

The Exalt In Our Stars

Psalms 19 June 1, 2025

I'd like to congratulate you on the trip you just made. In the time it took us to listen to Psalm 19, you traveled more than 2,000 miles in our orbit around the sun. That's as far as here to Cleveland.

If that doesn't impress you, maybe this will: In these last 2 minutes you also travelled over 16,000 miles as our sun (with it's solar system in tow) orbits the center of the Milky Way.¹ That's the same as crossing the United States six times. We didn't cover much ground, but we covered a *lot* of space.

Psalm 19 covers a lot of space, from the cosmos to the Canon to the conscience. It's a heavyweight Psalms. Of course, all of them are wonderful but a few stand out in their majesty and magnitude.

Psalm 19 is one of those. C.S. Lewis called it the greatest poem in the Psalter.² Beethoven, Bach, and Haydn all wrote pieces inspired by these words. Verse 9 is inscribed on the Lincoln Memorial. When the James Webb space telescope launched on Christmas Day in 2021, NASA's chief officer quoted the opening line of *this* Psalm, marveling at the greatness of God.³

This truly is one of the greatest songs ever written in all of human history. In it both creation and revelation are unfolded to show us a magnificent God. Through creation, we see His power. Through revelation, we see His character. By the end, we discover that we can not only see Him, but we can serve Him, and He can save us.

Psalm 19:1-4b - ¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the expanse proclaims the work of his hands. ² Day after day they pour out speech; night after night they communicate knowledge. ³ There is no speech; there are no words; their voice is not heard. ⁴ Their message has gone out to the whole earth, and their words to the ends of the world.

Our universe is not random. It didn't come from nothing. It is a purposefully designed, Master-crafted work of art and perfect engineering. The more we look out into the stars beyond with our eyes and our telescopes and our satellites, the more amazing things we learn.

Thousands of years ago, man discovered the moon has cycles. In 500 B.C., Pythagoras figured out the earth is a sphere. Centuries later, humans grasped our planet orbits the sun. That was all before the invention of the refracting telescope in 1608 AD. In the late 1,700s, science realized that dark stars or black holes must exist. In 1924 Edwin Hubble observed a galaxy outside of our own - the Andromeda galaxy. Five years later he saw the universe is expanding. In 1992 we had the first confirmed discovery of an exoplanet. And eight days ago, a new member was added to our own solar system when scientists conclusively discovered a dwarf planet beyond Neptune.⁴

¹ <https://medium.com/starts-with-a-bang/how-fast-does-the-earth-move-fabfe9dc39c2>

² C.S. Lewis *Reflections On The Psalms*

³ <https://www.thetrumpet.com/25035-why-nasas-chief-officer-quoted-psalm-19>

⁴ <https://www.iflscience.com/newest-member-of-the-solar-system-just-announced-and-its-in-an-extreme-orbit-79322>

We keep discovering new things and having our understanding changed and refined, but one thing has always been absolutely clear: the Person Who made this cosmos is unimaginably powerful and precise. The universe is bubbling up, *gushing*⁵ with testimony of the *glory* of God.

The Psalms love to use this term, glory. It refers to His might, His weightiness.⁶ Each planet and pulsar a demonstration of His greatness. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then what is a whole universe worth?

Today our culture, classrooms, and content-creation sites are full of scientists who mock the idea of God. They're convinced that all the something came from nothing. Which means *you* are ultimately nothing, by the way. Sadly, they sneer at the idea of this intricate design having a Designer.

And yet, they ignore the fact that every few years science *dramatically* changes. Did you know we've added 14 elements to the periodic table in the last 55 years? There are more hypothetical elements scientists are working to discover. So when a non-believing scientist mocks Christianity, just remember: They don't even know all the building blocks this universe is working with.

Rather than a heap of randomness, Psalm 19 explains the universe is spreading the message of God's infinite power and genius. His incredible artistry. His meticulous design. His careful administration. His love of variety. His abundance. His faithfulness. His excellence. The cosmos broadcasts this message, generation after generation, so that people can look to the stars and realize there is a God beyond them - a scripted melody *put there* by God for us to pick up on.

