

Romans 1:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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:

Analysis

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:

Paul elaborates on God's self-revelation through creation: *ta gar aorata autou apoktiseōs kosmou tois poiēmasin nooumena kathoratai* (τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου τοῖς ποιήμασιν νοούμενα καθοράται, 'for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things made'). The paradox—*aorata* (ἀόρατα, invisible things) are *kathoratai* (καθοράται, clearly seen)—indicates that God's unseen attributes are perceived through visible creation. *Nooumena* (νοούμενα, being understood) implies rational inference, not mystical intuition.

The content of this revelation is *hē te aidios autou dunamis kai theiotēs* (ἡ τε αἰδῖος αὐτοῦ δύναμις καὶ θεϊότης, 'His eternal power and divine nature/Godhead'). *Aidios dunamis* (αἰδῖος δύναμις, eternal power) refers to God's omnipotence and self-existence. *Theiotēs* (θεϊότης, divinity/Godhead) is God's divine essence. Creation testifies to a powerful, eternal, intelligent Creator. The conclusion: *eis to einai autous anapologēτους* (εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἀναπολογήτους, 'so that they are without excuse'). *Anapologēτους* (ἀναπολόγητος, without excuse/inexcusable) is a

legal term—humanity has no defense before God's tribunal. Ignorance is not a valid plea.

Historical Context

Natural theology—knowledge of God through nature—was debated in early Christianity. Church Fathers like Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Augustine affirmed that creation reveals God's existence and power but not the gospel. Romans 1:20 grounds the traditional theistic arguments for God's existence (cosmological, teleological). The Protestant Reformers distinguished natural revelation (sufficient to condemn) from special revelation (sufficient to save). Modern evolutionary materialism attempts to suppress this innate awareness of the Creator.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. When you observe creation—stars, DNA, ecosystems—what specific attributes of God ('eternal power' and 'divine nature') do you perceive?
2. How does natural revelation leave humanity 'without excuse' (ἀναπολόγητος), and why is this important for understanding human culpability?
3. In what ways does modern secularism attempt to suppress creation's testimony to the Creator?

Interlinear Text

τὰ	γὰρ	ἀόρατα	αὐτοὺς	ἀπὸ	κτίσεως	κόσμου
G3588	For	the invisible things	his	from	the creation	of the world
	G1063	G517	G846	G575	G2937	G2889
τοῖς	ποιήμασιν	νοούμενα	καθορᾶται	ἥ	τε	
G3588	by the things that are made	being understood	are clearly seen	G3588	G5037	
	G4161	G3539	G2529			
αἰδῖος	αὐτοὺς	δύναμις	καὶ	θειότης	εἰς	τὸ εἶναι
eternal	his	power	and	Godhead	so	are
G126	G846	G1411	G2532	G2305	G1519	G1511
αὐτοὺς	ἀναπολογήτους					
his	without excuse					
G846	G379					

Additional Cross-References

Romans 1:19 (References God): Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

Isaiah 40:26 (Creation): Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.

Psalms 8:3 (Parallel theme): When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

Romans 2:15 (Parallel theme): Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

John 1:18 (References God): No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

1 Timothy 1:17 (Eternal Life): Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Psalms 104:5 (Parallel theme): Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.

Psalms 119:90 (Parallel theme): Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

John 15:22 (Parallel theme): If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

Colossians 2:9 (References God): For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

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