

Delightful Discoveries in Prayer

Prayer Lessons in Creation

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Lesson 09: The Pulpit of the Sun

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.” Psalm 19:1 to 4.

“For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.” Psalm 84:11, 12.

The God who commanded on the fourth day of creation, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven” (Genesis 1:14), also promised in Isaiah 42:16, “I will make darkness light before them.”

And “Light is sown for the righteous” (Psalm 97:11) and because it is impossible for God to lie, we can believe “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6), will show us more of God’s amazing promises.

In the 19th Psalm it says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” Then it speaks of the sun; that in the heavens, God has “set a tabernacle for the sun.” God has given the sun a “tabernacle” for the purpose of preaching, or declaring the glory of God, to show His handywork. But what is the sun preaching.

Paul tells us in the 10th chapter of Romans, that the heavens preach the gospel. It is in the 16th to the 18th verses. Paul even quotes from the 4th verse of the 19th Psalm. In the Psalm it says that the inarticulate voices of the sun, moon and stars, go out to the whole earth. The exact words are, “Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” But Paul, in quoting, states, “Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” Paul says they preach the gospel.

The sun preaches the grace of God, But the Psalmist says it preaches His glory. This is because when it preaches His grace, it preaches His glory; for the gospel is dealing with the grace of God.

Jesus speaking in Matthew 5:45, says that God makes “his sun to rise on the evil and on the good.” When God makes the sun to shine on the evil, who do not deserve it, this must be grace. Could this be what the 84th Psalm verse 11 means when it says, “the Lord will give grace and glory”?

When Moses asked God to show him His glory, God told him of His grace. Moses, pleading with God, said, “I beseech thee, shew me thy glory” (Exodus 33:18). The Lord immediately replied, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee, ... and will be gracious” (verse 19). Then in Exodus 34:6, the Lord did pass by before Moses, “and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious.” His character, His grace is His glory.

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Exodus 34:6 explains that God's grace and glory are found in His "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (verse 7). So every time we see the sun shining on the fields of wicked, profane transgressors, we can know that the sun has the pulpit in the tabernacle in the heavens. The sun is preaching the gospel of God's grace. He has no tongue, but he acts it out! His warmth produces what the fields of sinners need. The rain, falling on the fields of the unworthy, causes the seed to burst forth and start growing.

When we ask God to bless us, we have His answer already from the pulpit of the sun. That sun declares that God is gracious to us, no matter how wicked or sinful we may be, thus preaching the gospel by showing what God is like in His treatment of sinners.

God is telling us to be merciful and forgiving, too. Jesus said, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. But then He hastened to add: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." Verse 25. Christ makes forgiving others a condition to answered prayer.

When we pray creatively, thinking of the power of our Lord to shine through the sun on wicked, unworthy souls, we accept the fact that He can also work through us to heal old animosities; for "unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" Malachi 4:2. Since the gift of God is in His promise, when we pray for the healing of old wounds of misunderstanding, we can expect reconciliation.

We read in Hebrews 11:1, "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." So even before we see the answer, we have the evidence. For the gift of reconciliation, of forgiveness, is in that very promise of Mark 11:25.

There is a lot in this gospel the sun is preaching from his pulpit. Members of families, who may not see eye-to-eye, may pray creatively, expecting God to work out reconciliations. For does not the Apostle Peter state: "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them [the wife] according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" 1 Peter 3:7? Here is the glory of grace that has a forgiving attitude toward one another, and if we don't work toward reconciliation, our prayers are hindered.

When "the heavens declare the glory of God," it is the glory of His grace in a particular way.

In Jeremiah 14, verses 20 to 22, the prophet Jeremiah confesses: "We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for we have sinned against thee." Then he pleads, "Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory." The glory of God is to forgive; if He did not, it would be a disgrace to the throne of His glory. We also need to determine to forgive those who have hurt us.

Paul invites us, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16.

This message of forgiveness is really the gospel of reconciliation. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19), just like God is using the sun to preach His forgiving love.

The Bible also says that those who "turn many to righteousness" "shall shine" "as the stars." Daniel 12:3. It must be that God wants even our countenances to be joyful as we present God's forgiving love.

