

A Psalm and two Sonnets

Psalm 19 (ESV)

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above^[a] proclaims his handiwork.
² Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.
³ There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard.
⁴ Their voice^[b] goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.
In them he has set a tent for the sun,
⁵ which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,
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 there is nothing hidden from its heat.
⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect,^[c]
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple;
⁸ the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is pure,
enlightening the eyes;
⁹ the fear of the LORD is clean,
enduring forever;
the rules^[d] 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 Who can discern his errors?
Declare me innocent from hidden faults.
¹³ Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins;
let them not 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 in your sight,
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

God's Grandeur

By Gerard Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of **God**.

It will flame out, like shining from shook **foil**;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of **oil**

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his **rod**?

Generations have trod, have trod, have **trod**;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with **toil**;

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the **soil**

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being **shod**.

And for all this, nature is never **spent**;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down **things**;

And though the last lights off the black West **went**

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, **springs** —

Because the Holy Ghost over the **bent**

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright **wings**.

Source: *Gerard Manley Hopkins: Poems and Prose* (Penguin Classics, 1985)

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44395/gods-grandeur>

Petrarchan sonnet form: abba abba cdcd cd

St. Peter

By [Malcolm Guite](#)

Impulsive master of **misunderstanding**
You comfort me with all your big **mistakes**;
Jumping the ship before you make the **landing**,
Placing the bet before you know the **stakes**.
I love the way you step out without **knowing**,
The way you sometimes speak before you **think**,
The way your broken faith is always **growing**,
The way he holds you even when you **sink**.
Born to a world that always tried to shame **you**,
Your shaky ego vulnerable to **shame**,
I love the way that Jesus chose to name **you**,
Before you knew how to deserve that **name**.
And in the end your Saviour let you **prove**
That each denial is undone by **love**.

Source: [Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year](#) by Malcolm Guite

Shakespearean sonnet form: abab cdcd efef gg

Resources for Praying with Poets

- Read: Learning the Sonnet
Poetry Foundation
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/70051/learning-the-sonnet>
- Watch: Malcolm Guite read a beautiful poem in a beautiful setting:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrWjT9zAt-g>



Malcolm Guite: On being told my poetry was found in a broken photo-copier

- Listen: to Malcolm Guite reading [“What If”](#) a poem inspired by perhaps the least quoted words of Jesus (Matt. 12:36-37), which he says “ought to be inscribed in golden letters above the door of every politician’s office and in diamond letters above the door of every advertising agency.”
- Read: [“When Poets Pray”](#) by Marilyn McEntyre
- Watch: [Spiritual Formation and Poetry with Karen Curry](#)
- Watch: [Space for God: “The Eye of the Heart”](#) with Dr. Ben Sammons
- Watch [A Creative Advent: Scripture, Poetry, and Christian Imagination](#) with Drew Masterson and Rick Mastroianni