

The Glory of God the Creator

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Preacher: Nigel Anderson

[0 : 0 0] Psalm 19. To read the whole of this psalm, but particularly in a few moments, focused on the first six verses, but let's read the whole of this psalm.

It's a psalm that David wrote. I see gaze in wonder at God's creation. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaim or proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

In them he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them.

And there is nothing hidden from its heat. The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

[1 : 1 0] The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever.

The rules of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold. Sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.

Moreover, by them is your servant warned, and keeping them there is great reward. Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults.

Keep back your servants also from presumptuous sins. Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless and innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight.

O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. And then in Revelation chapter 22, we're going to read the first seven verses that speak of the new creation.

[2 : 2 0] Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, through the middle of the street of the city.

Also on either side of the river, the tree of life, with its twelve kinds of fruit yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face and his name will be in their foreheads, and night will be no more.

They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. And they said to me, these words are trustworthy and true, and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.

And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. And may God and his blessing to these readings from his holy word.

[3 : 34] As we return to the first reading that we had in Psalm 19, where we read of the heavens declaring the glory of God, and that's very much what we want to focus on this morning, the glory of God, God the Creator.

Because we want to see how David the psalmist expresses that glory when he looks to the heavens, he looks above, and what does he see? Yes, he sees, he might see a physical, material creation, but he sees the glory of God, even in that creation.

And as he sees, he hears, he hears these wordless words, telling the God who made the heavens and the earth. And as he sees, as he hears, in his heart, he sees the beauty, the beauty of creation, because the beauty of God has made all things well.

We'll come to these points, obviously more detail as we go through this, these first six verses of Psalm 19 this morning, because, well, unless you've been living on another planet in the last week, you'll be very aware of the world focus in Glasgow, that COP26 meeting, the conference of parties, the 26th, the 26th time this kind of gathering of the United Nations conference has taken place, where leaders, as we were saying to the children, where leaders such as President Biden have been in Scotland's largest city, and climate activists are making their presence felt and felt.

News outlets are in, well, some of them anyway, are in overdrive in assessment and comment and views and prophecies of doom. And should Christians turn a blind eye to these events?

[5 : 22] Should Christians say nothing on climate change and the impact of man ripping apart all the properties of the earth? Of course not. God's Word tells us the earth is the Lord's and the fullness.

Yes, they're off. You read that in another psalm, Psalm 24. Planet Earth bears the fingerprints of God, and we do no honour to God, no honour to him at all, in any kind of neglect or abuse of his creation.

Even the word creation, of course, mentioned that. Well, you won't hear that word mentioned at the COP26 conference. But we do need to be reminded again and again that the earth is the Lord's because God made the heavens and the earth.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And so we do need to hear and rejoice as we even turn to God's Word to be reminded that the earth is the Lord's, that we are to give glory to the maker of heaven and earth because it's God, the Lord, our Saviour, our Provider, the Saviour of the world.

To help us to see the glory of God in creation and to see how important it is for the Lord's people to take an interest, an active interest in the way that the earth has been, we might say, treated.

[6 : 49] Well, Psalm 19 is so helpful. And the first half of this psalm, we read the whole psalm because the first six verses really tell us about knowing God through his creation. The remainder of the psalm, well, certainly from verse 7 onwards, tell of knowing God but through his Word.

Well, we're going to focus on the first six verses this morning, of course, as we seek to bring out what's so wonderful, what's so beautiful about God's creation and the response that you and I have to, well, must give to the world that God's placed us in to look after, to manage and to care for.

So, the heavens, the heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims this handiwork, the glory of creation.

And, you know, you can just picture in your mind's eye, David, David the psalmist, David on that hill as he's tending his sheep. He's on the hillside, one of the hillsides in Judea.

And he's sitting there, maybe in the nighttime, it will have been the nighttime, in the darkness, where he looks above. And he's taking time to wonder at God's creation. And he's fully connecting with what he's seeing in his knowledge of God.

[8 : 12] He's marveling at what he's seeing, even with his eyes and with his heart. It's the same David who would write another psalm, Psalm 8, When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you've set in place, what is man that you're mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him.

David was so aware of the glory of God in creation, that even thinking, what's man in relation to what you've created, and yet God, in his glory, God has sent man within the vastness of God's creation, and God's showing his love to man, even as he shows his love to you.

And, you know, I think we have to say this, that, you know, David is just so absorbed in the glory of God as he's there sitting in that hillside. He's not being distracted by the busyness of town life or city life.

He's gazing at the wonder of creation, and he's praising God the Creator. And by inspiration of God, he writes down these words of praise.

Whether it's words of praise in Psalm 8 or Psalm 19, or other psalms that we've already sung this morning, he's inspired to tell of the glory of God in creation.

[9 : 34] And only somebody who, you know, who took that time to rest in quiet meditation, solitude, and gazing, and thinking on God through that knowledge of God in creation, only he could write what he's written there of the glory of God.

But, you know, surely it's something that each one of us need to do many times, not just from time to time, to see the beauty of the Master's hand in every detail of creation, from every grain of sand, to see the wonder, the wonder of God as seen in his creation.

You know, we live in a world where we're just rushing from one thing to another. Take time, take time in your heart to gaze at God's creation, to see the evidence of God's glory.

You see that glory revealed in his creation. That's what David's expressing here in Psalm 19. You know, he's looking at the big sky above. He's seen the wonder of the vastness of the universe.

He's seen the glory of creation. He's rejoicing in what he sees that declares the glory of God. But then you might say, well, what exactly is David saying when he's saying the heavens declare the glory of God?

[10 : 54] Well, surely David's saying this. He's saying creation reveals God. God in his majesty. God in his power. God in his creative order.

I mean, the Apostle Paul knew so much about God's glory. That glory revealed in creation when Paul wrote of the invisible God who's made himself visible and made himself knowable through God's creation.

You read in Romans 1 verse 20, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world and the things that have been made.

Ever since God created the world that we read off in Genesis 1.1, in the beginning God. In the beginning God created. Ever since, you know, these words were written.

These tells of creation that projects the glory and the majesty and the power and the beauty of God the creator. Now yes, sins marred God's creation.

[11 : 59] Sins spoiled so much of the perfection of the beauty of God's creation. But the evidence is still there. The heavens still do declare the glory of God.

The skies still do proclaim the work of God's hands. And we even see it this morning. The glory of God in creation is ever before you.

God's glory is seen in even the very order of creation. The perfect balance of creation. And all the various forms of creation, the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the universe, life itself, plant life, sea life, animal life, human life, all point to the glory of God.

And yourselves, you each day have access to the glory of God in creation. You breathe because God has enabled you to breathe through his creation.

All that you see and feel and smell and touch. You live in the world that God's created for our benefit and our blessing. God's power, his glory, his majesty, it's seen.

[13 : 10] It's been plain in the natural world around us. And so we're all without excuse. But Paul goes on to say this in Romans 1.20, man in rebellion against God, man suppressed that truth.

Man denies the God of creation. creation. And what a furious denial it is of the God of creation. If anyone's going to mention the word creation at COP26, I'm sure there's going to be such a backlash.

Because man without the saving knowledge of God in Christ will not accept God as creator. Man without that saving knowledge of God won't acknowledge the glory of God even as the evidence points to that glory.

So we've just seen even the last few weeks the climate activists, the world leaders by and large, yes, they're concerned with God's creation.

Who's going to admit to the God and who's going to worship the God of creation? Yes, the world sees worth and value in creation. But it's not going to speak of creation.

[14 : 21] It's not going to speak of God the creator. The world simply shuts its ears to Jesus through whom creation came into being. The world denies even the glory of God as seen around.

The world tries to raise the glory of God for the glory of a man sent a solution to the problems of our environment. But the Christian, you who know the Lord Jesus as a savior, you who worship God, you do see the glory of God in creation and you do affirm in your heart that the heavens do declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

And so God is calling you to see the master's hand in every leaf that trembles in every grain of sand and reject absolutely the teaching that somehow a chance together of billions of atoms or billions of years ago somehow came together in a process of evolution to bring about the world that we know of nowadays.

Because that's denying the glory of God. That's seeking to raise the name of God, the work of God, the order of God in creation.

Denying God for some kind of impersonal coming together of forces that exclude God the maker of heaven the earth. But if you're a Christian you can rejoice to know that you see not just the sky not just the heavens not just the moon the physical moon the stars all around us you can rejoice that you see the glory of God in what God has created.

