

(How to Understand the KJV Bible) 15 Psalm 19

by Keith Simons

The Bible teaches us about God's greatness and how to live a right and good life, and it is sweeter than honey.

Duration: 23:46

Scripture: Psalm 19:1

Topics: "KJV Bible", "God's Glory", "The Power of Scripture"

Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 19, emphasizing the psalm's declaration of God's glory through creation and the importance of His Word. He explains how the heavens and nature testify to God's greatness without words, while the Scriptures provide a deeper understanding of His character and guidance for living. Simons highlights the transformative power of God's law, describing it as perfect, sure, and pure, which brings joy and wisdom to those who follow it. He concludes with a personal prayer for cleansing from hidden sins and a desire for his thoughts and words to be pleasing to God, recognizing Him as his strength and Redeemer.

Transcript

Welcome, my name is Keith Symons. I'm a Bible teacher from England and you're listening to our talks on understanding the King James Version of the Bible. Today we're going to be looking at Psalm 19.

I hope that as you think about and study these psalms, and I think we've done 15 different psalms so far, a tenth of the total number, I hope that as we go through these, it's giving you inspiration for your own prayers, for your own thoughts about God and about the Bible. You know, these psalms are a treasury, a treasury of information, a treasury of ways to pray and to praise God. We're following our usual plan of going through the psalm verse by verse and word by word, understanding any difficult words and not preaching too many sermons, just simple explanations and letting the entire psalm fall into place.

So Psalm 19 begins with the title that we've often seen in different forms, to the chief musician, that's the leader of the music in the temple worship, a Psalm of David, probably by King David. And the first verse reads, the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. So heavens above us, the skies, the moon, the stars, the sun, and the heavens above that, the dwelling place of God.

All of this is combining to declare the glory of God, how great God is. All of this shows to us how great and how wonderful the God who created these things must be. We don't need to try and follow a religion or whatever to know about God's greatness, we only need look around us and to think of the immensity of

the worlds that he has made.

And the firmament sheweth his handiwork, the skies above us with their vast expanse like a dome towering over us. No builder could build a building with a roof like that, but God's prepared the skies like that, and that shows God's handiwork. It means what it says, it translates two Hebrew words, the one means work and the other means hand.

In other words, the work of God's hands is the skies above us. And immediately with this introduction we're awestruck, we're amazed, we're amazed to think how great and how wonderful and how powerful God is. Verse two, day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

So one day speaks to the next day and declares the glory of God, or one day continues the speech maybe we should say of the previous day in declaring the glory of God. It doesn't say day declares to night. No, day unto day, the speech of one day, the testimony that God's given us by the greatness of what he's done in the day, well that continues on the next day.

And what we see of, we'll learn of the knowledge of God from the night, when we look at the stars in their vast numbers, the next night teaches us even more of the same, so that every day as it passes by, even from nature, if nothing more, we should be learning about the greatness and the wonder and the power of God. Verse three, there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. This testimony to God's greatness, this testimony which worlds round us, which is skies, which nature gives to God's greatness, we don't need speech, we don't need words, we don't need language to recognise that or to understand that.

They testify to us without words and without words we understand that the person, the God who created these wonderful things must truly be very wonderful. Verse four, their line is gone out throughout the earth. The line means a measuring line, like a builder uses a line to measure a distance, and people used to use that to measure boundaries, and a boundary is the extent of land which you have control or rule over.

So it's saying the rule of the sun and moon goes right through the world. Didn't you read in the account of the creation that God created the sun to rule by day and the moon and the stars to rule by night? Well they rule and they rule and they declare across the world about who God is. Their words go out to the ends of the world.

There's no no place where this testimony is not received. There's no place where nature around us does not declare the greatness of God. The subject now changes to the sun, the end of verse four.

In them, in the skies, hath he set a tabernacle, that's like a tent, a temporary dwelling for the sun. So in them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, verse five, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. So it pictures the sun coming out early in the morning with the joy of a bridegroom just married, happy and rejoicing in the wife who he now has, and he comes out of the tent where he's spent the night with his wife, his new wife, and he's full of joy.