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The Bible says, "In thy presence is fulness of joy" (Psalm 16:11). Just as the flowers, and the trees, and the grass all seem to rejoice when the sun arises, so we can rejoice because the Sun of righteousness has arisen in our hearts.

In Job 38, verses 4 and 7, God raises the question, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" God's gospel is one of reconciliation, and of peace, and this brings joy. Since we are represented as shining as the stars, we have a right to be happy Christians.

The Scripture says, "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)." Acts 10:36. And Paul exhorts, "Rejoice evermore." He states that it is God's will for His children to be continuously giving thanks. 1 Thessalonians 5, verses 16, 18.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Romans 5:1, 2.

"When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." Psalm 102:16. It must be that when God's children are built together in peace and unity, that our Lord will return to take us home with Him. May we all be ready to go home with Him when He comes.

Jesus prayed to His Father, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." John 17:22. Here Jesus says God had already given Him that glory and He has already given it to His disciples; that makes us one!

Jesus said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 18:19. It must be to the glory of His name for His children to press together, to agree—not to contend.

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory." Psalm 84:11. What a tabernacle! What a pulpit for the sun! "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens." Psalm 8:1.

We have this promise, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Then it says, "we are his workmanship." Ephesians 2:8 and 10. So, just as the 19th Psalm says the heavens show His handywork, so this text says we are His workmanship. God's creative word made the sun, the moon, and the stars. God can, and will, make us His handywork, too. He can create us "unto good works," if we will but claim that promise.

"The goodness of God" leads us "to repentance." Romans 2:4.

Here is a real promise for every one who feels unworthy. It says that God has adopted us as His children, "according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Ephesians 1:5 and 6. So God's goodness leads us to Him. And we, then, are to manifest the same character of grace of forgiveness to others.

Here is how we can shine for God. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18. And with this we place this wonderful promise, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their strength." Psalm 89, verses 15-17.

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"They that be wise [or, teachers] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Daniel 12:3. Jesus said that such folk will "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matthew 13:43. Thank God for shining Christians. May your lights never go out.

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
The Lord make his face shine upon thee,
And be gracious unto thee:
The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee,
And give thee peace." (Numbers 6:24-26.)

The ABC's of Claiming Bible Promises

A - Ask - Matthew 7:7.

B - Believe - Mark 11:24.

C - Claim, or, Receive - Matthew 21:22

Recently one little boy said, "C - means collect"

Review Questions

Kindly fill in the answers to the following questions.

1. God made the stars, plus _____ great lights. Gen. 1:16.
2. "The _____ declare the glory of God." Ps. 19:1.
3. God makes the sun to shine on the _____ as well as on the good. Matt. 5:45.
4. Are human beings God's witnesses, too? Yes _____. No _____. Isa. 43:10, 12.
5. God's people who turn many to righteousness will shine "as the _____ for ever and ever." Dan. 12:3.
6. Jeremiah 10:10-12 tells us that our God, the true God, made the heavens and the earth. True _____. False _____.
7. Our Creator also makes men new creatures. True _____. False _____. 2 Cor. 5:17.
8. Does the Lord want us to tell others that Jesus has had compassion on us? Yes _____. No _____. Mark 5:19.
9. Does God want us to tell what we personally know about Jesus Christ as our Lord? Yes _____. No _____. 1 John 1:1-4.
10. Did Peter, on the day of Pentecost, state that he, and others, were witnesses of the resurrection of Christ? Yes _____. No _____. Acts 2:32.
11. Is baptism the answer of a good conscience toward God because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ? Yes _____. No _____. 1 Peter 3:21, 22.
12. Beside baptism does God offer The Holy Spirit's anointing? Yes _____. No _____. Acts 1:8.
13. When we rise from the watery grave as Jesus did, can God operate on our hearts to cause us to rise to a new life? Yes _____. No _____. Col. 2:12.

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14. When we are taught, believe, and repent, and there is water, should anything hinder our being baptized? Yes _____. No _____. Acts 8:26-39.

Answers found on answer sheet.