The New King James has a vivid translation of verse 4: "Their line has gone out through all the earth." A line that points right back to God Himself. This creation doesn't only reveal His power, but also shows something about Who He is.

You can know something about an artist from the mediums they use. Do they use paint or pencils or photographs? Do they work three dimensionally or two dimensionally? What about the mediums God uses? He uses light and life and beauty and truth and love.

From the wide lens of all the stars in the sky, the song now zooms in to look at just one - our sun.

Psalm 19:4c-6 - In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun. ⁵It is like a bridegroom coming from his home; it rejoices like an athlete running a course. ⁶It rises from one end of the heavens and circles to their other end; nothing is hidden from its heat.

Our sun is so essential to human life, such a major aspect of so much of earth's our activity, yet it has no proper scientific name. It's not Polaris or Arcturus. It's just "the sun."

⁵ CSB Study Bible Notes

⁶ Theological Wordbook Of The Old Testament

Here we learn God fashioned the sun as a caring gift for planet earth. We are at *just* the right spot for it to not only give light but also heat, energy, even *nutrients*! Have you ever thought about how amazing it is that the sun - 94 million miles away - can provide Vitamin D for your body? The sun even helps to *clean* our planet, killing bacteria for us day-by-day.

You don't want to *look* at the sun for too long, but as we *consider* it, we can start to piece together that God's glory is gracious and generous and faithful. Look at what it does for us.

But the witness of the stars is not enough for us to know the Lord, *personally*. We can see there *must* be a divine Being outside of space, but Who is He? For *that* answer we need more than creation, we need *revelation*. Amazingly, the same God Who made the stars has given us a Book.

Psalm 19:7-11 - ⁷ The instruction of the LORD is perfect, renewing one's life; the testimony of the LORD is trustworthy, making the inexperienced wise. ⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right, making the heart glad; the command of the LORD is radiant, making the eyes light up. ⁹ The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are reliable and altogether righteous. ¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold—than an abundance of pure gold; and sweeter than honey dripping from a honeycomb. ¹¹ In addition, your servant is warned by them, and in keeping them there is an abundant reward.

If you want to *know* God, you must find Him in His Word. In verses 1 through 6, David refers to God. Starting in verse 7 things change. He is "the LORD." All capitals. In the first half, "God" is the general term El, which was used of *many* deities. In the second half, He is revealed to be Yahweh - the God of the *Bible*. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The God Who put on flesh and dwelt among us. The One True God, Who exists in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

His Word is displayed in these verses with the kind of admiration an astronomer has looking at the night sky. Look at the list, see what God's Word does. *Everything* is positive and beneficial. It touches our hearts, our minds, our eyes. It restores us to life.⁷ It instructs us and gives us guidance. It brings joy and sweetness to life. In fact, in verse 10 David uses what scholars call hyperintensification. That God's Word is the sweetest of imaginable honeys.⁸

There is no evidence of bee domestication in Israel at this time.⁹ If they wanted honey, they had to happen upon it. In the same way, the people of earth cannot generate the truth and wisdom and life-giving power found in the Word of God on their own. It must be prepared and preserved *for* them, and that's exactly what God did.

But God's Word is not *only* to be enjoyed, but also *obeyed*. Look: Precepts. Ordinances. Commands. The stars reveal what God can *do*, the Bible reveals what God *desires*. It is not only a

⁷ Robert Alter *The Hebrew Bible: A Translation With Commentary*

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ Victor Matthews, Mark Chavalas, and John Walton *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*

benefit to life, it is a necessity *for* life. It must be used medicinally and for regular nourishment. It is the highest, most valuable treasure we could lay hold of for our life now and for our future.

On top of all that, it serves as a warning system for us. It helps us see the dangers ahead and around us while at the same time revealing areas of weakness or blindness in our lives. But, once revealed, we discover that those areas of weakness are a big issue.

Psalm 19:12-13 - ¹² Who perceives his unintentional sins? Cleanse me from my hidden faults. ¹³ Moreover, keep your servant from willful sins; do not let them rule me. Then I will be blameless and cleansed from blatant rebellion.

