable bubbling of a spring. In other words, creation cannot hold back from visually displaying God's beauty, power and might.
 - “Although God should not speak a single word to men, yet the orderly and useful succession of days and nights eloquently proclaims the glory of God” (John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*, Vol. IV, p. 311).

Verses 3-4a

- The testimony of creation is such that it leaves mankind without excuse. We see His revelation. What is our response? (Romans 1:19-20; 10:18) Denial or delight?
- Robert Jastrow, the founder and director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, in his book, *God and the Astronomers*, humorously points out the difference in these responses. “For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries” (James M. Boice, *Psalms – Volume 1*, p. 165).

Verses 4b-6

- Here David poetically delights in God's creation. He sets up the sun in a tent, as a bridegroom, like a strong man. The whole thrust of these verses is how the sun delights to do the will of God, to race across the sky bringing light and heat to all of life.
- The sun affects every day of our lives. It is enormously powerful, so powerful that most religions ancient and current make some sort of practice out of worshipping the sun. But David's clear point here is God is more powerful than the sun. He is in control of it.

Special/Specific Revelation – Word Revelation (verses 7-10)

- “If the sun is the most glorious gift of the creator for physical life, the word of Yahweh is the most glorious gift for spiritual life; and if the sun dominates life and illumines everything under it, the word dominates every aspect of the spiritual life – and the physical life as well – all the time. There is no physical life without the sun; there is no spiritual life without the word” (Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on THE PSALMS*, Vol. 1, p. 469).
- As the Psalm shifts here to specific revelation, the reference to God changes from “God” to “LORD,” the Covenant name of God, Yahweh.

Verse 7

- When we hear the “law,” we often think of it as rules we must follow to make God happy or commandments we must adhere to so that we can earn favor with God. In Jesus' time, the Pharisees saw the law as a means to achieve social and personal power over others. The Pharisees, who Jesus and Paul spoke against, saw the law as a legalistic burden placed upon them which they passed on to others.
 - “It is certain, that if the Spirit of Christ does not quicken the law, the law is not only unprofitable, but also deadly to its disciples” (John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*, Vol. IV, p. 322).

- David, a man after God's own heart, delighted in the law. For him it revived the soul, it made people wise, it was a joy and enlightened the eyes. For David, the law or the Word of God was a delight not suffering under the weight of an unattainable legalistic burden.
 - Three uses of the law: guides us in paths of righteousness – guardrails (for the believer in Christ), restrains sin – bridle, shows us our sin/convicts us of sin – mirror/hammer

Verse 8

- The precepts of the LORD are right. The standard of "rightness" does not originate within us as if we need to just look deep inside to find out what is right. "Rightness" is revealed to us.
- The only way we see things rightly is through commandments of the LORD.

Verse 9

- Fear – reverential, God-honoring fear.
- "The way in which men generally manifest their fear of God, is by inventing false religions" (John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*, Vol. IV, p. 322).
- Only God is fully and wholly true. He defines truth.

Verse 10

- The word of God, the law, is better. It is better than gold, honey, a great toy, a new Corvette, whatever you think the best thing is. The word of God is better than that.
- "Certainly, if we separate the law from the hope of pardon, and from the Spirit of Christ, so far from tasting it to be sweet as honey, we will rather find in it a bitterness which kills our wretched souls" (John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*, Vol. IV, p. 325).
- As believers, we do not suffer under the condemnation of the law. We don't bear the guilt of the law because Jesus bore that for us. We are free from condemnation (Romans 8:1-2).

Response to Revelation**Verse 11**

- The sun affects all things (v. 6) and here we see that the Word affects all that is in our hearts.
- The flow of the passage goes from God of all nature, to LORD of the law, to the prayerful intimacy of "your."
- The reward of the keeping the law is certainly having a relationship with God through Christ and being clothed in His righteousness. But it's also the great benefit of living as the Creator of the universe intends for us to live. There is an intrinsic reward in doing good and walking in right ways. The full benefit is not seen in this life in riches or status or power, but rather the reward of a clean conscience without the need to hide our transgressions.

Verse 12

- David's response to God's revelation is to pray, to confess his sins and find refuge in God.
- "Hidden faults" – sins that we commit in ignorance.
- Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 14. What is sin? A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

Verse 13

- Keep me back, hold me back, restrain me from intentional sin because in my flesh I run headlong towards it. Rein me in, Lord.
- Let my sins not rule over me. May I not be enslaved to them following my ungodly desires.
- If I am restrained from willful sin and seeking to confess my hidden sins as I become aware of them, then I will most likely be turned away from "great transgressions."
 - Confessing and repenting of sin when it is relatively small is far better than having to deal with the consequences of sin when it is great.
- "blameless" – pure like the purity of an Old Testament sacrifice, without spot or blemish

Verse 14

- Keep me back from ungodliness and do not let it rule me. Instead, let the words of mouth... Let me pursue righteousness. In the battle against sin, it's not just about saying, "no" to sin. While that is necessary, we must also say, "yes" to godliness. We can't just focus on stopping, we need to actually move in positive, holy directions.
- After all of this revelation of God, David's response is not to run from God, but to run to God to find refuge in Him because He is David's rock and redeemer.