

1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.
3 They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them.
4 Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.
5 It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.
6 It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is deprived of its warmth.
7 The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.
8 The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.
9 The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever.
The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous.
10 They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold;
they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.
11 By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.
12 But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults.
13 Keep your servant also from wilful sins; may they not rule over me.
Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression.
14 May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight,
Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

"World" is an often-used word.

If you put "world" into a "Google" search on the internet you get about almost 12 billion "hits" - that is the number of uses of the word on the World Wide Web! Not only is the word used to refer to this planet of ours, but it is also applied to many other things, including a luxury cruise ship on which you can live permanently (if you have the money!). We talk of the "human world," the "plant world," the "world of work," or the "world of football."

There are indeed many worlds in God's creation - on the earth, in the waters and in the skies - worlds visible to the human eye and worlds so small we need special equipment to see them.

There are reckoned to be over 4,000 species of mammals, 10,000 species of birds, 300,000 species of flowering plants and as many as 1.6 million species of fungi - and each one is a little world of its own. But all these pale into insignificance when you start examining the heavens. The psalmist, David, knew nothing of our modern scientific methods of calculating distances in light years, nor did he have the telescopes that can enable us to see deep into space; yet when he pondered the heavens, he was overwhelmed by the glory of the Lord.

The only logical conclusion for him was that the existence of creation implied the existence of a Creator and the nature of the creation implied that its Creator was wise enough to plan it and powerful enough to execute his plan and maintain what he had made. So complex a creation, he

reasoned, demands a creator who can do anything, who knows everything and who is present everywhere.

Maybe you too, like him, have felt the same way when, on a clear starry night, you look up and see the incalculable number of stars in the sky. And then, when you consider that each one of those stars is like our sun, with circling planets, you find it impossible to believe that all of this could just have happened just by chance. I know that I have felt like that!

David says that creation he observes is a "wordless book" - a book that everyone can read, one that requires no translation. Day after day, night after night, God's "speech" pours out silently, abundantly, universally through his creation. In the light of this, I think that you have to admire the faith of those who believe that everything in the vast universe is the product of random chance!

In writing to the Romans, Paul quotes from this psalm (10:18) as part of his explanation why Israel rejected the gospel and what the rejection did to the nation. The point Paul is making is that God's voice of power in creation prepares the way for God's voice of grace in the Gospel. If when we look at the creation and surmise that there must be a great architect, a great creator behind it all, then it should lead us on to want to find out more about this creator.

Helen Keller was born at in [Tuscumbia, Alabama](#), on [June 27, 1880](#). When she was nineteen months old she came down with an illness could have possibly been [scarlet fever](#) or [meningitis](#). The illness did not last for a particularly long time, but it left her completely deaf and blind. At that time her only communication partner was Martha Washington, the six-year old daughter of the family cook, who was able to create a [sign language](#) with her; by age seven, she had over 60 [home signs](#) to communicate with her family. Later, thanks to her teacher Anne Sullivan she developed a sophisticated system of communication.

When the American bishop, Phillips Brooks, author of the Christmas carol, O little Town of Bethlehem, first started to communicate with Helen about God. She told him that she had always known there was a god, but she didn't know what his name was or what he was like. There are many in the world today who are not deaf and blind like Helen, but still do not know about the one true God.

The trouble is, in spite of the universal message that pours out day and night, despite the wonder of the natural world around us, despite the miracle of another harvest - the fact is, most people do not come to know God through it.

Yes, the revelation of God in creation is truly wonderful, and that's why we are celebrating it today, but it is limited when it comes to telling the full story about God and his purposes in the world. Something more is needed for people to understand it all. The something that reveals the character and purposes of God more clearly is the Word of God. That's what David goes on to say in the next part of Psalm 19 in verses 7-10.

When he wrote about God's work in creation, David used the general Hebrew word for God Elohim. But from verse 7 on he uses the personal name given to the Hebrew people - Yahweh - sometimes translated Jehovah. Though he is revealed generally in creation, it is only through

his word that God is revealed personally by name. The heavens declare God's glory, but the Scriptures tell us what God did so that we may share in the glory. There is no conflict between what God does in his universe and what he says in his Word.

David tells us here that:

The Word of God is Law which, unlike human law and statutes does not change - it is complete. It gives us the wisdom to know God and points us to new life in him.

The Word of God is instruction. None of us needs convincing, I am sure, of the value of an education. Nor can we learn a skill or a craft without someone to show us and teach us. God's word does that - it teaches us about who God is and what he is doing in the world.

God's Word commands us. Boundaries are needed -without them there would be chaos and confusion and anarchy. God's word sets the boundaries for human behaviour and we ignore them at our peril - as we are seeing all too clearly in the world today.

There is an inbuilt human need to worship something. For many it is money or fame and fortune. For others it is their career. For other it is celebrities or music. The Bible tells us of the only one who is truly worthy of worship. Most cultures have some sort of festival to celebrate the bringing in of the harvest. It is right that we have this special time of celebration, when we can think God for all that he has done for us.

However, unless we have a personal relationship with him so that God is our Father and Jesus Christ is our Redeemer, then what we see in creation and what we read in the Bible will not do us much good.

Through his meditation on the wonders of creation and through what he has read in the scriptures he had at that time, David comes to the conclusion that he is not worthy to stand before God. He knows that this all-powerful, creating God is all-holy and that he is anything but holy. He recognises his sin and his unworthiness. We too, as we wonder at the same God and his creation and the bountiful provision for all our needs, should have the same sense of sinfulness and inadequacy.

And when David confessed his sins and threw himself on the mercy of God, God in his grace forgave him. We have the same promise of grace and mercy from God, if humbly we come before him and confess our sin and trust in his Son. Indeed we have a great advantage over David, for we know how God has dealt with our sin - once and for all by the sacrifice of his only Son on the cross. Our sin -the ultimate barrier between us and God - has been removed because Jesus died in our place, taking our sin upon himself, so that we might be free.

So, as we celebrate today the wonder of creation and the bounty of the harvest not only can we know about God through what he has done and the symbols around us today speak powerfully of that. But much, much more, we can know the creator God in a personal in intimate way, if we would simply put our faith and trust in his Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour.