

02-06-30a Revelation

Let's take a moment as we continue our worship this morning to pause and reflect on the grace of God, the faithfulness of God. We're embarking on the week that includes July the 4th and the commemoration of the founding of our country. We are so privileged to be Americans and to not deal with a lot of the issues and the challenges that face people in other countries.

God and his sovereign plan could have had us be born in any place at any time. I, for one, am grateful for the time that God chose to place me. People have said, oh, I wish I could live in prairie days or I wish I could live in the time of Christ or live in ancient times when God was doing miracles.

I think this is the greatest, most privileged time in all of history. Even our daily life, we live better than kings of the earth. The things that we take for granted would have been priceless luxuries.

To be able to walk to the refrigerator and pull out something cold any time of the day or night. To have ice on a whim. To hear the greatest orchestras and the greatest musicians and the greatest vocalists ever play and sing at our beck and call.

To travel in safety. To communicate with one another even when we're separated by great distances. The medical care, the ability to take an aspirin when you have a headache.

I mean, there are just countless blessings that we enjoy. And we have access to all of them in multiplied manifold abundance here in the United States of America. And the freedom and the privacy and the opportunity and the abundance that we enjoy has been purchased at the cost of blood.

At the cost of self-sacrifice. Was and is preserved, protected and defended by those in uniform. And it's a wonderful thing that we set aside a time more than once in the year.

To specifically remember the great blessings God has given us in the divine institution of nation. But as we worship this morning, our focus as always is on the Lord God himself. And on the purpose and calling that he has revealed to us.

And all of these things that we enjoy are not an end in themselves. They are designed to make it possible for us to pursue our heavenly calling, the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. And if they become an end in themselves, if we enjoy them for their own sake without realizing that these create potential.

These provide the resources to move forward to maturity and to the stature of a complete and perfect man in Christ. That's really why they exist and why God has given them to us. And how much more shameful it would be with all of these provisions and with all of these blessings.

To fall short of the potential that God has created for us. Let's take a moment before we begin our

worship in the word. To clear our minds and prepare our hearts and seek the ministry of God's Holy Spirit.

Shall we pray? Father we are so thankful for all of the manifold ways that you have blessed us, provided for us. Expressed toward us, surpassing grace in our physical circumstances as well as in the spiritual realm. Where all things are ours in Christ.

We ask this morning that you will be with those who serve in our government. Who serve in the leadership of our armed forces and our institutions that provide safety and security. And determine the direction and policies of our country as well as our local and state offices of government.

We pray that you will continue to preserve the environment that allows us to focus our attention regularly and frequently. On the study of your word and then to express what we learn in our daily lives. We thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ and for the work that he accomplished on our behalf.

We thank you for his continuing ministry of intercession. The symbolic function that he serves in sitting at your right hand. That reminds us always that we have been made acceptable in the beloved.

We are acceptable in Christ. We share his relationship to you. We share his destiny.

We share his priesthood. We share the future calling and the future purpose that you have for him and for us. We pray this morning as we study your word that God the Holy Spirit will find ready and willing hearts.

That we will not only understand but also remember and find occasion to apply the things that we see from your word. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

For our scripture reading this morning turn with me to Psalm 19. Psalm 19. Our special study that we began last week looks at a very special section of scripture.

The letters to the seven churches in Revelation chapter 2 and chapter 3. In order to place those letters in a framework and in context we began by looking at the first chapter of the Revelation. The authorship, the purpose, the circumstances of writing and what that book represents as the final chapter in God's written revelation to us. As we move forward we are going to see that there is a symmetry.

There is an order in the plan and purpose of God that is revealed both in his word and in creation. We are going to be taking a look at the specific ways, some of the specific ways that God has expressed that order and that symmetry this morning. Psalm 19 is one of the great songs of praise.

It was written by David, it was given to the chief musician to be placed in the hymnal of the Israelites. It is a wonderful expression of those principles. Psalm 19 is subtitled in the New King James, the perfect revelation of the Lord.

It is a very fitting way to continue our study of the first portion of the Revelation in the New Testament. It is dedicated to the chief musician, a Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows his handiwork.

Day unto day utters speech and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world.

In them he has set a tabernacle for the sun which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber and rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is from one end of heaven and its circuit to the other end and there is nothing hidden from its heat. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Moreover, by them your servant is warned and in keeping them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins.

Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless and I shall be innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

If there is such a thing as having a favorite psalm, I think Psalm 19 would certainly be a contender. It sums up in a few beautiful poetic lines so much of the plan and purpose of God, his provision for our failures and our faults, his power manifesting itself in and through overcoming our weakness. It reminds us that we are, as has been observed even in the secular world, travelers on a tiny speck of dust in the great universe that God created, and yet God cares for us.

God did the greatest work that could ever be done in coming in the form of his Son to die on our behalf. It is also a reminder that there is the manifestation of God in creation. We are going to return to our study in Revelation chapter 1 this morning.

One other thing I just want to point out as we leave Psalm 19 with Ecclesiastes still fresh in my

mind. You remember in chapter 1 where it talked about how the sun traverses the sky and then panting returns to the place from which it began. Here in Psalm 19 Solomon's father David also pictures the sun as running a race, like a strong man, like the bridegroom coming out of his chamber in the morning with enthusiasm and strength and warming everything that he touches.

I think it is more than coincidence that Solomon and David had that view of what this life can be. We know the traverse of the sun across the sky from sunrise to sunset is a metaphor for our human life. There ought to be joy, there ought to be strength, there ought to be warmth and recognition of the provision of God in each and every day.

But as we return now to our introduction to our special study, you remember that we talked about the authorship of the book of Revelation. You can't approve to the point of blood that it was John the Apostle. I think there are many things that commend him as the author.

We remind ourselves that it is not the man, it is the message. We close by looking at the fact that even John was susceptible to the temptation to be occupied with the messenger in Revelation 22 verse 8 where the angel who was his guide through the vision of the apocalypse, John falls at his feet to worship and the angel has to raise him up and he says, No, I am a servant of God as you are. It is the Lord who is worthy of worship.

This is just a messenger revealing a message. This book as we are told in chapter 1 was given by God to Jesus Christ to show his servants what will shortly come to pass. Of course that shortly is as close as the end of our lives or the rapture, whichever comes first.

It has been signed and sent through the Lord's messenger. The content of the book is explicitly claimed to be the word of God. It is explicitly claimed to be the testimony of Jesus Christ.

This portion we are going to study in the 2nd and 3rd chapters is specifically addressed to us, to you and to me. We are not having to go through the step of recognizing that these were words addressed to Old Testament saints or to first generation church age believers. These are words, there is no portion of the word of God that is more directly addressed to us.

This is the one place in the Bible where the Lord Jesus Christ speaks directly to believers in the church. What is the purpose? The purpose is to be a blessing. It is to bless those who will guard or keep the words of this prophecy.

Look at chapter 22, verse 6. Revelation 22, 6. The messenger says to John, These words are faithful and true, and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel, his messenger, to show to his bond servants, his douloi, the things which must soon take place. And then Jesus speaks. If you have the words of Christ in red, verse 7 is in red.

And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book. The fascinating thing about this is that even though it speaks of future events, we are

enjoined to heed the words of the prophecy now.

If it's all about the 70th week, if it's all about the tribulation and we're not going to be here, then in what sense do we heed the words of the prophecy of this book? It's not just an instruction manual for those who are, quote, left behind. It is, in fact, something that we should know and apply. John manifests himself in verse 8 of that same chapter as the witness.

I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. But he said to me, Do not do that.

I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brother in the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God. And the ultimate value and the ultimate purpose of this revelation, as with the rest of scripture, is twofold.

To bring us to the point of worship and obedience of the Father and in so doing to receive a blessing. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book. So we've seen the authorship.

We've seen the authority of this message. It is signed, sealed, and delivered by God himself specifically to us. We've seen its purpose, which is to bring us to the place of worship, recognition of God's place in our life on a moment-by-moment basis, and as a result, to bless us.

Finally, the application of this book. This is the close of biblical revelation. And as we find so many places, there is a symmetry.

There is sort of a correspondence or a chiasm type of relationship with this closing portion of biblical revelation. It gives the church an Old Testament saint piece of revelation to observe, interpret, and apply. After chapter 3, when in chapter 4, verse 1, the voice says, Come up here to John, which I think almost everyone recognizes as a reminder of the rapture of the church.

John is on the earth, even in his vision, up through the end of chapter 3, and then the voice says, Come up here, and I will show you what will take place afterward. And John's perspective on all of the subsequent events from chapter 4, verse 1 on is heavenly. And that would be our perspective as the church, to see what takes place in the 70th week of Daniel from that vantage point.

So even as biblical revelation begins by giving us the Old Testament revelation and Old Testament saints, whose record is written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come, even so, biblical revelation closes with Old Testament saints. It's the last week of the Old Testament age, and so we have the resumption of that age, we have the record of what is going to take place, and we are to observe, interpret, and apply in the present those things. Just as we look at the record of Old Testament saints in the past, and we observe, we interpret, and we apply, we should do the same with the revelation.

It's not enough to sit and get stars in our eyes and think about left behind and what the mark of the beast and all kinds of calamities taking place. We should observe, we should interpret, we are commanded to apply these things to ourselves in the present. That's why the blessing says, it is for those who are reading and are hearing the words of this prophecy.

These are present participles. These are present tense verbs in Greek. Blessed are the ones who are hearing.

Blessed are the ones who are reading. Blessed are the ones who are keeping. All three of those in the verses we just read in chapter 22 are present participles, ongoing action in present time.

Those who are reading, those who are hearing the words of this prophecy and are keeping what is written in it. So with that, we are going to move forward now in Revelation chapter 1 because we have, I say we are going to move forward, or you would think we are going to move forward, but it is a matter of opinion. We have seen the first three verses.

The book begins and ends with a pronouncement of blessing on those who read and hear and heed the things that are written in it. We find it in chapter 1, we find it in chapter 22. Then in verse 4, we have John, we have already talked about him as the author, to the seven churches that are in Asia.

Well, before we go any further, we have this seven churches declaration. Why seven? We know from history that there were more than seven churches in Asia. Why does he choose seven churches? Why does the Lord God choose seven churches here? Because we are going to see as we go forward in chapter 1 that when John is in the Spirit on the Lord's day, the reason John writes this to the seven churches is found down in verse 11.

He is commanded to, the Lord Jesus Christ himself, in a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet says, write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea. So this was not John's decision to pick out seven churches. These are seven that are chosen and declared specifically, named out, called out by the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it is not just those names that are given. When you look at verse 12, I turn to see the voice speaking with me, having turned. The first thing he sees, he is looking for who spoke, but even before he sees who spoke, what does he see? Seven golden lampstands.

We are going to find that number seven is repeated throughout the next several verses, throughout the next couple of chapters, indeed throughout the book of Revelation, and we find it of course throughout the Bible. So it is time for us to pause and take a look at the concept of biblical numbers, the symbolism of biblical numbers. This is a study that will not only aid us as we look at this study, but throughout the scripture.

And by way of introduction to this particular digression, if you will, numbers occur throughout the scripture, and we have the idea that they are significant. We know that there is a significance to 40 days and 40 nights. We know there is a significance to the third day.

We know that there is a significance to six days of creation and then the seventh God rested. We sense that there is a symbolism and a significance that goes with these. And indeed, numbers are as evident in creation as they are in the word of God.

And that makes sense, because God is the author of both. God is the author of creation. God expresses himself in creation.

God also expresses and manifests himself in the written record of scripture. And you would expect that the same God is going to manifest himself in some of the same ways. The symmetry and the order that are found in nature are also found in the word of God.

Symmetry and order are often expressed in terms of numbers, of even mathematics, if you will. And as I was making this point, I thought, well, you know, last week we just brought up the point that people don't think John the Apostle wrote Revelation, because if the same author authors two books, there ought to be points of correspondence, and there are so very few between the gospel of John and the Revelation, or even the epistles of John and the Revelation. But one thing about this point with regard to God and finding the same sorts of uses of numbers in creation and in the word, is that the purpose of creation is to declare.

That's one of the reasons we had Psalm 19 for our scripture reading this morning. The heavens and the earth, creation declares God's character. And the purpose of creation is to manifest God, as is the purpose of scripture.

You can't say the same that the purpose of the gospel of John and the epistles of John and the Revelation of John are not to tell us all about John. They're to tell us about the Lord. And so, let me just give you a few points of introduction.

We're in the introduction to our Seven Churches study, and then when the concept of numbers comes up, now we're in the introduction to numbers. So I'm like two steps away from our main study, but not for long. But let me give you five or six points here on the concept of numbers in the Bible.

First of all, God the Father is not Himself visible to us. The scriptures declare over and over again that God is not visible to us. For example, John 1.18. No one has seen God at any time.

The only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has revealed Him. He has explained Him. Colossians 1.15. He, Christ, is the image of who? The invisible God.

Christ is the image of the invisible God. 1 Timothy 1.17. Paul talks about this. In his doxology, at

the close of the first chapter, 1 Timothy says, Now to the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

Amen. We have that hymn based on this verse. Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inexpressible, hid from our eyes.

Some apostate took the closing line of that hymn, where it says, 'Tis only the splendor of light changeth thee, and changed it to hideth thee, or vice versa. The whole purpose of that hymn is to remind us of the revelation of God in so many ways. In light inexpressible, He is hid from our eyes.

If you look in a modern hymnal, someone has taken those words and monkeyed with them. But God the Father is not Himself visible to us. You might also put with that, 1 Timothy 6.16. Where once again, at the close of the book, just as he did at the beginning, Paul makes mention of the fact that God alone is immortal.

He is talking about He who is the blessed and only sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

And that is talking about God the Father. The context there is the Father and His timing of the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father will bring about the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ at the proper time.

He, God the Father, who is the blessed and only sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. I could digress on that particular statement, but I won't. Secondly, the invisible God, God the Father, is revealed in creation.

We already saw that in Psalm 19 and verse 1. The heavens declare the glory of God. The earth reveals His handiwork. You also find this in Psalm 33, verses 6-9.

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap. He lays up the deep in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke and it was done.

He commanded and it stood fast. That, of course, is the same idea we have in Romans chapter 1 and verse 20. You'll remember this from our Roman studying.

We've referred to it many times since. Since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they, reprobate people on the earth, are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, became vain in their

imaginations, their foolish hearts were darkened.

You can put with this also a very wonderful passage in Isaiah chapter 40. Isaiah 40 and verse 26. Isaiah 40 verse 26.

Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created the stars, the one who leads forth their host by number. He calls them all by name. Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power, not one of them is missing.

So when we look up to the heavens and we see the stars, we see the one who created them. We see the one who leads forth their host by number and calls them all by name. What may be known of God is revealed in creation.

Not only is God's eternal power and deity or Godhead revealed, but thirdly, God's plans and purposes are revealed for us. And those are revealed in scripture. We can see His power.

We can see His existence and His sovereign deity in creation. But to find out God's plan and God's purpose, we look to scripture. And this is found most clearly.

I could give a lot of scripture for this, but let me just give you one. Romans chapter 16 verse 26. Paul talking about the mystery.

And once again, this is the doxology, the closing section of Romans. He says in verse 25, Now unto him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, the writings of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith. God's plan and purpose is revealed not only in the New Testament, not only in the epistles of Paul and of John and of Peter, but also the writings of the prophets.

Things that were hidden and unclear in the Old Testament writings are now perspicacious and understandable. The things that were foreshadowed. You'd be surprised how this is not understood in seminaries.

There's a big standard thing that's taught to people in seminary that there's nothing in the scriptures that could not be understood by the original recipients. They say don't read something in the scripture from hindsight. You have to only see in it what could have been understood by the original recipient.

I don't know where they get this principle, but you're never going to figure out Isaiah 14. You're never going to see Satan in Ezekiel 28 if you don't use the vantage point of hindsight. To take that approach is anti-biblical.

Look at the gospel of Matthew over and over again. He says that the scriptures might be fulfilled.

Going back to an Old Testament scripture, when Isaiah wrote about the Alma, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, it was not perspicacious that it was going to be the Virgin Mary giving birth to the Messiah.

It was a sign, but the full meaning and understanding that's invested in those scriptures is ours through hindsight. And Paul explicitly states that here. But you would just be amazed.

You can't believe the dumbing down, if you want to talk about that, that takes place in seminaries where the academic approach to the scripture says, well, you're getting into allegory and fantasy and you're reading the future back into the past. You're investing scripture with more than what should be there. Well, this is to say that scripture is not inspired and that God couldn't put any preview of coming attractions in the scripture.

So, the purpose of God is manifest by the scriptures, by the writings of the prophets, as well as by the writings of the apostles, according to the commandment of the eternal God. That's Romans 16.26. A fourth point, God is not random. God is not chaotic.

God is not disorganized. God is not random. He is not chaotic.

He is not disorganized. There's actually a theology. I won't even bore you with the details, but there are people, process theology has the idea today.

And it's catching on. It's big. It's taught in seminaries.

There's large segments of Christianity who go for process theology. That God is sort of extemporizing. He's making it up as he goes along.

God really doesn't see the future. He's powerful and he can cope with things, but he's sort of coping with it as it comes up. It's a process.

And God can be surprised. God can change his mind. And it's a misunderstanding of some of the anthropomorphisms of scripture, but you just can't believe some of the nutty ideas.

Anyway, God is not random. God is not chaotic. God is not disorganized.

I mean, what is the testimony of God in Isaiah and Ezekiel? I am the God who tells you what is going to happen before it takes place. He is the God who knows the end from the beginning, who in eternity past predestined so many things. Before the foundation of the world.

I mean, you just can't believe it. God is not random, chaotic, or disorganized. Numbers reflect order, system, plan, and consistency.

Wherever we turn in observing creation, you can look at astronomy, you can look at physics, the world of chemistry or biology, you find numerical order. One of the first places, and I'm sure you probably all remember this, remember the Bohr model of the atom? Remember the valence

shells and electrons and protons and all of that and how atoms combine when you go through the periodic table? Remember that? What happens with the shells? Remember the valence? You can have up to seven electrons in a shell, and then when you get to eight, you have to start over with another shell. And the rules for the combining of atoms into molecules and into compounds are an ordered and numeric system.

The combinations of chromosomes. Within a species, you always have the same number of chromosomes. Human beings, unless there's something the matter with them, have some sort of genetic defect, always have 23 pairs of chromosomes.

Always, without fail. 46 chromosomes, 23 pairs. You get the little fruit fly that they do all the experimenting with, genetic mapping.

One of the first things they ever mapped the genome for was *Drosophila*, the little fruit fly. And it's easy because it has four pairs of chromosomes, and that's how they got their start. They went on to map other things, and now the Human Genome Project has finally completed and mapped the human chromosome.

At least five representative people. They took five people and used them to map the genome. They don't have a map of mine or yours, but they've got the map of five people.

But wherever we turn, chemistry, biology, astronomy, we find a miracle order. And especially in astronomy, you find that this is a very ancient understanding. Pythagorean philosophy.

Remember Pythagoras? It was the guy with the Pythagorean theorem. My dad, the first time I went into geometry and I came home and told him we were learning it, he said, oh, that's the Pythagorean theorem. But it's the Pythagorean theorem.

The way in a right triangle, if you square each of the sides that form the right angle, that will equal, if you square those and add them together, you're going to get the square of the hypotenuse. Or put in the way I memorize it, the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sums of the squares of the other two sides. And that reminds me of a bad joke that I won't repeat.

But there's order everywhere. There's order in geometry. There is order.

The value of pi, 3.14159, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, running on into infinity is one of the fundamental values. It can never be resolved. No matter how far you try to calculate pi, you never come to the end of that decimal.

We round it off to 3.14159. That's how I memorized it. And I just used that the other day, trying to figure out how to put in my pool and make sure that the piece of railing that goes around the curved end was the right length. I had to dig back in my mind and remember the formula for the circumference of the circle and take it in half and figure, well, this semicircle with this radius

should be this long.

And it works. It works every time. It never fails.

God is not random. God is not chaotic. And the principle of order is found mathematically throughout the universe.

And it is found in scripture. It's found in scripture. Aristotle, talking about Pythagorean philosophy, expressed it this way.

Number is the principle of all things. And the organization of the universe is a harmonic system of numeric ratios. And this came to be known as the harmony of the spheres.

Have you ever heard that phrase, the harmony of the spheres? They looked up at the planets. And at that time, they couldn't see past Jupiter and Saturn. They couldn't see Uranus or Neptune or Pluto.

And so they could see the six planets in the sky. They saw Mercury and Venus. Of course, they knew about the Earth and Mars and Venus and Jupiter and Saturn.

And so there were a total of six visible planets. And this was a source of great mystery and investigation for the ancient astronomers because they could see that the stars were static and these planets moved. And so they tried to figure out what was going on.

And Kepler, Johannes Kepler, revived that. In the Renaissance, there was a great return. After the Dark Ages, there was a great return to delving into the mysteries of the past.

And I just want to give you this as one example. There are myriad examples we could go to in biology or chemistry, but I want to just give you one example in astronomy to give you an idea of how we observe things in nature reflecting the order of God. Pythagoras, along with his observations in geometry, also thought about music.

And he was one of the first to observe that the pitch of a musical note depends on the length of the string that produces it. There is a direct proportional relationship to how long the string is when tightened to the same tension. And the note that it produces, the little harmonic waves, you can take a rubber band and stretch it across in front of a fluorescent light and then pluck it and you can see the sine wave, you can see the harmonic waves.

And Pythagoras correlated the intervals of the musical scale with numeric ratios. And think about a musical scale. How many notes are there in one complete octave before you start repeating? There are seven.

Seven, as we are going to see, is a number of completion and wholeness, as we find in the creation week and so on. Well, you have Do, Re, Mi, Fa, So, La, Ti. You have seven notes in the

harmonic scale.

And the octave, when you repeat, when you get to the next Do in the scale, our ear recognizes that as the same note, even though it's a different frequency. We recognize middle C and the C above it when we hear it as corresponding. Now, why is that? Why does our mind tell us that that's another C? That's the same note at a different pitch.

We are built to sense and see the harmony of this correspondence, the ratio and the frequency of musical notes. The octave has the same, you know, note, an octave higher has the same quality of sound, but it vibrates at twice the frequency. And our mind observes that and makes order and sense out of it.

The mathematical relationship between the key note and its octave is expressed as a frequency ratio of one to two. In every type of musical scale, the notes progress in a series of intervals from the key note to the octave above or below. And anybody that studied music theory, my dad took some of this when he went to college in his later life and took music theory, and it's a fascinating study.

Notes that are separated by intervals of a perfect fifth have a ratio of two to three. Notes that are a form of perfect fourth are a ratio of three to four. And they've always been the most important consonances in Western music.

So Pythagoras saw this and saw the mathematics that are involved in music and in harmony. And this was actually, it became the foundation of Western science. By associating measurements of length with musical tones, Pythagoras made the first known reduction of a quality, which is sound, something invisible, into a quantity, length and ratio, a scientific description of something that's invisible.

The understanding of nature through mathematics remains a primary objective of science even today. The miracle of the octave is that it divides wholeness into two audibly distinguishable parts, yet it remains recognizable as the same musical note. So the Pythagoreans worked this into a complete science of healing and all kinds of things.

But this was revived, and what I want to talk about is Kepler, who started working on this after Copernicus. You know, Nicholas Copernicus was right around 1500. He was born in 1473 and lived until the middle of the next century.

He spent most of his life, he was kind of an administrative clerk type of guy, but he spent his spare time trying to figure out the universe and the movement of the planets. And he had this Pythagorean idea that there ought to be order and harmony. And he realized that the idea of the sun at the center of the planetary system made a whole lot more sense and enabled him to mathematically predict the movement of the planets much better.

So, you know, Copernicus is the one that moved us from the earth-centered view to a sun-centered view. And Kepler really sympathized with this and understood it. And he did a lot of work on the movement of planets and just figured out that there was a geometric correspondence in the orbits of the planets.

And I won't give you all of the details, but even ancient geometricians figured out that if you take the fundamental geometric constructions like the triangle and the square and that sort of thing, if you want to build them together and make a solid, make something in three dimensions, there are only five rectangular geometric figures that you can combine to make solids. And that's the triangle and the square and the octahedron and some of these others, the isosahedron, which is 20 triangles all put together. But there are other things that you can't put together to make these solids.

Well, he took these five platonic solids and figured out that each one of them defines the orbits of the planets. If you ever want to just look up the music of the spheres and if you want to delve into that, I want to stay with biblical truth as much as we can. But suffice it to say, there is an order in the universe that was observed and has been observed since ancient times.

And in working this out, Kepler actually figured out, he thought at first, well, there's going to be these spherical orbits. And he started working backward from the Pythagorean idea that there's order and harmony in the universe and that these platonic solids would help to define the orbits. And he couldn't quite make it work.

It didn't quite come out. And by continued observations, he's the one that figured out that the planetary orbits are elliptical. And once he figured out that they were an ellipse and he figured out the ratio of the ellipses, you know, you have the nearest point of approach and the farthest point of approach.

And when he figured out those ratios, they corresponded to chords on a musical scale, a minor sixth and a major third and a major fourth. And actually was able to predict the movement of planets. And when they discovered the rest of the planets, they found that the same ratio exists and completes the pattern of chords that are available.

Anyway, it's a fascinating thing. I don't want to get off into it. But I just want to point that out as an illustration of the fact that God is fond of numbers.

I was listening to Dr. Criswell talking about this idea. And he said, God is fond of numbers. He likes them.

And he does. The universe is full of numbers. And scripture is full of numbers.

And they have significance. They help to reveal the order and the purpose and the plan of God. That's why we're going to spend a little bit of time looking at them.

Well, without further ado, I want to give just a survey. This is not comprehensive. You'll think of other examples.

You'll think of other passages. You'll think of other ideas. But let me just give a survey or an overview of what numbers do for us.