



still waters

home church studies

Psalm 19

[Worship]

1 The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. 2 Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. 3 There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; 4 yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, 5 which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. 6 Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hid from its heat. 7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes; 9 the fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. 12 But who can detect their errors? Clear me from hidden faults. 13 Keep back your servant also from the insolent; do not let them have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Consider:

[Words]

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild? Time to re-read John 2: 13-22. If it were a movie, the trailer would begin like this: "Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables....'Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!' he said (John 2: 15-16).

Jesus leads a liturgical response to a world-reordering covenant known as the Ten Commandments. Having "no other

gods" includes the Caesar shown on those coins. Remembering the Sabbath day to "keep it holy" suggests stopping the livestock sales in the temple. Bearing false witness, coveting, stealing, and making idols also defame the temple. Living out the Mosaic covenant (Exodus 20:1-7), Jesus took action.

Chipping the Ten Commandments into a marble plaque at a courthouse is the easy way out. The harder path engages the numerous ways the covenant challenges human law and order. Empires, both ancient and modern, are frightened by this sort of commitment to the way God reorders society. Loyalties shift. Greedy values are rejected. Coins roll.

In early biblical times, covenants presented from the dominant nation or person were called the "words." The "word" of God also flows from this notion of the one in charge offering direction through a covenant. The "words" of our God are a threat to kings, Caesars, and presidents, for their authority comes from a distinct and unexpected source of power.

Divine covenants clarify life and sharpen ethics. Paul reminds the cosmopolitan, ethically wishy-washy culture of Corinth of the value of God's promises, assuring that "every one of God's promises is a 'Yes'" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

[Scripture]

1 Corinthians 1. 18-25

18 For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." 20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, 23 but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Also read, **John 2.13-22**