And then in great power he begins to run a race. Remember this is a word picture for the sun now. It's running his race and his race runs all the way from one side of the sky to the other, and in a day with such energy, never flagging, never tiring, he completes that race.

And he does that day after day. Of course we're talking about the sun, the way the sun moves through the sky or appears to move through the sky. Verse six continues this word picture.

His, that's the sun's, going forth is from the end of heaven and his circuit unto the ends of it. So in other words, the sun is going forward and it's taking its route like a runner right across the skies and there's nothing hid from the heat thereof. Israel's a hot country.

David knew a lot about the heat of the sun. He was a shepherd as a boy and often out in the heat of the sun. And he just thinks of the power and the majesty of the sun.

Why? Because he's thinking of the power and majesty of the God who made the sun. This is the great God we serve. This is the great God we worship.

This is the great God we belong to. And this is the great God who has revealed himself to us. And how has he done that? By his word, by his Bible, by his law.

He's made known to us who he is. If we didn't have the testimony of the Bible, then we would know that there was a great God and there was a powerful God. And we would know the beauty, something of the beauty of what he's done and so on.

But we wouldn't know who he is, not personally. It would be a far distant relationship. But God has revealed himself to us.

And you'll see six times in verses seven to nine, the word Lord, the special name which God gave to Israel's people to express his relationship with them. That word Lord in block capitals, in Hebrew it's the letters Yod-Heh-Vov-Heh. It means something like the eternal one, the one who always was and is and always will be, the one who is eternal in his power, in his greatness, in his character, in his love.

It's this God who's revealed himself to us in the Bible. Yes, we knew him as the creator, but now we know him as the one who cares for us and looks after us and defends us and teaches us. Verse seven.

We've got here in the next three verses, six different descriptions of the Bible. So verse seven begins, the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The word for law here is the famous Hebrew word Torah.

It really means teaching, how God teaches us to live through his law, through the books which he gave to Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, which were the whole Bible in the days of David who wrote this psalm. And so what God teaches us, how God has taught us in the Bible to live is perfect. Converts the soul, he says.

In other words, it changes our inner person. These are not just rules about how you're to live and how you're to behave. No, God is changing our inner selves.

God is changing us deep inside. That's why God's law, his teaching is perfect. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

God has given testimony to how we to how we should live. His testimony means witnesses, like God's commands, witness to us what God's way is for us to live. And if we are simple, if we don't really understand how we should live a right, if we don't really understand how to serve God properly, well, God's provided his testimony and it's sure, it's reliable, it's trustworthy, it's faithful.

It makes wise the simple person who doesn't know how to live. We learn from it how to live. But you might say to me, aren't a lot of God's laws commands telling us what to do? Aren't they statutes, as the beginning of verse 8 describes them? The statutes, the instructions of God about how we're not to live.

These things, the statutes of the Lord, are right, rejoicing the heart. God has given us the right instructions, how we're to live. And that brings joy to our heart, because when we know what's right in life, then we can be joyful for right reasons.

The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. This isn't a load of instructions which don't make sense. These are there for proper reason, a proper moral reason.

They teach us what is truly right. They're pure. They're not corrupted by all sorts of false ideas, like a king who makes laws just for his own personal gain.

No, God's law, God's commandment is pure and shows us clearly how we should live, so that we can see. That's why they enlighten the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever.

When we talk about fearing God, we're talking about respecting God. And when we respect God, we could call that right religion. It's when our religion is right, when we truly serve God in a pure and right way, seeking to take our proper place in relation to God, but also to care and love for other people.

And no wonder, therefore, the psalm describes that as clean, enduring forever, because this is the right way to live. And it's not a way that is going to satisfy us for a short time and then be of no value, but that will last. The judgments of the Lord, God's decisions, are true and righteous altogether.