[16 : 07] But how poor is anyone who won't recognize the glory of God in what's seen? How poor are those who maybe see a glory in the earth but don't see the glory of God what the earth reveals.

Yes, if you're a believer and a follower of the Lord Jesus you're going to want to care for what God has made himself known through in creation. Somebody wrote this just the other week there.

For Christians the world in which we live bears the mark of God's ownership and is the stage in which we live out the great commandment to love God with all we are and have.

So we give God the glory. He says glory is made evident in creation. But there's something else that David expresses when he speaks about the wonder of God's creation and that's the voice of creation.

Listen again to what David writes. Day to day pours out speech nor are their words whose voice is not heard.

[17 : 21] Their measuring line goes out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world. Again David's just so lost in wonder and praise at what he's not just seeing but hearing of creation.

This wordless speech that creation gives because creation of course was brought forth by the word of God when God created.

He said his voice accompanying creation each day of creation God said God said but only did God speak creation.

Creation itself speaks. Creation itself speaks in world wordless wonder as it speaks of the God who's made heaven and earth.

It's that kind of poetic language. Well we've already sung it in Psalm 96 verse 12. That sort of language where the natural world is given as it were sort of human capabilities.

[18 : 27] The fields and all them will shout and forest trees will sing. Or you go to Psalm 98 verse 8 and 9 let the rivers clap their hands. Let the hills sing for joy.

Isaiah 55 verse 12 The mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing. And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Now this isn't literal of course but it's as if creation speaking of the glory of God.

Creation itself responding to the greatness of God. Responding to God maker of heaven and earth. And the voice of creation well it's heard by you who have ears to hear the speech of wordless creation.

You hear yes you can hear and surely do hear creation speaking to you in the night time of the glory of God as you know as you gaze upwards to the expanse of the universe and as you hear the sky proclaim the greatness of almighty God.

You hear creation tell you that God is the one who's made the vastness of the universe and he's done so by the work of his power. Even this week or past week as the stars have been seen in the sky the stars themselves speaking of a creator.

[19 : 49] A creator whose creative power sustains all these various positions in their appointed places. You see creation itself can't be silent. It can't be silent to you who know God.

And you do see the master's hand and every leaf that trembles and every grain of sand. And as David tells us of the glory of God and creation, well as he goes on to say it's everywhere.

Not just everywhere but it's ongoing. Because you can't avoid seeing God's glory even through the lens of his creation. David tells us day by day creation speaks of the glory of God.

Night after night God's great handiwork has been displayed and it's happening from one part of the earth to another. See God in his perfect wisdom has given man that continuous reminder of his power, of his greatness, of his glory.

Even in the cycle of time, day and night, even in the seasons that are reminders to us. There's a God in creation who cares for his creation and if God cares for his creation so must you and so must I.

[21 : 06] Remember what God said after the flood. We read in Genesis 8 22. While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.

Don't these words, even of God promising this perpetuity? Don't they speak to your heart of a God, the one true God who's sovereign in glory and compassionate in his care for his creation?

So listen, listen, take time to listen to what creation is saying to you that points to God, to God, maker of heaven and earth. Now, of course, even in recent days we've been hearing speeches from world leaders and prominent activists who are imploring the world to prevent a catastrophe of climate disaster.

But above all, hear the voice of creation itself that calls out to mankind to seek the glory and to see the glory, the glory of creation.

God has made all things good, even very good. And we see it, not just see God in his glory, don't just hear the voice of God through creation, but we see the beauty of creation.

[22 : 31] Verse 4 to 6, or the second part of verse 4 to 6, and then he has set a tent for the sun which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens and its circuit to the end of them. And there's nothing hidden from its heat. And David's now turning his attention to the sun, and he's using language that really speaks of the experience of those at the time, and I suppose until fairly recently, who observed the sun and who observed the sun as if the sun was moving across the sky, as if the sky itself was a tent under which the sun resided.

So David's expressing a language that tells of the beauty of creation that's observed from man's viewpoint. As man saw something of the beauty of the created sun, that great, we might say, that great marker of time, the great provider of warmth and heat to enable life to live, to enable crops to grow.