As David looked into the wonders of God's Word, he found a life-threatening problem - like looking into a telescope to see a huge asteroid headed our way. That problem is *sin*. The ways we disobey God - rules of His that we break. Choices we make that reject His rule over our lives.

We have all sorts of sin issues, from the unintentional to the willful, spit-in-the-face-of-God rebellions. It's not just "innocent" mistakes here and there. Sin brings *death* into the world.¹⁰

God's Word not only reveals Who He is and what He desires, it also reveals the truth about us. David discovered these truths but when he did, he didn't try to hide from the light and heat of God's Word. Neither should we. We must allow God's Word to shine on us.

When we do, it will not only expose the darkness and the impurity in our hearts and lives, but it will do a cleansing work. Paul tells us we're washed by the water of the Word.¹¹

Notice verse 12. David recognizes that he cannot clean himself. He can't even *know* himself. Just like all the best scientists still haven't unraveled all the secrets of the cosmos or all the elements of the periodic table, so we cannot know all the depths of sin within our hearts. Even if we did, we are powerless to heal the infection on our own. Even with the best of intentions and attempts, all fall short of the *glory* of God because of our sin.

We need an intervention from the God Who created our universe. Unless *He* saves us, we're not just making mistakes or failing to live up to the best standards, but sin will actually *rule* over us.

That word was used back in Genesis 1 when we're told the sun was made to *rule* the day. Later, in Genesis 4, God told Adam's son Cain that if he did not *rule* over sin, then sin would devour him.¹²

So, unless God intervenes and washes us and sets us free, sin's fiery power will control us with its gravitational pull. It will burn us and dominate our lives, bringing death instead of life.

¹⁰ James 1:15

¹¹ Ephesians 5:26

¹² Genesis 4:7

David sees only one antidote to the scourge of sin, and that's to know the God of the Bible and to serve Him. Twice now he has spoken of being a *servant* to this powerful, purifying God. And in the closing verse, he doubles down, bringing the song to a close.

Psalm 19:14 - ¹⁴May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

Many peoples throughout history worshipped the sun. Of course, the sun never spoke back to them and doesn't care for them. David decided his life would not be about orbiting the sun, but anchoring on Yahweh. Yahweh was his *rock*. But not *just* his rock - Yahweh was his *Redeemer*.

David knew all about redemption. His great-grandmother Ruth's story was all about redemption and grace and a life transformed by God's goodness and mercy and providence. Like Job, David knew that his Redeemer lives and that His desire is to save us and transform us and nourish us and display the fantastic power of His grace through us like stars in the sky.¹³ That His glory would shine through our lives - His *special* creation displayed for all the ages to come.

And so, the song does *not* end with, "Ok God, I see how great You are, so I promise to *try really hard*."¹⁴ It ends with, "God, *You* made me, only *You* can save me. And that salvation will not just be a rescue, but a re-creation of who I am from the inside out."

David's desire was that his words and the motivations behind them would be so in line with God's designs and principles that they would bring pleasure to Him.¹⁵

Ever the poet, David used a lovely term. Meditation here refers to the sound of cooing doves or growling lions.¹⁶ And so we might say, "God, I want my melodies *and* my mutterings to glorify You." Just as the stars in the night sky proclaim the glory of the Almighty God, so my life can shine as a beautiful example of His grace, His power, His goodness, His faithfulness, His splendor, His majesty.

The sun and moon and stars are impressive. Mankind spends billions of dollars trying to get to the moon. Now, we're talking about whether we can get to Mars. But consider this: The sun is not eternal. None of this universe is...*except you and me*. We will endure long after our sun is destroyed because Christ has *redeemed* us. And He has left us here on earth to be *light*. To be scattered stars illuminating His glory.

Astronomers look at different stars and say, "That's a neutron star," or, "That's a dying star," or, "That's a dwarf star," or, "A *giant* star." What sort of Christian are we? Do we shine with grace and truth and love? Or have the melodies and mutterings of our lives started to change from His glory to our groanings? May we *exalt* the Lord as His amazing universe continues to do, age after age.

¹³ Daniel 12:3, Ephesians 2:7

¹⁴ Derek Kidner *Psalms 1-72*

¹⁵ *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*

¹⁶ *TWOT*