In every way, the things that God has decided are true and right. That's quite a passage, verses 7 to 9. But all of it means taken together. God's law, God's teaching in the Bible is good.

It's good because it is good, but it's good for us as well. It's what brings us into the right relationship with God, the right life, doing what is beneficial to us and to the whole of creation. And how much more do we understand about God and what he wants from the Bible that he's given to us? We understand so much more clearly because God himself has become our teacher.

We haven't merely learned about God from the sun and the moon and the stars. We've learned from God as he's taught us his word. Oh, how much we should desire it, verse 10.

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold. Oh, the things people will do for money and wealth and gold. But how much more should we do for God's word, his precious word that teaches us and helps us to live in the right way? And yet it's not heavy to us, it's not a burden to us, it's a pleasure to us.

Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Honey wasn't easy to get in Bible days. You had to climb a tree and raid a nest of wild bees to get honey and you'd probably get stung in doing so.

So the honey had to be sweet and precious and be wonderful to be worth that risk. And God's word, just as it's more to be desired than gold, so David says it's sweeter than honey. It's more wonderful, more beautiful than anything he can imagine.

Moreover, in addition, verse 9, by them is thy servant warned and in keeping of them there is great reward. Yes, these things warn me. David calls himself thy servant, the servant of God.

He was the king of Israel. He calls himself the servant of God. So he has to be humble when he approaches God.

He says, God, your Bible is teaching me, but it's also warning me. It's warning me about the wrong things I do and that I'm tempted to do. I have to listen to that voice of warning.

I didn't get that voice of warning when I just looked at the sun, the moon, the stars. They told me about God's greatness and his glory. But now I'm being warned.

I'm being warned because of the importance of this. I'm being warned that I've got to be careful about everything that I do. And yet, I know that in keeping of them there is great reward.

When I obey God's law, God rewards me for that. It's not something which I lose from doing. It's something I gain from doing.

And so in the final section of the psalm, beginning at verse 12, David's prayer becomes very personal. He's been looking at the moon and the stars and the whole world, but now it's his own heart he wants God to examine. Now he looks at his own conscience and he prays verse 12.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. He's saying to God, God, I think the wrong things. I'm tempted in the wrong way.

All sorts of things are leading me astray and no one else sees it. I don't live by the standards of your perfect law. My life, my thoughts, my attitudes are far from your standards and I can't cleanse myself.

I can't clean myself up. God, please will you do it for me? Will you cleanse me from the sins that no one else sees? Will you change me so that I am truly obeying you faithfully as your servant? Verse 13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins.

Let them not have dominion over me. Then shall I be upright and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Presumptuous sins.

Elsewhere this word is translated proud. The sins which you do boldly and proudly. That you're not afraid for other people to see.

Those are terrible sins. David says save me from them. Keep me back.

Prevent me from doing such terrible things against me. And especially don't let them rule over me. That's what half dominion means.

Don't let them rule over me. Keep me innocent from great transgressions, from going away from you, from wandering away from what is right and good. And then he finishes with a prayer.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. The meditation of my heart really means the thoughts of my heart. The Hebrew you could translate as the music of my heart.

The thoughts that are going on in my mind, I want them to please you, O God. The words that I say, I want it to please you, O God. When you look at me, I want it to please you, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

Elsewhere that word rendered my strength here is my rock. O Lord, you're my rock, the rock of my life, the defender of me, the one on whom I depend and I must depend. So let my words, my thoughts be pleasing

to you.

And you're my Redeemer. You're the one who rescues me. You're the one who sets me free and delivers me from my errors and my secret faults and keeps me back from presumptuous sins.

So let my secret words, let my secret thoughts, let my whole life be acceptable and pleasing to you. David prays. I would love you to write to me.

My email address is 333kjb at gmail.com. I'll read that again. 333kjb at gmail.com. And please say that you've listened to the talk on Psalm 19. Now here is the whole Psalm.

Psalm 19. To the chief musician, a psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his hand work.

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In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes 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 judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, they're much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Moreover, by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins.

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