And, you know, very much the language that David's using, it's the language of joy. He's comparing the sun to a bridegroom going from where he's staying to go to his wedding. At the same time, he's comparing the sun to an athlete running with power and strength.

In other words, David's speaking of the beauty of God's creation, and he's using language that really brings out the joy, joy of those who are seeing the beauty of God's creation, seeing the glory of God, seeing what God has formed for the benefit of mankind.

[24 : 15] It's that beauty of God's creation that should cause you to give thanks and give glory to God. That beauty that reflects the love and kindness of God towards mankind.

And John Calvin put it so well, he said this, wherever you turn your eyes, there's no portion of the world, however minute, that doesn't exhibit at least some sparks of beauty.

It's impossible to contemplate the vast and beautiful fabric as it extends around without being overwhelmed by the immense weight of glory. I'm going back to what I've said earlier.

When was the last time you really did stop and rest in the weight of the glory of God's creation? When you contemplated the beautiful fabric of creation around and you became overwhelmed, truly overwhelmed by the awesome splendour that you see above and around, when you gaze in awe and wonder at the power of God in every minute detail of creation, that in itself surely is a worthy act of worship to the God who's our creator.

But surely there's something more to be gleaned from the words of this psalm. Words that David's telling us of the beauty of creation as evidenced in the sun.

[25 : 46] Because David's writing here of we might say a man-centred view of the sun as it appears to move across the planet giving light and heat in its motions.

That movement that, as we said, elicits joy, joy to behold. But surely we can say this, that these words that David's referring to the sun here and the sun and its movement, a supposed movement, well, surely they point to the one whom the prophet Malachi wrote of.

When Malachi wrote of the sun, S-U-N, the sun of righteousness rising with healing in his wings. Because Malachi the prophet wrote of one to come who'd be as the physical sun shining in glory.

The sun of righteousness that's none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember when Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, when Zechariah spoke prophetically of the birth of Jesus, he spoke of Jesus as that sun.

Luke 1, 78-79, the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide our feet into the way of peace.

[27 : 05] And Jesus has come as that son of righteousness. And it's his grace and his power that, yes, extends from one part of the world to another or to the other. And it's the salvation that Jesus gives that will be known to peoples in every part of the globe.

And the heat of his saving love gives life, gives life to all who know him as Lord and Savior. And that salvation that is gifted wherever the light of the Lord Jesus shines in the hearts of his people.

The Lord of creation shining in your heart, you who know him as Lord and Savior, because that light that shines in your heart has made you a new creation.

Because Lord Jesus has promised to return to create a new heavens and a new earth. And yes, the problems of climate change in the 21st century, yes, they're real.

And I think we have to say there's a shared desire across humanity that earth's going to be rid of all the climate problems and decay that we see around. But the Christian has a sure hope and a true hope that no conference of parties is ever going to realize and put right.

[28 : 33] And that's that hope of a renewed creation. That renewed creation when the Lord Jesus returns and when he makes all things new. When there'll be no more sin-polluted earth.

When there'll be no more tears. When there'll be no more decay. But a perfect and a perfected world for all for whom the Lord Jesus shed his blood.

Because the fullness of Christ's death is going to, and does bring life, life in all its fullness, but even in the sense of the bringing in of the new heavens and the new earth.

Because that's why we read in Revelation 22, Revelation 22, 5, the promise of that new heavens and new earth. The night will be no more.

For no lamp or no light of lamp or sun will be needed. For the Lord God will be their light and the Lord's people reign forever. That's the sure hope that the Lord's people have that you have as you await an expectation the return of the Lord Jesus, the Son of Righteousness when he makes all things new.

[29 : 46] That's your hope. But is it the hope of all who have gathered and worshipped this morning? Well, I pray that is your hope. You have that hope of the return of the Lord Jesus.

You have that hope of that new creation. That you have that hope that is sure and absolute in the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Let us pray.

Our Lord, we bow before you. We worship you. We see with all sadness how we have polluted your world and we have abused what you have created.

may we know, Lord, that hope that you give to your people of the new creation when you will make all things new.

And so, Lord, may we live with that true expectation of heart and not be dismayed, but to know that you are the one who is true and whose word is true.

[30 : 43] So here is, Lord, as we continue and worship before you now. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.