

12 N Bible Study - March 22, 2023

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Is There a God?



QUESTION 1:

Growing up, what did your family teach you about God?

THE POINT

God has given us ways
to know He exists.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

For over seventy years, China has been a communist and atheistic country. When Mao Zedong ruled, he attempted to wipe out Christianity. Religious thought was suppressed, so that today somewhere between 40 to 49 percent of the population do not believe in God.¹

Yet, as tragic as that is, China is still on pace to have the world's largest Christian population by 2030.² In spite of all the government's efforts to suppress biblical beliefs and persecute believers, more Christians than communists now live in China.³ We might

be surprised by the growth of Christianity in a deeply irreligious country, but God has a way of making Himself known. I heard one missionary in China say, "God will always reveal Himself to anyone who is seeking Him and that has been my experience in China."

Many of us learned about God at home; our families talked openly about God. For others, we had a friend who pointed us to Christ. But even for those who haven't had such experiences, they still can have an awareness of God. The Book of Psalms certainly reveals God to us.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

PSALM 19:1-6

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the expanse proclaims the work of his hands.
² Day after day they pour out speech; night after night they communicate knowledge.
³ There is no speech; there are no words; their voice is not heard. ⁴ Their message has gone out to the whole earth, and their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun. ⁵ It is like a bridegroom coming from his home; it rejoices like an athlete running a course. ⁶ It rises from one end of the heavens and circles to their other end; nothing is hidden from its heat.

One distinctive of the Judeo-Christian worldview is our worship of the Creator; most other belief systems worship aspects of the creation: the sun, moon, stars, nature, and animals. The Old Testament law condemned anyone who had "gone to serve other gods by bowing in worship to the sun, moon, or all the stars in the sky—which I have forbidden" (Deut. 17:3). Such idolatry is tragic because the created universe points us to God's presence and power.

In this psalm, David worshiped God for revealing His existence in the world.

God's declaration is not periodic or occasional; it continues non-stop. David said, "Day after day they pour out speech" (v. 2). It's like coming late to a worship service: you enter the room and hear worship in progress.

Nor is the declaration of God's presence and glory limited to one corner of His universe. "Their message has gone out to the whole earth, and their words to the ends of the world" (v. 4). The prophet Isaiah expressed the same thing in his vision, as he heard the Seraphim proclaiming, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Armies, his glory fills the whole earth" (Isa. 6:3). David continually saw the worship of God in the world around him, "You have covered the heavens with your majesty" (Ps. 8:1b).

QUESTION 2:

When has something in nature pointed you to God?

THE POINT

God has never been hidden. God's general or natural revelation—the unveiling of Himself—has been communicated since the very beginning of creation. David's use of the word *declare* is from the Hebrew word rendered “to count or make a written record.” The universe is a record we read that proclaims God's existence, His power, and His glory. Centuries later, Paul stood on the shoulders of David and declared, “For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made. As a result, people are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20).

Creation's message is limited, though. We call the message the universe reveals about God “general revelation.” General revelation points us to our Creator, but only Jesus Christ and His special, written revelation in the Bible gives us a fuller understanding of the nature and character of that Creator. General revelation should be seen as a gateway—only the beginning. As the psalmist said, “The LORD's works are great, studied by all who delight in them” (Ps. 111:2). That means God's creation draws us in to seek Him more, and that brings us to Scripture, His revealed Word.

PSALM 111:7-9

⁷The works of his hands are truth and justice; all his instructions are trustworthy. ⁸They are established forever and ever, enacted in truth and in uprightness. ⁹He has sent redemption to his people. He has ordained his covenant forever. His name is holy and awe-inspiring.

In verses 7-9, the psalmist focused on God's truth, justice, instruction, and redemption. We know of these things because He has revealed them through Scripture, the divinely inspired Word of God. And that Word is trustworthy!

QUESTION 2:

How have you found the Bible to be trustworthy?

This passage reflects a “divine agreement.” The psalmist acknowledged both the covenant and the redemption established by God, but it was more than a mental acknowledgment. The psalmist wrote with absolute faith in the works and words of God. We also live in “divine agreement” when we are one with God on the same issue. We choose to see things from God's perspective. We can entrust the difficult decisions in our lives to God because His Word—His instructions to us—are trustworthy.

MARCH 22

Your Path of Purpose

The Lord has made everything for its purpose.

PROVERBS 16:4 (ESV)

AT ONE TIME or another, you might wonder, *Why did God create me?* Perhaps you can't fully answer the question, but it is comforting to know that He created you for a purpose. Each day, as you walk on His path, you come closer and closer to discovering exactly what that purpose is.

All-knowing God, give me the wisdom and strength to overcome any obstacles on the next steps in my journey.
