

The Awesome Value of God's Word

Psalm 19

Last week in Psalm 8 we focused on God's majesty reflected in nature. Psalm 19 *begins* there: The heavens declare God's glory, but His Word reveals so much more! Its value is greater than we realize, and benefits of learning it are the key to our spiritual life. Do you highly value it?

- The Psalm of Two Books: Nature and Scripture

- The Book of Nature (1-6)
 - *It is universal (general)*
 - *It is silent (no words)*

- The Book of God's Word (7-14)
 - *What it IS...*

Its titles: law, testimony, precepts, commandment, fear, judgments

Its Qualities: It is perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true

- *What it DOES*

Restores life; gives wisdom, joy, insight; lasts forever; is righteous

- *How it does it*

Warns of sin, offers great reward, makes us acceptable sacrifices

1. Hebrew poetry doesn't usually rhyme sounds; it rhymes ideas. This is called 'parallelism.' For example, we might say, 'Everyone had a wonderful time; It was a very enjoyable day!' "Time" and "day" don't rhyme in the way we normally think, but they rhyme in their meaning – the two phrases 'echo' each other. Together, they mean one thing. Psalm 19.1-6 exhibits parallelism. What do the two lines of v1 communicate? Verse 2? Verse 3? The first two lines of v 4? The last line of v4 with v5? The three lines of v6?
2. Some scholars think Psalm 19 was originally two separate psalms that got combined by accident, but this misses the central point that David wanted to make. What are the attributes of natural revelation in verses 1-6 (for example, in v2 it is constant, every day and every night)? How does this contrast with the special revelation of God's Word in vv. 7-14? What messages does natural revelation convey? What messages does special revelation convey? While both kinds of revelation are important, which is more valuable? Why?
3. Verses 7-9 contain six couplets describing God's Word and telling what it does for us. Each couplet has a noun ('law,' 'testimony,' etc.), adjective ('perfect,' 'sure,' etc.), and verbal phrase ('restoring the soul' [better, 'the life'], 'making wise'). What 'picture' of the Bible do the nouns and adjectives paint? In your own words, what benefits of knowing the Bible do the verbal phrases reveal? What's David's assessment of the Bible in v10? What is your assessment?
4. In vv11-14, David gets specific. He has just stated that God's word is more valuable than gold and sweeter than honey to him. Now he tells us *why*. In v11 he mentions warning and reward; how do these two ideas relate to each other? What does Scripture warn us against (see vv12-13)? What kind of sin does David ask God to reveal to him in v12? What kind of sin is David addressing in v13? Why is it so important? What causes a person to receive 'great reward' (v11)? What is David praying for in v14? This truth is echoed in the NT; see Matt. 6.33; Lk. 11.28; Rom 12.2; 14.10-12; 2 Corinthians 5.10; Eph. 4.1; Col. 1.9-12; 1 Thess. 2.11-12; 2 Timothy 2.15; 3.16-17; 4.7-8; Hebrews 4.12.