

**DAVID'S LORD AND OUR LORD**

Psalm 139:1-12

**Intro:** I could take most of the time this morning reading to you the glowing comments that have been made down through history by those who have read and re-read this Psalm many times, have studied it thoroughly, and many who have preached on it more than once. The consensus with many of them is that there is not another Psalm like it in emphasizing the glory of God and His condescension in his relationship with His people. Of course, what is here declared about God applies equally to all people everywhere in all generations, but what strikes the child of God with unbelievable amazement, strength, comfort and joy, will strike terror to those who do not know the Lord if they are able to comprehend even a part of what the Psalmist has written.

There are those who question whether or not King David wrote Psalm 139, but I will let the scholars argue about that. I believe that we can all say that, if David did not write it, he certainly could have written it, and that he among all OT writers none would have been more qualified to write it than David was. So I am willing to abide by the superscription that stands at the heading.

It is mainly a Psalm about two Persons, God and David. Like most of the Psalms, the writer is the one who has done the writing, or speaking. But all the Psalmist has to say has to do with his knowledge of God and his relationship to this most wonderful Lord and God. This is theology at its best, and yet theology which even a child can understand. In a way, while the Psalmist is speaking for himself, we need to realize that he is speaking for us as well. With the Holy Spirit guiding us, this could have been our Psalm if we had walked in fellowship with God like this Psalmist obviously had walked with the Lord.

Years after this Psalm was written, the Apostle Paul expressed what was undoubtedly the greatest desire in his heart, when he said, speaking of Christ, "That I may know Him" (Phil. 3:10). And it was to be the Apostle Peter who exhorted all believers to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). To know Christ is to know God, and to know God is to know Christ. Our Lord said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." There is no high purpose that any person on earth can have than to know God – any Person of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit. To learn about One of Them, is to

learn about all of them.

But the Psalmist in Psalm 139 reveals the glory and majesty of God by speaking of God's relationship to us, and especially by telling us what God knows about us. As Christians we often talk about what we know about God, but the Psalmist tells us in Psalm 139 that one of the best ways to learn about God is by learning what He knows about us. The Psalmist was speaking for himself, but we need to understand that he was speaking for us too.

I am sure that you have noticed that this Psalm begins and ends on the same note. And that is brought out by David's use of the verb, *search*. (Read verse 1, and then read verse 24.)

Verse 1 tells what the Lord already had done about the Psalmist, and then at the end of the Psalm this same word is used to describe what the Psalmist want the Lord to continue doing.

This word "search" means *a thorough, deliberate, intimate, examination* of everything that could possibly be known about David. There was nothing that David could have told the Lord about himself that the Lord did not already know. And the same is true about you and me. And the words of verse 1 mean that the Lord had done the searching Himself. He had not delegated this search to angels, or to any human being. He has conducted that search personally.

### **I. The Omniscience of God (Psa. 139:1-6).**

This is the first of four stanzas that we have in this Psalm.

But the object of His search is not to expose us, or to ridicule us, but it is to show us how much He loves us. This is the kind of knowledge that goes on with the Lord a day at a time. The Lord notices every time we sit down, and every time we get up. Have you ever checked yourself to count how many times you sit down and get up in a day. We are doing this all of the time, aren't we? We start the day doing that. We do it so often that we don't even think about it, *but God does!* And God does not do it just for King David, but He does it for all of His children around the world! Nobody cares for us like the Lord does. We don't even care for ourselves the way He does. But this isn't all!

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He always understands what we are thinking about. People can often tell that something is bugging us, but they don't know what it is unless we tell them. But the Lord understands even what we are thinking about without being told. He loves it when we tell Him, but He knows what it is before we tell Him. So we had better learn to tell the Lord first. Matthew Henry said that "thoughts are words to God."

Look at verse 3. We not only sit down and get up, but we go places, and at the end of the day we take our much-needed rest. For the Lord to compass our paths means that He makes crooked places straight, and rough places smooth. Haven't we often been rebuked in our hearts when we faced some difficult trial only to learn that it wasn't as bad as we thought it would be? Why was that? It was because the Lord was going before us and preparing the way.

He is acquainted with all of our ways. Haven't we all had the experience of planning our days, and then something happens so that we find ourselves doing things that we never planned to do? Sudden changes may surprise us, but they never surprise the Lord. He is in it all! "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way" (Psa. 37:23-24).

