

The Power of Quiet
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Psalm 19
TCC – January 13, 2019

It's a bit tricky to speak about the power of quiet. Why couldn't we just take this time together and observe silence? Naw. You know I'm not going to do that. But we can take a couple of moments and be quiet before we look at our psalm together.

(Silence 2 minutes. Bell)

Let's look at the three parts of this beautiful psalm and break them down into three states of mind, or a flow of consciousness, or a description of a meditation on God.

1st section (verses 1-6) - This obviously is a description of the sky. It is also meant to convey the power of God the Creator. No one can look at a sky crammed with stars and not consider the infinite, the awesome and the source of all things. The sky is too hidden these days for many of us. And so it is with God: too hidden, too obscured by other lights, too dim to make an impact. Gone are the days when we just laid out on a pallet in the yard and watched the stars come out. There is a "Dark Sky Reserve" in Central Idaho where you can go and see the most amazing night sky. I hope to go there someday.

But consider that this passage could also be descriptive of the inner sky, or the mighty presence of the Holy Spirit, present with you now, and now, and now. If you close your eyes and be still long enough, you can see a whole world that opens up. Our minds are clogged the way the sky is clogged, with too many thoughts, too many worries, too many judgments. Inner pollution is real. Artificial light obscures the real light. The star that the Magi followed is a symbol of an inner star that leads to peace and joy. The manger and the baby are symbols of a safe and holy place where innocence and infinite possibility reside. But if we can't discover the power of quiet, these things will elude us. They will only be concepts that sound nice. Daily prayer and quiet observation and breathing deeply are ways to access the inner sky that has many wonders.

People go on pilgrimages in all the world's faiths in order to see and feel the presence of God. People seek the experience this section describes, the experience of awe and the presence of God.

Motivations for pilgrimage vary, within as well as between traditions. Sacred travel is frequently linked to a pious search for ultimate [salvation](#) but can also be prompted by more earthly aims, such as gaining miraculous cures, fulfilling vows, or doing penance for wrongdoing (*becoming free from guilt and longing*). In medieval times the English shrine of Walsingham, associated with the Virgin [Mary](#) and the [Annunciation](#), attracted women seeking solutions to problems of lactation and

infertility and may have encouraged self-identification with the Holy Mother. I hope some of you can go on a pilgrimage. But in the meantime, there's quietness and the night sky. In the meantime, there's your inner sky.

Middle Section (verses 7-10)

When we access the Spirit through our prayers and quietness, something rises up within us. It is the awareness of God and the desire to please God, because being close to God is so deeply pleasurable. We learn to love God's laws, commands and precepts. We love them so much because they save us and they keep us safe, safe from our own misguided efforts of usurping what we should leave to God. They show us what's truly important and what truly gives us joy. By practicing them we gain wisdom and we bless others and are blessed. (This is the opposite of being right, exacting revenge, and gaining power in a worldly sense).

We realize in this section, that keeping God's laws and working our faith through discipline, obedience (such a bad word!) and quietness that we can move into the ecstasy of loving God and loving others. We love God's laws so much that we consider them more precious than gold (more valuable than anything of this world, however tempting). We think they are sweeter than honey straight from the comb (and you know how good that is!).

Third Section (verses 11-14)

We acknowledge in this section the power of the world but God's power is so much greater, that is if we allow it to guide our lives. *By your laws your servant is warned. By your power your servant is made aware. But who can see their own errors?* Our night sky is polluted by concerns of the self. How can we see our own errors, our own faults, our own hand in any situation? We need to turn to God fervently and often (at least every week, but better every day or moment by moment).

We ask God what we can only ask God: May we be peaceful. May we be quiet. May our words only bless. May our thoughts be pleasing to God; may our thoughts reflect the light of heaven. And may we remember to be quiet, not just in prayer, but at times when we most want to talk; when we are bursting to make our point; when we strongly desire to be right and to prove others wrong; when we want to defend our innocence and shine light on the faults of others. May we let God speak through us and show us the power of quietness. Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, Oh Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer.