**# 2 God our Redeemer Psalm 19**

**READ the Psalm together.**

Following Psalm 8 last week, this Psalm is another awe-filled description of how God reveals himself both through his creation and through his written word of truth. God is a revealing God – he wants us to know him, to love him and serve him so he communicates with us about who he is and the nature of his purposes on planet Earth.

‘The heavens declare the glory of God’. The apparently inanimate creation is given life and voice here. The words used here (‘declare’, ‘proclaim’ and ‘pour forth speech’) imply that the praise they shout is ongoing and will continue until it is no longer required. This is the only place in the Bible where the theme of heavenly praise is mentioned.

1. What does this say about what God is telling us through his creation?

Is it simply that we should admire his handiwork?

Does it say something about his character?

The psalmist (King David) is keen to say that this message about God goes out to the whole world (v4). There is no ‘speech or language’ so heaven’s praise can be understood by all – its language is pictorial not verbal.

Romans 1:20 says

***‘For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse’***

1. If the creation shouts about God and his invisible qualities are also clearly seen, what does this say about people who say they have never heard the truth about God?

Is there such a thing as a person who knows absolutely nothing about God?

The sun is clearly part of the ‘praising heavens’ – it is specific example of the whole creation which is clearly visible to every human being. The metaphor used is that of a tent pitched in the heavens and then the metaphor is mixed with a bridegroom and a champion runner. Verse 6 also reminds us of the predictable daily path of the sun and the heat it generates without which the earth would cease to be habitable.

1. When put together, what do these pictures convey to us?

Is v6 a reminder of God’s constant care for us or does it speak of judgement (withering heat)? – maybe both?

This leads us to the second section of the Psalm referring to the ‘law of the Lord’ (Jewish word is ‘Torah’). Having been drawn to God by his ‘loud creation’, the Psalmist directs us to words that will help us avoid pitfalls and whereby we will earn rewards from our subsequent actions. (best understood as ‘pleasing him’) (v11). We see a string of adjectives describing God’s law followed by phrases that amplify the adjective.

1. Take a look at each of them and share times where God’s word has blessed you in each of the ways described.

***The law is***

 ***Perfect - reviving the soul***

 ***Trustworthy – making wise the simple***

 ***Right – giving joy to the heart***

 ***Radiant – giving light to the eyes***

 ***Pure – enduring forever***

 ***Sure – altogether righteous***

 ***More precious than gold***

 ***Sweeter than honey.***

Is reading God’s word always like this?

When we struggle to read it how can we get back to loving it again?

The last few verses are about our response to the magnificence of creation and the reading of God’s word. The two parts of this Psalm tell us clearly that we are not to ‘worship creation’. The creation points us to the God who made it and it is him we worship and obey. This response is often called the ‘fear of the Lord’. Up against God’s complete lack of any faults, we need his forgiveness for our faults.

1. King David is clearly well aware of his sins (v13). He fears being overwhelmed by them so is desperate for forgiveness and longs for innocence.

Read 1 John 1 v 8 to 10.

Do we really understand sin? Are there dangers that we think we’re really quite decent people because we think ‘sinners’ are REALLY wicked people?

What is the effect of God’s forgiveness?

The last famous verse (v14) is really a plea that we may follow through all this Psalm has taught us about the awesomeness of God and his passion to tell us his truth. It also conveys King David’s desire to please God which we would do well to copy.

His final description of God describes how we can experience God in our daily lives

1. God is our Rock – one who can be relied upon to be totally available 24/7

God is our Redeemer - one who can give us hope that we will be saved and brought into his presence

***It would be appropriate to finish your group time using v14 as the focus for your prayers.***

***Ask God to help you use words that honour him.***

***Ask God to help you meditate on God’s character and works.***

***Ask God to show you the ways that please him.***

***Thank God that he is the one who is always there***

***Thank God that, as our Redeemer, he is our only hope.***