

THE GLORY OF GOD

Week 4 – The Heavens SHOUT!

October 20, 2024

God REVEALS His glory – His glory cannot be CONTAINED...

Do you know that the heavens SHOUT!!!!?

Psa. 19:1 – *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament (the expanse of heaven; the expanse of the skies) shows His handiwork.* The universe reveals the majesty of its Creator. Of course, God's glory can be seen in many different aspects of creation, not just the heavens.

Consider the intricacy of a living cell, the complexity and amazing diversity of life on earth, and the mathematical precision of the laws of physics and chemistry. Praise God for His incomprehensible creativity, intelligence, and power!

Why does the Bible single out the heavens as declaring His glory? Perhaps the heavens declare God's glory in a special way or to a greater extent. God made the universe unimaginably large. Our galaxy contains over 100 billion stars; the Bible says that God calls them all by their names (Psalms 147:4; Isaiah 40:26). Our galaxy contains more than stars. The heavens also contain nebulae, an enormous cloud of dust and gas occupying the space between stars and acting as a nursery for new stars. Nebulae are estimated to be more massive than 10,000 suns.

Consider: our galaxy, the Milky Way, with over 100 billion stars, and countless nebulae, is not the only galaxy. How does the Bible describe the creation of all this? Genesis 1:16 states simply that God "also made the stars"!!

When we contemplate all that God has created, it brings to mind Psalm 8:3–4: *When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?* It is amazing that the God who created such a universe would be concerned with...US – human beings. Yet, Scripture makes it clear that human beings are the capstone/the pinnacle of God's creation (Gen. 1 & 2; Gen. 1:26, 28).

Psa. 19:1-4 – *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. ² Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. ³ There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. ⁴ Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*

GOD, in all His might, ANNOUNCES WHO HE IS; THE HEAVENS SHOUT OUT HIS GLORY!

King David looked to the heavens...the heavens of the blue sky and the night sky...and David clearly SAW ("the heavens show His handiwork"). This is God's artwork magnifying His glory – ALL WHO HE IS!

And David HEARD the glory of God...as it was DECLARED!

Psa. 19:1-4 - *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. ² Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. ³ There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. ⁴ Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.* But David was born approx. 3,000 years following creation!

How could David have heard? **When** have the heavens declared the glory of God? What is the timeframe of this declaration? Just at creation?

The heavens declare the glory of God....

Declare – in the Hebrew means to recount, to retell (to tell again...and again).

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Declare, this verb is in the present tense. That is, the heavens “are declaring,” and the sky “is proclaiming” the glory of God. God’s creative work has been a continual display SINCE CREATION!

There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line/sound/voice has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

What we see in nature is meant to constantly/to continually show THE WORLD that God exists and to tell THE WORLD how amazing the Creator truly is. The heavens and all with which God has filled them constitute the ongoing testimony to the glory of God.

God created each day and each night. And, day unto day (continually occurring), utters speech (!) (pouring out, flowing out [sounding like a bubbling brook]). God’s handiwork spills out His utterance, speech, words, sayings, promises, commands) and night unto night (continually occurring) reveals (making known, telling, declaring) knowledge (what is perceived, discerned, understood,)]. ³ There is no speech (word, speech, utterance), nor language (utterance, words) (where their voice is not heard. (continual noise, sound...going out to all the languages on earth) ⁴ Their line (that which binds together, which gathers this message that is being announced about the glory of God!) has gone out through all (the whole of everything) the earth (land, inhabitants), and their words (speech, utterance) to the end of the world. The entire earth is receiving this message – and understanding it in their individual languages!

It has been said, “Though all preachers on earth should grow silent, and every human mouth cease from publishing the glory of God, the heavens above will never cease to declare and proclaim His majesty and glory. They, the heavens, are forever preaching; for, like an unbroken chain, their message is delivered from day to day and from night to night.” (August Tholuck, a German Protestant theologian (1799-1877) cited in Spurgeon’s work)

The glory of God in the visible heavens is communicating to all mankind, no matter their language.

The Apostle Paul expanded this truth in Romans 1. He explained that God’s invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:20). Paul told us that because this testimony had gone out through all creation, all men are without excuse for rejecting the God who gave us such clear and beautiful evidence of His power and wisdom.

Rom. 1:18-20 - *For the wrath of God* (the righteous anger of God. Our holy God MUST deal with sin) *is revealed* (uncovered; laid open before us; disclosed) *from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress* (hold down) *the truth in*

unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest (evident; displayed) unto them, for God has shown it to them. (The TRUTH has been made known to all) ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen (God shows us something of His eternal power and divine nature/Godhead as He states in v. 20) *being understood* (they continue to be perceived through the Holy Spirit [I Cor. 2:14]) *by the things that are made* (those within mankind who are responding to the general revelation...and they understand), *even His eternal power and Godhead* (deity in terms of the Trinity; divine nature), *so that* (those who have suppressed the truth of God) *they are without excuse* (without defense; without vindication/without justification) – BECAUSE GOD HAS MADE HIMSELF KNOWN.