Verse 4 indicates that the Lord knows the words that are on our tongues before we speak them, and which we often wish that we could take them back. Therefore we often need to pray, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (Psa. 141:3). James reminds us in his epistle in the NT that if we control our tongues, we are not going to have trouble with the rest of our bodies. But only the Lord can enable us to control what we say.

And verse 5 shows even more how the Lord protects us from the onslaughts of evil. He encloses us behind and before, and lays His hand upon us. So did the Lord protect David literally surrounding him with His very presence.

It was the knowledge of all that David had mentioned from the first of the Psalm that caused him to marvel, and yet it was all so very wonderful to him that he could not actually take it in.

Now what was the Psalmist talking about in these opening verses, the first stanza of this great Psalm. It had to do with the omniscience of God. He

is all-knowing. We are to go to Him with all of our burdens and needs, but never with the idea that we have problems or needs which He knows nothing about. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ which are recorded in Matthew 6:7-8:

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

This is a subject, the omniscience of God, which goes far beyond what we read here, but this is foundational for our peace and blessing in daily living.

The glory of what we learn in these verses is magnified many times over when we stop to realize that what David declared for himself, is true for every person on the face of the earth. The passing of time makes no difference. What God has been, He still is. And what His Word teaches us, remains unchanged even though everything around us changes.

Now we come to the second stanza:

## **II. The Omnipresence of God (Psa. 139:7-12).**

One characteristic of all men and angels is that we can only be one place at one time. If we are here, we are not anyplace else. But this is not true of God as David explains so clearly in these verses.

Again we need to recognize that truth which bring such blessing to the people of God, causes terror for those who do not know the Lord. So the questions are raised by the Psalmist which we have in verse 7. These questions are similar to those proposed by Jeremiah in Jeremiah 23:23-24:

23 Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?

24 Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?

saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.

Remember that it is a good habit to answer the questions that are asked in Scripture. And we need to follow our answer with meditation on the truth.

“Spirit” in verse 7 probably should be capitalized because it refers to the Holy Spirit. These are profound questions of extreme importance. Is it possible for anyone at any time under any conditions to be where God is

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not? This is a question that every person needs to ask and to answer truthfully. We hear a lot these days about what is going on behind closed doors? Are there any doors that are strong enough to shut God out? Or as this stanza goes on, Is it possible to go anyplace where God is not?

Now these statements do not mean that when we go some place, God goes before us and gets there ahead of us. That is not the point. The point is that God is everywhere all of the time. In answer to the questions in verse 8, while God is in heaven, at the same time He is in “hell” (the word in Hebrew is *sheol*, the place of the dead.

We have been praying for Dr. Lin and his family who are in China. Look at verses 9 and 10. Can the Lord be in China and in Portland at the same time? There are countries in the world that will not allow their people to have a Bible. Can they shut God out of their borders? Absolutely not! It is not that God moves around all of the time, but He is everywhere all of the time? Think of all of the languages that Christians speak throughout the whole world. Can we be sure that God is close enough to hear all of us?

But then there is another problem, the problem of day time and night. We are told in John 3 where we have the ministry of our Lord to Nicodemus a Jewish Pharisee who eventually became a Christian that “men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil” (John 3:19). Men are still like that. The night is the time when people sin because they are seeking to avoid detection. Does God need a light to be able to see what is going on in the darkness of night? Read verses 11 and 12 of our text. (Read.)

When Daniel was enabled by God to interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dream to him, Daniel thanked the Lord in these words found in Daniel 2:22;

22 He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

**Concl:** The Lord willing we will look at the remainder of this wonderful Psalm next Lord’s day. But for now let us focus our attention on these two great truths about God: His omniscience and His omnipresence.

When Isaiah the prophet wrote in Isaiah 26:3-4,

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is

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everlasting strength,  
he was speaking of keeping our minds and hearts occupied with the God that we know, the God Who has saved us, and the God Who has made every provision for our complete joy and total security, not just by what He does for us, but because of Who He is! Just think about this! There is not a thing about you that the Lord does not know. He knows when you sit down, and when you get up – and He knows if it is getting harder to get up. There is not a thing about you that the Lord is not well acquainted with and well aware of. He loves you that much. And there is not the slightest possibility that you will ever be separated from Him.

Let us all make Psalm 139 our Psalm. Let us make David's words our words because we know that David's Lord is our Lord too. Read Psalm 138 for further comfort and encouragement.