

God's Great Book

by

Ellis P. Forsman

God's Great Book

by

Ellis P. Forsman

October 11, 2011

God's Great Book

Psalms 19:1-14

When we contemplate the beauty and order of the creation...

We see the glory of God through His handiwork. Psalms 19:1, *“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.”*

We see evidence of His power and deity. Rom. 1:20, *“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”*

Perhaps we are moved to agree with the song, “How Great Thou Art!”

While the creation reveals much about God, it tells us nothing about...

- God's great gift of love and mercy.
- God's great people that He wants us to become.

To learn of such things, we must look elsewhere. God has chosen to reveal this through His book, the Bible.

Is this book equal to the task? You would expect a great God to give us a great book; has He?

Indeed He has! By His Spirit, He inspired a book capable of accomplishing great things!

For example, let's just start with one portion of the Bible...

How great is the Old Testament!

In the days of David.

A guide for true happiness. Psalms 1:1-3, *“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”*

The virtues of God's word praised:

It converts the soul. Psalms 19:7, *“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul...”*

It makes wise the simple. Psalms 19:7, “... the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”

It rejoices the heart. Psalms 19:8, “The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: ...”

It enlightens the eyes. Psalms 19:8, “The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.”

It endures forever. Psalms 19:9, “The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the ...”

It is true and righteous altogether. Psalms 19:9, “... the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.”

Making it more desirable than gold, sweeter than honey. Psalms 9:10-11, “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.”

The value of God’s word contemplated.

Helps the young man cleanse his way. Psalms 119:9, “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.”

Guards the heart against sin. Psalms 119:11, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

Makes one wiser than his enemies. Psalms 119:97-98, “O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.”

Gives one more understanding than his teachers and the ancients. Psalms 119:99-100, “I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.”

A lamp and a light to guide one’s way. Psalms 119:105, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

Provides great peace to those who love it. Psalms 119:165, “Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.”

This is the value of just a small portion of God’s Word, available during the days of David (perhaps the books of Genesis to Ruth).

In the days of Paul.

A source of patience and comfort, imparting hope to the Christian. Rom. 15:4, *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”*

Serving as examples, written for our admonition. 1 Cor. 10:11, *“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”*

As with all Scripture inspired of God, profitable in many ways. 2 Tim. 3:14-17, *“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*

- Making one wise regarding salvation by faith in Christ.
- Useful for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness.
- Helping the man of God to become complete, equipped for every good work.
- Christians may not be under the Old Covenant, but it remains an importance source for truth and happiness.

If such is true regarding the Old Testament, how much more so when we have the complete and final revelation from God! In other words...

How great is the New Testament!

It is a living word.

The Word of God is living and powerful. Heb. 4:12, *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow...”*

The Word of God is piercing, discerning. Heb. 4:12, *“For the word of God is ... a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

This is because it is the sword of the Spirit, the instrument by which He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment!

- John 16:7-8, “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”
- Eph. 6:17, “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

It is a life-giving word.

The Word of God can save our souls. James 1:21, “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

The Word of God can produce rebirth and spiritual growth. 1 Pet. 1:23-2:3, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”

This is because of the power contained in the gospel of Christ. Rom. 1:16-17, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

It is a life-guiding word.

Producing the faith necessary for our walk in life.

- 2 Cor. 5:7, “(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)”
- Rom. 10:17, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Equipping the saint for every good work. 2 Tim. 3:16-17, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

As Jesus quoted in response to Satan's temptation: Matt. 4:4, *"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."*

There should be no question that God's book is great! It fulfills our greatest need, and gives us our greatest hope. But let us consider...

How great is our response?

Is our response worthy?

Many people (including Christians) are "Biblically illiterate"!

Like Israel of old, we suffer from a *"famine for the Word"*. Amos 8:11-14, *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst. They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again."*

Israel's famine was imposed by God by their exile. Our famine is self-imposed by our own neglect! The effect is still the same!

Our young people faint from thirst! They fall, and do not rise again! For many, they feed upon an "unbalanced diet"!

Examples:

- Reading only select passages, often ignoring the Old Testament.
- Reading only to prove themselves right and others wrong.

Is "God's Great Book" worthy of such a tepid response? No!

What is a worthy response?

We must properly value God's Word.

More valuable than gold and silver. Psalms 119:72, *"The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."*

As precious as great treasure. Psalms 119:162, *"I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil."*

Do we consider God's Word of greater value than money?

We must diligently read God’s Word.

With an attitude of longing.

- Psalms 119:131, *“I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.”*
- 1 Pet. 2:2, *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”*

With an intention to obey. James 1:21-22, *“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”*

With a prayer on our lips and in our hearts.

- Psalms 119:18, *“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”*
- Psalms 119:133, *“Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.”*

A consistent program of daily Bible reading in this spirit is a worthy response to God’s great book!

Conclusion

Contemplating God’s creation produces the response: How Great Thou Art!

- God is a Being of great power.
- God is a Being of great intelligence.

Contemplating God’s book produces a similar response: How Great Thou Art!

- God is a Being of great wisdom and understanding.
- God is a Being of great love and compassion.
- God is a Being of great justice and righteousness.

I pray that our study has done at least two things:

- Increased your appreciation for “God’s Great Book”.
- Stimulated your desire to be more diligent in your response to it.

More diligent in your reading of it.

More diligent in your obedience to it.

Acts 20:32, *“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”*

Let “God’s Great Book” build you up, that you may receive that wonderful: 1 Pet. 1:4, *“... inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,”*