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...so that they are without excuse... Rom. 1:21-23 ...because, although they knew God (that's a profound statement – and yet v. 18 - *they suppressed the truth in unrighteousness*), **they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile** (useless; worthless) *in their thoughts, and their foolish* (without understanding; stupid) *hearts were darkened* (were blinded). ²² *Professing to be wise (???)*, *they became fools*, ²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things - !!!!

The problem is not that man did not know God...man did know God (according to Rom. 1:21), but they refused to glorify Him as God! Instead of glorifying God, they transformed their mind's idea of Him into corruptible forms and images!

The heavens and the earth, all that is in heaven and in the earth, were designed to be a channel through which God reveals Himself. Creation IS a revelation from God and a response IS expected.

Let's look at a response from the book of Job (Job and Abraham were contemporaries placing them before Moses) contains several chapters that speak to what nature can teach us about God as well as God divinely intervening!

In Job 38, God spoke to Job. *Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind:*

Job 38:4 - *Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?*

Tell me, if you have understanding. Job did not know.

Job 38:10-11 – In looking at the ocean shoreline, God told Job, *I set a bolt and doors. Thus far you shall come, but no farther.* The ocean's tide throws itself upon the beach but it never changes the shoreline. God put the ocean in sand, and the sand can sustain the movement of the waters without eroding the shore away!

Job 38:12-13 – God causes the sun to rise every day with such precision.

Job 38:22 – God asked Job, *Have you entered the treasury of snow, or have you seen the treasury of hail, ²³ which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war? Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail, ²³ which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war?* Hail is frequently a tool of judgment against God's enemies, as seen against Egypt (Exodus 9:24 – the 7th plague in

Egypt), the Canaanites (Joshua 10:11), apostate Israel (Isaiah 28:2), and Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38:22), and against a rebellious earth in the Great Tribulation (Revelation 16:20-21).

When Job saw God in creation, Job was humbled and said, *I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. ⁶ Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* Job glorified God because of what God revealed to him in creation!

General Revelation/Special Revelation

General revelation and special revelation are the two ways God has chosen to reveal Himself – His glory – ALL Who He is - to humanity.

General revelation refers to the general truths that can be known about God through nature.

Special revelation refers to the more specific truths that can be known about God through the supernatural.

Perhaps a working definition of general revelation would be "the revelation of God to all people, at all times, and in all places (Psa. 19:1-4) that proves that God exists and that He is intelligent,

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powerful, and transcendent." General revelation is something that all humanity has received. It is general in that it reaches all people in all times and in every place...nobody is without general revelation

Special revelation can be defined as a supernatural communication from God. God must directly reveal Himself to us. Special revelation includes physical appearances of God, dreams, visions, the written Word of God, and most importantly Jesus Christ.

The Bible records God appearing in physical form many times (Genesis 3:8, 18:1; Exodus 3:1-4, 34:5-7). Special revelation includes many occasions in Scripture that God has revealed Himself to us: God speaking to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:8-19; God speaking to Abraham in Genesis 12, 13, 15 and 17; God speaking to Moses in Exodus 3; Jonah speaking to the barbaric Ninevites; Gabriel speaking to Zacharias (John the Baptizer's father – Luke 1:8-20); Gabriel speaking to Mary (Luke 1:26-38); Simeon hearing from the Holy Spirit that He would not die until He saw the Lord's Anointed – the Messiah - in Luke, and the Bible records God speaking to people through dreams (Genesis 28:12, 37:5; 1 Kings 3:5; Daniel 2) and visions (Genesis 15:1; Ezekiel 8:3-4; Daniel 7; 2 Corinthians 12:1-7).

Of primary importance in the revealing of God is His Word, the Bible, which is also a form of special revelation. God miraculously guided the authors of Scripture to correctly record His message to mankind, while still using their own styles and personalities. The Word of God is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). The Word of God is inspired, profitable, and sufficient (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The ultimate form of special revelation is Immanuel – Jesus, God the Son! God became a human being (John 1:1, 14).

Hebrews 1:1-3 summarizes it best, *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the*

brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

The way one responds to general revelation may lead to special revelation:

Special revelation is God's "more particular witness to particular people at particular times" who, perhaps, have received God's message through His general revelation.

God gives us revelation through His creation broadcasting that we need something outside ourselves to face eternity. However, because we are dead in sin (Eph. 2:1-2) and unable to know truth unless revealed to us by God through special revelation, we can only be saved by hearing and believing the word of God (*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God*, Romans 10:17). Furthermore, that Word of God must focus on the person and work of Jesus Christ, since being saved requires knowing Jesus Christ (*There is salvation in no one else*, Acts 4:12).

Romans 10:14 - *How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*

QUESTIONS:

What was new?

What was impactful? Why?

How are you responding to God's glory?

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What are you sharing with others?

Is journaling helping you retain what you're learning?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 4's handout with Bible references.

Continue to journal.

Pray about sharing what you are learning with others.